

CCEA GCSE - Art and Design  
Summer Series 2017

# Chief Examiner's and Principal Moderator's Report

art and  
design



## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Art and Design for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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# GCSE ART AND DESIGN

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Assessment Unit 1      Core Portfolio (Controlled Assessment)

Candidates produced thematic units of work for the Core Portfolio. Units of work were presented mainly in both sketchbook and A2 page formats. In general, the work displayed by the candidates showed a diverse use of materials, processes and techniques. Sketchbooks had been well utilised by many candidates as visual diaries which encouraged them to develop and explore personal ideas. Sketchbooks used in this way allowed candidates to take ownership of their personal artistic development and thinking skills.

Candidates chose to work primarily with a range of graphic media. Textile techniques such as embroidery, batik and felt-making, 2D and 3D ceramics, 2D relief and 3D paper-based constructions were also popular areas in candidates' work. The use of photography and digital manipulation were generally strong elements used by candidates to further develop personal ideas. The use of 3D modelling in wood, card and plastic was evident in the work of candidates.

3D work was evident in many centres, but overall there was a stronger emphasis on the use of fine art disciplines in the work presented: Ceramics accounted for the majority of 3D final outcomes in this year's examination. There were also interesting constructed textile outcomes including garments, sculptures and vessels. Graphic Design work was seen in centres, though to a lesser extent.

Where possible, centres had encouraged the development of candidates' work by arranging workshops with practising artists and craftspeople. This practice encouraged candidates to develop skills in a wider range of materials, techniques and processes, and supported development of knowledge, skills and understanding.

Candidates' work, at various levels, showed development of skills and understanding using the visual elements in a wide range of graphic and other media. Candidates' learning processes were also enhanced by the extensive use of different materials, processes and techniques in many centres. Experience of using a wide range of media facilitated more experimental work. Overall candidates' contextual studies were generally relevant and supportive to the development of personal ideas, creativity and learning, as well as individual enthusiasm for the subject.

### Assessment Unit 2 Working to a Stimulus

There was an excellent level of engagement among candidates in responding to the theme 'Structures'. Many candidates explored a variety of personal interpretations to the theme which produced original, inventive and a diverse range of responses. In many centres candidates' work showed maturity and sensitivity.

Popular areas of investigation included localities and structures observed in local, natural and manmade environments; animal and human forms; evolution; and religious, political and social structures. Some of the most thought-provoking units were based on emotional structures. There was structured thinking about body image and personal confidence and peeling away layers of human insecurities.

Many candidates produced well informed and visually confident responses to the theme. There was a strong emphasis on developing ideas by the investigation of primary source materials supplemented by meaningful secondary sources as well as contextual material.

Unit 2 preparatory work was presented in both sketchbook and A2 page formats. The work included a wide variety of materials such as photographic images, sketches and studies in a range of graphic media. Many candidate final outcomes tended towards the use of fine art disciplines and candidates in several centres produced final outcomes in textiles, ceramics, wood and plastic constructions. The integration of photography and the exploration of photoshop image manipulation techniques allowed candidates to inform and develop initial ideas as well as subsequent work in a thoughtful and skilful manner. This was a highly successful aspect of candidates' work in many centres.

The use of contextual studies is an important aspect of stimulating, informing and developing ideas as well as underpinning progression in candidates' work. There were many excellent examples of candidates' use of contextual referencing to support personal ideas and developing work. There were also examples where contextual referencing did not always inform the progress and development of work towards an outcome.

The development of work in Unit 2 was more Fine Art orientated than Design based and final outcomes reflected this. Preparatory and development work was sometimes stronger than final outcomes.

## Assessment Objectives

Centres should encourage candidates to address all assessment objectives equally. Moderators reported that most centres had addressed all the assessment objectives within the Core Portfolio but not always with balance.

Generally, AO1 was addressed by candidates using visual mind maps, annotation, artist research, first hand drawing, collage and photography. Most candidates, at various levels, developed personal ideas using both primary and secondary source materials. The most successful candidates fully supported their personal ideas throughout the initial and development stages using contextual referencing. This approach resulted in many candidates achieving cohesive and mature units of work.

At times artist research was predictable and tenuous with weaker candidates. Contextual referencing was less effective in candidates' work when added retrospectively. All candidates could improve their standard of work by integrating meaningful contextual links and sources as their work develops. Recording from secondary source images was evident within some candidates' work. Candidates should be actively encouraged to work directly from observational studies and use photography for original personal sources.

Many candidates displayed strength and consistency in recording ideas, insights and observations by using a range of media, techniques and processes. Candidates' observations were generally well linked to intentions. However, at times the use of a discrete approach to AO1 and AO2 prevented candidates fully exploiting the knowledge and skills gained from development and exploration and limited methods of recording. Higher achieving candidates clearly understood and demonstrated the integration of both AO2 and AO3 through the successful review, modification and recording of ideas. These candidates effectively used an appropriate range of materials to investigate their theme thoroughly. This offered them greater choice when focusing the development of their work at subsequent stages. In some instances, candidates limited their exploration of ideas to pencil and paints which hindered the development of their ideas and progression in their work.

At various levels of achievement but particularly at the higher levels candidates produced comprehensive, perceptive and personal units of work for both elements of the examination. There was evidence of higher level annotated work which was mature and insightful. Written responses in other cases lacked specialist language or meaningful comment.

## Displays of Work

Centres made significant efforts to display students' GCSE work effectively. Each of the units of work were separately displayed which accommodated the moderators' work in centres. Overall centre displays were of a good standard and facilitated the needs of the moderation process with little or no disruption.

## True Colours

True Colours Exhibition is annually hosted by CCEA. The exhibition offers the opportunity for the most outstanding work produced in the 2017 examination to be exhibited and enjoyed by all centres as well as the public. The work exhibited is indicative of the outstanding quality achieved by candidates throughout Northern Ireland in both units of the 2017 GCSE examination.

Teachers have once again worked to ensure that this year's moderation process was successful. Thank you to all centres for your hospitality and co-operation during moderation visits.

## Principal Moderator's Report

The Principal Moderator and Chief Examiner and moderation team would like to thank the Principal and Head of Art and Design at Laurel Hill College, Lisburn for their hospitality and assistance during the 2017 Briefing Meetings for GCSE Art and Design moderators.

## Moderation Visits

It is now current practice that visiting moderators to a centre have a short discussion with the head of department prior to the moderation taking place. This discussion allows the opportunity for the HOD to explain how they deliver the specification in their centre. This opportunity has been welcomed and heads of departments have used this time to further explain the department's learning and teaching strategies and how pupils have approached both Units in the centre.

## Administration at centres

While the majority of centres had the relevant documentation ready for the moderation process, there were many more errors noted this year. Inaccurate completion of paperwork can and has caused considerable delay to the moderation process getting underway.

There were many errors in transcription from the Candidate Record Sheets to the Tac 1.

A number of CRS's were either not signed or had no candidate number on them. Moderators also noted that on many occasions written comments were illegible. These comments are very important in communicating to the moderator how the centre arrived at their marks. The comments should indicate if the mark awarded takes into account assistance given by the teacher.

The work of all candidates was available at all centres as moderators are now requesting work from outside of the sample.

Moderators noted that the majority of centres had provided a list of candidates and their marks in rank order for each unit. This was very helpful.

CCEA provides a check list in the 'Instructions to Teachers' booklet to assist teachers in the preparation for the centre's moderation.

## Display of Work

It is crucial for the smooth running of the moderation that the work of each candidate in the sample is easily located and identified.

Issues arose this year with some centres erecting work out of reach of the moderator and where work of two or more candidate's overlapped with unclear division of work. This became more of an issue when the work of a candidate from Unit 1 and Unit 2 were displayed together and shared a common theme.

Only the computer generated sample needs to be erected. It is not necessary to display both units of work for a candidate when there is only one unit listed on the sample. If only the sample was displayed in rank order, in one room, this would speed up the process of moderation considerably. It would be highly recommended that school's do not organise a parent's viewing of the exhibition of work on the same day as the moderation is taking place, particularly when the moderation is due to commence at 13.30pm.

This year again, moderators are reporting interruptions while moderating is taking place. It is unacceptable to have teachers, technicians or cleaners walk in or through the rooms where moderation is taking place.

## Marking

While the majority of centres have a good grasp of the assessment objectives, the vast majority of moderators reported leniency in marking by many centres. The leniency was at times significant causing centres to have adjustments made to work of all of the candidates in the centre. There was also a notable increase in centres marking to the very edge of the acceptable range and just above the grade boundaries. This 'strategy' of marking is both risky and not to be recommended. These centres are risking possible adjustments being made to pupils' marks. It is worth noting that when centres' marks are adjusted, it is all candidates in the centre and not just those in the sample being moderated that may be adjusted. Teachers need to mark the work of the lesser able pupils with the same integrity as those who achieve at the top levels. Moderators noted many candidates were marked severely at the lower levels. We need to recognise and value achievement at all levels.

Internal standardisation is essential particularly when there is more than one centre's work being moderated in one school. Quite often when internal standardisation hasn't taken place, erratic marking is evident. A re-mark of all work in the centre is then requested and a second moderation needs to be organised.

## Addressing the Assessment Objectives

Candidates should cover all four assessment objectives equally. Moderators found that while most centres had addressed AO1 and AO3 well, AO2 and AO4 were less well addressed.

**AO1** Candidates across all centres had developed a range of ideas. While candidates had contextual references, these on occasions weren't used to inform their ideas with understanding of purpose.

- AO2** 'Refining of work/ideas' was weak in a large number of centres where marking was lenient in this particular assessment objective. Experimentation in many centres was often done as an exercise or as a workshop for the class and had little or no bearing on the development of the work of the candidate. When experimentation with materials, techniques and processes is done as a tick box exercise and has no meaning to the development of work of the candidate, then it is of little merit and cannot achieve marks at a high level. Reviewing and modifying work should be part of a natural progression of that idea. This aspect of the development was missing in the work of many candidates across centres. Opportunities for risk taking and the creative development of ideas were missed in many cases. In other cases where candidates had some excellent examples of positive experiences with experimentation, these did not inform their final outcome in any way. These were missed opportunities to achieve marks at higher levels.
- AO3** It was disappointing to read that many moderators noted the lack of first hand direct observational drawing in many centres. Some centres used only second hand sources. While acknowledging that on occasions this might be necessary, candidates should be actively encouraged to draw from first hand sources. Photographs are not first-hand sources when pupils work from them. That said, there was some teaching of photography in many centres. Good practice was seen in centres where candidates were encouraged to work from a range of media, techniques and processes. While there was a variety of media used in all centres, some candidates struggled to explore more than pencil and paint.
- AO4** Many responses marked at Level 4 and Level 5 did not meet the criteria for those levels. Often responses were successful but not well balanced when looking at the work of the candidate holistically. In some instances the final response bore little resemblance to the development of ideas and was not the realisation of all that had been learned across AO1, 2 and 3. Final responses should be supported and informed by connections made to the work of others. In many cases these links were tenuous at best.

## Assessment Unit 1      The Core Portfolio (Controlled Assessment)

Preparation work was presented mainly on A2 sheets and in sketchbooks. It was good to see a great range of both 2D and 3D fine art and design work evident across the cohort. There was a wide range of teaching styles with best practice allowing candidates to develop their work in a personal and individual way. In some centres moderator's noted that the work of all candidates was similar and repetitive: so much so that all of the work looked exactly the same. It is difficult to moderate work where there appears to be little to no personal input from the candidate. Contextual study didn't always inform the progress or final response and at times appeared to be a 'bolt on', and not a source of learning. The use of visiting artists' workshops is to be recommended. Candidates can develop new skills and learn about new technologies that can be developed further in their own work. The most popular disciplines this year were print making and ICT which proved very popular with boys. Where the history and appreciation of art and design was taught as an integral part of the delivery of the specification, candidates performed at a higher level in AO2, where work was more meaningful and personal.

## Assessment Unit 2      Working to a Stimulus

Unit 2, Working to a Stimulus paper, 'Structures', was well received in all centres and appealed equally to both boys and girls. Candidates explored the human body, science, family, politics, feminism, transgender issues, animals, emotions, under the skin, beneath the surface, and architecture to list a few starting points. The development of ideas in this unit was noted to be more focused than Unit 1 and less teacher led. While the exploration of media was strong, moderators noted that the majority of candidates did not 'take risks' using techniques learned during their exploration of media and in the development of ideas and reverted back to safer outcomes in 2D drawing media. Good practice was noted where exploration with a variety of media was used innovatively and developed fully within final outcomes. Weaknesses appeared again in the reviewing, refining and modifying of work as part of the natural progression of the unit of work. When contextual references were used skilfully for top candidates to develop their own ideas and guide work, many lower level candidates often used contextual references as a mere accessory with little thought or incorporation into the development of their work. Written responses in many cases lacked specialist language, however at the top level, candidates' annotation was mature and insightful.

## Contact details

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