Examiners' Report Summer 2008

GCE

Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied Art & Design

(8711 and 8712)

Edexcel Advanced GCE in Applied Art & Design

(9711 and 9712)

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General Comments

- This was the third moderation of the Advanced Subsidiary and the second for the (A2) GCE in Applied Art and Design. The qualification and the requirements of delivery and assessment are now more firmly established.

- An additional number of centres have been accredited for AS following the 2007 moderation series and did not receive moderation this year.

- Centres had followed guidelines for moderation and the work was well presented. The work was usually clearly labeled with the evidence for the Summative Project, the *synoptic* project and the Portfolio and Optional Units clearly identified. Portfolios were accompanied by the Unit Assessment Grids and Authentication Forms.
- The report that follows is a compilation of evidence from the Moderation Team reports on the 2008 series.

Assessment

- Assessment was largely reported to be accurate for the AS units; however some slightly lenient marking was reported for two of the A2 units, Unit 8: Personal and Portfolio Development and Unit 10: Professional Practice and Progression.

- The moderation report to the centre will provide individual feedback on the accuracy of assessment decisions. Centres are requested to refer to the Moderation Report for 2008 as it will contain information that should assist with assessment review.

- Many centres now follow the practice of presenting the Portfolio and Optional Unit work holistically through a number of projects and assignments. In most centres the portfolio work for the AS and the A2 levels had been presented discretely with the Summative and *synoptic* Project work clearly identified.

- Most centres had assisted the moderation process by clearly indicating evidence against unit criteria on the assessment grids. Where there were full annotations, particularly when the details gave information on the justification for the assessment decisions, this was very useful to moderators.

Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied Art and Design (AS)

6906 Unit 6: Develop Set ideas and 6907 Unit 7: Produce Set Ideas

The Externally Set Assignment included a theme and scenario. The vocational aspect was addressed by the inclusion of a client list from which candidates selected the most appropriate for their chosen area of study. A self-identified client could be chosen if appropriate and relevant and some centres had done this by making use of live briefs. Included with the paper was a Project Brief Outline requiring details of the candidates' chosen subject, client, and consideration of constraints.

The 2008 paper was comparable with earlier papers, having a similar format but a new theme - 'Environment'. The format and structure of the Summative Project paper has been reviewed at the end of each moderation series. It has enabled centres to devise appropriate methods of delivery that provide candidates with opportunities to address all of the assessment criteria through individually devised project proposals.

6906 Unit 6: Develop Set Ideas
a. the ability to research and analyse primary and secondary sources

The theme of 'Environment' had been well received. Responses that explored issues concerned with the physical environment were common. There was less evidence of work on more contentious themes such as global warning and pollution.
Most responses were in the broad area of fine art or visual studies practice and there were a smaller proportion of projects that were in design areas such as visual communication, fashion, textiles or three-dimensional design.
In the best practice a range of alternative ideas had been explored. In the weaker work seen there was limited exploration of the theme of Environment by candidates; rather they had worked to tutor devised briefs that had only tenuous connections to the theme.

Some centres had encouraged candidates to collect initial primary research through visits to locations where there were specific types of environment, such as parks, woodlands and urban environments.
Although candidates were clearly competent in working from observation, as evidenced in the portfolio units, the use of primary research in the Summative project was limited, even though it would have been useful in informing ideas and design work. Candidates often preferred to work from their own photographs when direct observational study would almost certainly have provided better information. Observational drawings that were primarily concerned with representation did not always allow for the essential experimental or exploratory work to develop alternative visual ideas.
Secondary source material was more in evidence although too often this consisted simply of collections of visual material with no evidence of critical analysis or application to the candidates' own project work.

In weaker projects there were references to the work of others' but links between these and the candidates' work were not fully explained and the references lacked accompanying critical analysis of the use of visual language.
In the best practice the range of 'academic' and visual research made positive contributions to the project work. Where centres directed the work to the extent

that this limited the candidates' personal initiative and involvement, the resulting work was often mediocre and lacking in invention or creativity.

- The practice of using primary research continues to improve although there remains work to be done in encouraging candidates to produce precise visual information that can inform the development of ideas and forms in the project work.
- There was a wide use of secondary sources. In the work of weaker candidates this was often limited to uncritical collections of printed material that had only tenuous links to the project work.
- There was evidence of relevant critical and contextual referencing that had received more consideration this year. The evidence indicated that the study of others' working methods and techniques has had a marked impact on final outcomes.

b. the ability to generate a range of visual ideas, formal elements, materials, techniques and processes
- The development of visual ideas was improved this year with more evidence of the integration of visual language.

c. the ability to develop visual ideas to prototype, using skills in materials, techniques and processes
- There was more evidence of work in 2D than 3D, although candidates did not always make full use of maquettes and tests with materials and processes.
- The emphasis on the generation of ideas (Assessment Strand b) seems to have taken precedence over the development of ideas (Assessment Strand c) with students falling back on safe options. Sometimes the most suitable, appropriate and effective idea was not carried forward.
- In some cases candidates had moved too quickly to produce the final work without full consideration of alternatives. There were examples that showed improved sequential development and refinement of ideas and these were very encouraging.
- Some excellent and well-resolved ideas were developed to prototype.

d. evaluation

- Evaluations were thorough in the higher marked work, but lower achievers tended to produce descriptive rather than evaluative and analytical commentary.
- In the best practice candidates referred to clients, either real or simulated, and showed awareness of the constraints and opportunities inherent in their brief.
- In weaker work written evaluations were limited and did not fully analyse the effectiveness of the final design.
- Evidence of more ongoing evaluation this year, recorded in workbooks and on work sheets.
- Evaluation was often focused on time management, the progress of the project and the effectiveness of working methods rather than the aesthetic or design considerations.
- Some evidence of improved visual evaluation was evident in the better laid out workbooks/sheets that indicated improved sequential thinking.
- Comments and reflections were more fluent when concerned with the generation of ideas and less so on the subsequent development of ideas.

Raising Standards -
- *Ensure opportunity and provision for work in 3D to match that of 2D.*
- *Research and development work should be appraised against the brief and client requirements at key stages.*

6907 Unit 7: Produce Set Ideas

The best work was often linked to the thoroughness with which the initial project proposal had been written. Many centres had produced carefully structured extensions to the set brief and supported candidates in the analysis of that brief and in preparing effective Project Brief Outlines. Carefully considered project proposals helped to focus both the project planning and its evaluation.

In cases where centres had devised an overarching brief the information on the Project Brief Outline was usually insufficient to provide clear guidance for candidates and the opportunity for meaningful evaluation against 'client needs' or aesthetic and practical criteria.

In cases where candidates had worked to briefs for real or simulated clients this had often resulted in a more creative and focused response.

a. planning to produce a final outcome
- Evidence varied from excellent to rather poor although overall there has been an improvement in project planning.
- Where practical action plans, log books or diaries had been used these enabled candidates to organise their time and resources more effectively.
- In some cases candidates had completed centre devised planning timetables but had not made full use of these to monitor or inform the project work. Other projects demonstrated strong visual evidence of organisation and sequential development and did not need such timetables to reinforce this aspect of study.

b. use of specialist materials, techniques and processes to produce a final outcome

- For the production of the final outcome there was evidence of the use of a range of media, materials and processes in 2D and 3D, although with a predominance of painting and drawing overall. Weaker candidates appeared to produce final outcomes without going through a considered art or design process so that alternative ideas and forms were not fully explored and there was little evidence of the refinement of final pieces.
- Effective project management schemes had encouraged a more confident and successful realisation of ideas.

c. presenting and evaluating the final outcome
- Video evidence and witness statements were presented to evidence presentations. This is accepted practice in a number of centres and appears to be a positive response to the moderation feedback.
- Where time had been provided at the end of the project for reflection and presentation this had resulted in more focused and detailed evaluation. The careful selection and organisation of work at the end of the project, editing and refining the project portfolio, had also contributed to the effectiveness of the evaluation process.
- In weaker work planning and project proposals were incomplete, and in some cases not presented. Evaluations were only an account of what the candidate had done and often made no reference to the original intentions or constraints with the brief.

Raising Standards-
- *Personal planning and monitoring of the project is very important and contributes to its success.*
- *A professional presentation of selected stages of the project and the outcome is worth the time and effort in terms of potential point score for Assessment Strand d.*

6901 Unit 1: 2D and 3D Visual Language
The best evidence included primary and relevant secondary sources which were used to identify starting points for creating and developing ideas.
There was usually evidence of work from observation using set subject matter or visits to specific locations and the quality of this was variable. There was limited use of primary source material as the basis for ideas development or the creation of images, motifs and forms. The use of visual language and of media, materials and processes was usually integral to portfolio work. Exploration and development work was supported with on-going annotation in sketchbooks and on worksheets. In the case of weaker candidates there seemed to be a lack of understanding of how formal elements could be used to communicate ideas, convey atmosphere or mood, or to express feelings.
In general the range and depth of study in 3D was more limited than 2D work, in terms of the use of visual language and formal elements.

a. use a range of primary and secondary sources and describe how others have used visual language in their work
- In most cases delivery was via a number of vocational projects supported by skills workshops and exercises.
- There were reports of a better balance of 2D and 3D evidence this year.
- Some reports indicated that the balance of research is still weighted more heavily towards secondary source material.
- In some centres printmaking, digital image manipulation or other intermediary techniques were effectively used to develop alternative ideas.
- Students did not always indicate which photographs they themselves had taken. These would preferably include annotations that show why they were taken and how they might be used.
- Candidates who made weak and rather meaningless copies of their own photographs when producing development work seemed unable to recognise the potential of abstract or formal qualities of the source material to inform or inspire their own work.
- This year saw another increase in relevant contextual referencing supporting the practical work.

b. use of a combination of formal elements, mark-making and object making to develop ideas and intentions
- Those students who were unable to develop their ideas through the selection and use of the formal elements produced more limited outcomes.
- There was evidence of effective investigation and exploration of visual language but this was not always applied to project outcomes.
- The range of media and techniques employed was good but visual language skills were not always systematically understood.

c. use mark and object making techniques and technologies to develop ideas

- The most successful work showed systematic study and progression through visual language development and the design process. This was often delivered through a structured programme of studies in 2D and 3D.
- Some candidates produced work in printmaking and photography in addition to drawing studies that supported the development of ideas. At the lower mark range there was often a lack of development work between the original idea and the final outcome. Evidence of the making of maquettes as a means of development in 3D work was often limited.

d. demonstrate and evaluate the use of visual language in your work and how others' work influenced your ideas.

- Reports indicated an improvement in evaluative skills. In the lower mark range the evidence of the evaluation of visual language was predominantly visual. Some reports suggested that effective written work can raise potential point scores for ASd.
- The use of contextual references has improved, although students did not always evaluate how others' work had influenced their own. Evidence for this was sometimes limited to a mention of the artist or visual clues in the work itself.

Raising Standards –
- *Improve provision of 3D and extend 3D references to include art, craft and design.*
- *Ensure that some project development work is based firmly on primary source starting points and that candidates' use visual language to develop alternative ideas.*
- *Continue to give guidance on relevant contextual referencing and develop skills in critical analysis. Contextual references should be clearly identified and acknowledged.*
- *Effective annotation and written evaluation often provides stronger evidence of understanding.*

6902 Unit 2: Materials, Techniques and Processes

Work showed a high level of skill and the imaginative use of a wide range of 2D and 3D materials, techniques and technology. The use of visual language and of media, materials and processes was usually integral to portfolio work. In the case of weaker candidates there seemed to be a lack of understanding of how these and formal elements could be used to communicate ideas, convey atmosphere, mood or to express feelings.

There was stronger evidence in 2D than 3D for the range of materials and processes used. Descriptions of processes and health and safety considerations were found in the stronger students' work.

a. investigate working with a range of materials and techniques exploring the characteristics and properties of materials

- The range of 3D is to some extent dependent on the centre's provision of 3D making facilities and resources.
- 3D evidence was sometimes restricted to one project which limited opportunity for exploration of the formal elements in 3D. (Mass, volume, structure, form etc.)

- There were only a few reports of centres having used or given time to investigate 3D materials, techniques and processes freely outside of the constraints of a brief.
- In strong centres the range of 2D work was extensive and included painting and drawing, printmaking, photography and computer manipulated images using a range of software. There was more evidence of digital photography being used to record processes and to collect source material.

b. explore the potential for using materials and techniques or combinations of materials and techniques to develop ideas
- Reports indicated that the exploration was very good in many centres. The potential though, once explored, was not always realised through the development and outcome stage and this sometimes limited achievement.
- Combinations were very strong in some areas – notably fine art and textiles.
- There was an increase in the use of digital processes both for basic research and recording and also to develop ideas.

c. use materials, techniques and technology safely in creating and developing finished work
- As in previous years the range of 3D resistant materials and access to specialist workshop provision in metal, wood and ceramics was limited in some centres. Consequently evidence of the exploration of characteristics and properties of many of these materials was restricted.
- There was good development in the use of 2D materials, techniques and processes and this has been extended to include more digital processes this year.
- Health and Safety evidence was often provided through centre devised proformas and witness statements. While these provide documentary evidence they do not always demonstrate candidates' ownership of, or understanding of good health and safety practice.

d. analyse and evaluate the creative potential and limitations of your use of materials techniques and technology
- Reports indicated that evidence of analysis and evaluative was still limited in some centres. The best evidence was drawn from students who had engaged in more formal, ongoing exercises, supported and encouraged by the tutor. There were appropriate records in logbooks, sketchbooks and on design sheets.

Raising Standards-
- *Provide for the use of a range of materials. Encourage more discussion of the properties and characteristics of different media, materials and processes.*
- *Promote a sense of careful craftsmanship and awareness of the appropriate health and safety practice.*

6903 Unit 3: Visual Communication and Meaning
The evidence for this unit was to be found in references to others' work across the range of project work and in set, illustrated essays. The best of these compared the use of visual language and techniques across a range of practitioners. There was evidence of the analysis of visual communication and meaning integrated in portfolio work rather than just biographical and historical information.
The work did not always demonstrate an understanding of the various contexts in which art, craft or design work is produced or an awareness of changes in taste, fashion or intentions that might influence such work.

Lower achieving work often consisted of collected images, which although sometimes relevant, were not accompanied by any form of analysis. Where influence was seen the result was often merely a pastiche of the selected references.
There was good evidence of visits to galleries, museums, exhibitions and actual practitioners and the use of visiting artists or designers to support the evidence for this unit.

a. analyse visual communication in the work of others
- Historical and contextual referencing was more extensive this year with analytical and practical work being informed, influenced and inspired by the work of others.
- There was an increased use of visiting practitioners. This provided candidates with the opportunity to extend evidence for this unit.
- Some centres make effective use of references from contemporary design and craft practice and work placements. However the majority of references are still from the fine art world with limited craft and design references.

b. identify an intended meaning or message for a specific 'audience'
- The identification of the 'audience' has been more rigorous in briefs this year particularly where live or simulated briefs have been used.
- The evidence of the identification of the meaning or message seems to have been achieved with more confidence in graphic design and fine art. Centres should encourage awareness of the use of visual language to create mood or atmosphere in craft disciplines.

c. use visual communication to develop your own work.
- This work was usually fully integrated in project work.
- The range of criteria, from 'effective' to 'innovative' was identified and evidenced from across the units

d. evaluate how effectively you have used visual communication in your work
- The best evidence was provided visually with supporting ongoing written evaluation and a summative evaluation.
- Evaluations often referred to the overall success of the work, and did not fully address how it communicated meaning and messages.

Raising Standards –
- *Continue to support candidates with how to look at work and analyse the intended meaning for a specific audience at the early stages of the programme.*
- *Encourage candidates to focus on analysis of communication in their own work and make judgments on how effective this might be.*

The Optional Units
6904 Unit 4: Working in 2D 6905 Unit 5: Working in 3D
These optional units offer candidates a choice of more specialist study. Unit 4 covers a broad range of 2D development, Unit 5, 3D development. The evidence indicated that the choice offered to candidates was, as would be expected, dependent on the centres' resources and staff expertise.

Once again, a few centres chose these units to work with a practitioner and a 'live brief', or to devise a 'live brief' in collaboration with a local company. These vocational activities were very successful in generating the required evidence for

these units. In the majority of cases, candidates had built on earlier experiences for Units 1, 2 and 3 to develop their ideas and practical skills.

6904 Unit 4: Working in 2D
This unit was sometimes linked to work produced for the Summative Project or alternatively for separate projects. In general this unit was marked leniently where the focus of working in a range of 2D materials and processes was subverted into the production of a single painted image. The unit should integrate the experiences and skills gained in Units 1, 2 and 3.

Whereas the focus of Units 1 and 2 is to practice and develop visual language skills and to explore, experiment and understand the use of a wide range of specialist 2D and 3D materials, techniques and processes, Unit 4 requires candidates to 'develop 2D skills through one or more specialist areas'. Examples of these are detailed in the specification. Candidates should also be able to 'analyse, refine and present 2D work'.

In the best practice seen there was a wide range of drawing and painting media supported by work in print, fabric and textile work, photography and computer generated and manipulated images. There were varying degrees of skill in the use of media and materials in the samples moderated. Outcomes included work in graphics and ICT, paintings and block printing on fabric.
High achieving work showed a deepening level of visual enquiry and extensive creative and technically competent experimentation. This was developed and extended by a successful outcome and supported by clear reflective skills and critical analysis of candidates' own and others' work.

Candidates marked at the lower end of the scale had used fewer techniques and had performed less skilfully in their use of techniques and technology.
Evaluation of this work was too often descriptive and lacking in rigorous analysis and critical judgement. It is clear that many centres promote this critical study but it is an aspect of work that needs continuing attention and effort to improve.

 a. a range of 2D investigative techniques – sources and contexts
- The unit was normally evidenced through a series of projects and exercises that also provided material for Units 1, 2 and 3.
- Some centres extended the range of 2D development by introducing new disciplines in this unit such as life drawing, printmaking and photography.

b. ability to develop a range of 2D ideas
- There was usually a range of experimentation and investigation of 2D work. Sometimes this work was seen as an end in itself and was not used effectively to develop ideas.
- In best practice candidates had produced a series of development studies from a range of source materials that refined ideas and visual form and led to the production of accomplished outcomes.

c. ability to produce a 2D outcome using and exploring the potential of media, materials   and processes
- Finished work included painting, printmaking and mixed media work, with emphasis on the exploration of the potential of media, materials and processes.

- In many cases, the 2D work for this unit was incorporated in a body of work that developed from initial studies in the formal elements through to a range of projects or mini briefs designed to apply or to develop further skills in the formal elements to develop a final 2D outcome.

d. ability to analyse, refine and present 2D work
- The evidence for this assessment strand was drawn from across the portfolio, although development work specifically identified for the optional units showed greater refinement than introductory studies.

6905 Unit 5: Working in 3D
A minority of centres presented work for this unit. The work for this unit included a range of techniques and a variety of sculptural forms, made in response to project work that included the Summative Project.

There was evidence of a range of work in three dimensions and the use of materials such as clay, plaster and wire and paper constructions. There was sometimes limited individual development work beyond the basic techniques to fully justify the evidence for one complete unit.

Levels of technical skill were adequate but much of the work was produced using low technology materials and processes such as card and paper so that more sophisticated 3D objects were not present.

a. a range of 3D investigative techniques – sources and contexts
- The work produced for this unit was to some extent dependent on centre resources and staff expertise.
- Delivery was through projects designed to address the unit. Work for Unit 5 also supported evidence for Units 1, 2 and 3.
- Some centres extended the 3D development by introducing new disciplines such as ceramics, metal work and plaster casting and carving.

b. ability to develop a range of 3D ideas
- The best work usually contained a range of maquettes and tests with materials including evidence based on earlier 3D work in response to specific briefs.

c. ability to produce a 3D outcome using and exploring the potential of media, materials and processes
- The range of resistant materials was limited. This inhibited some candidates in the production of more sophisticated or substantial objects.
- Where centres were able to introduce specialist practitioners to the programme this usually resulted in processes and health and safety being better recorded and the production of more finished work.

d. ability to analyse, refine and present 3D work
- Good evidence was produced when centres had worked with practitioners.
- As one would expect some of the most accomplished and refined 3D work was produced for this unit.

Raising achievement in the Optional Units -

- *Centres should ensure that candidates produce sufficient work specifically for this unit in addition to the basic studies in 3D addressed in Units 1,2 and 3.*

Advanced GCE Applied in Art and Design (A2)

6911 Unit 11: Develop and Produce Own Ideas - The *synoptic* project

Unlike the AS Summative project, the *synoptic* project does not contain an externally set theme, but centres need to ensure that the *synoptic* brief is made available to candidates and discussed fully, as it contains valuable information for the candidates to reference.

The project proposals must be thorough and well written in order to provide adequate information for candidates to respond to, with surety and confidence. Tutors must consider if the proposed work is within the scope of available resources and the designated time. The focus of the unit is on the research, development, production and display of work which answers a vocational brief and the proposal should contain reference to all of these important aspects for a complete and successful project to be achieved. This still needs to be addressed and improved upon in many centres, although not all, and is based on the evidence of this years' submission for this unit.

The centres are reminded that the 'Project Brief Outline' is a requirement and must be presented with the work.

Some centres encouraged a 'Statement of Intent' which was often located within the workbooks, and annotated the 'Project Brief Outline' to signpost this evidence. If a 'Statement of Intent' is generated, the guidelines cited above must be followed and the proposal transferred, in full, to the Edexcel 'Project Brief Outline' and be presented with the Unit 11 work.

a. anlysing the brief and planning the project
- Reports suggested that project management was on the whole very sound, with research, contextual referencing and evaluation all effectively undertaken. In the weaker evidence, the development and refinement of ideas seen in the Summative Project at AS Level was often lacking.
- Where two units were linked by the project, the work was more substantial, but project work addressing two complete units has to be sufficient and substantial enough to cover the criteria of two units. This was not always the case and in those instances it was usually reported to the centre by Moderators. The cases identified must review the delivery of the *synoptic* and associated optional unit to ensure adequate coverage of two sets of criteria.
- The quality of the brief varied enormously; in most cases the client was very obvious, but sometimes the client and the constraints were less clearly stated or neglected during the development of ideas. This was particularly evident in weaker work, which was a disappointing factor, as close adherence to constraints can often support rather than inhibit the development of ideas.

b. creating and developing ideas in response to the brief
- Where the unit was 'twinned' with Unit 12, the exploration and creation of ideas was usually consigned to Unit 12. In those cases the work for the *synoptic* project focused on the application of the ideas to the brief. (The separate delivery of Unit 12, with its exploration of visual language also supported Unit 11 as the skills and understanding achieved were then available for the candidate to apply to Unit 11).
- Where the unit was 'twinned' with Unit 13, the strong emphasis on close adherence to the client and the constraints encouraged a well developed response, although the exploration of ideas was often not so strong.

c. planning and producing final outcome using specialist working methods and processes

- The larger centres had been able to offer specialist options which gave the candidates more choice.
- Some candidates produced excellent work for this unit showing well resolved outcomes with considered presentation skills.
- The logging of specialist working methods should be better evidenced. This may well be the requirement of the 'client' in a real life situation and is, nevertheless, good practice in all cases.

d. evaluation of ideas, planning and finished work

- The range of evidence for this assessment strand varied considerably from centre to centre and within a centre. Candidates who had developed good skills throughout the programme produced the best evidence and often quite independently. Some very good supported practice was seen and this helped weaker candidates enormously.

- Where ongoing evaluation was evident - of ideas, planning and finished work- it highlighted the importance of this practice in enabling candidates to meet the constraints of the brief and to maintain close adherence to the requirements of the brief. It also demonstrated good practice in terms of professional working (Unit 10). The most successful evaluations did much to improve the quality and appropriateness of the response and were produced as the work progressed showing the 'value' candidates had placed on ideas, reasons for changes of directions, best working methods, etc.

- The final evaluation should take place once the 'client' – real client, tutor, peers - has appraised and responded to the finished work. Candidates should then have the time and opportunity to consider this feedback and make their evaluation in response to it. Will they change anything in the light of this feedback? Do ideas need to be revised and so forth. These considerations should be the focus of the final evaluation of the work. In weaker presentations this was not seen, with evaluations often being little more than an account of 'what they did'. The opportunity of the work of Unit 8 (presentations) to support this now becomes more apparent.

 Raising Standards-

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- *Support candidates with the full completion of the Project Brief Outline to ensure that all the required details are included.*
- *See commentary, last bullet point, under assessment strand d.*

6908 Unit 8: Personal and Portfolio Development

a. personal presentation and communication skills

- The practice of compiling a ring folder of evidence including information such as; progression aims, health & safety, application forms, CV writing etc, had been extended this year.

- Witness statements and feedback comments regarding mock interviews and group presentations were included by some centres, however some centres had made little improvement in providing this important feedback to their students.

b. portfolio presentation techniques

- As reported last year, portfolio presentation continues to improve and show a more professional approach particularly in those centres where the anticipated progression was to FE or HE. However, lower achieving students often presented very disorganized and unfocused portfolios.

c. identifying and pursuing progression goals

- In most cases, evidence was presented in the form of progression routes to Higher Education and Further Education courses.
- Work place research and job applications not evident in many centres. (Job applications - even if mock - should be written and be accompanied by CV's).
- The most thorough evidence - personal statements, evidence of presentations, mock interviews etc - was presented by centres anticipating candidate progression to foundation or degree courses.
- Evidence of presentations or mock interviews was still rather thin in some centres.

Raising Standards-

- *The importance of the experience provided by the work for this unit in that it should support students in the management of their work and in the making of reasoned judgements about the specific implications of alternative progression goals.*

- *Lower achieving students often presented very disorganized and unfocused portfolios. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that this Applied qualification must also support those students who may be considering progression to the workplace. A well presented portfolio, with the confidence gained from the exercise of a presentation or mock interview, may assist students to perform well at job interviews. Students should benefit from this Applied qualification by developing and showing skills that are transfereable to the workplace.*

- *Any associated evidence, possibly generated in other areas of study, eg, business or IT studies, could be included in the unit portfolio. This may help students organise a complete portfolio of work that contains all of their progression research, information and activity.*

6909 Unit 9: Contextual References

a. research historical and contemporary work, understand the context in which the work was influenced

- The research was more closely linked this year to the students' own work and this encouraged a greater understanding of the context of the work referenced.
- Engagement with live work often provoked a more enthusiastic response and aided understanding.
- The arrangement for visiting practitioners had been extended by many centres this year and this had provided additional first hand evidence for this and Unit 10.
- Although references are still predominantly in the 'mainstream' category of fine art, the evidence of references in craft and design was more in evidence. The use of web resources has extended the referencing in contemporary design.

- Lower achievers continue to need support with their research and analytical skills. There were many cases from this category of evidence that fell below the standard expected at this level. (See also Unit 3 commentary).

b. record and present information explaining the use of visual language in others work
- It was reported last year that where students had the opportunity to visit exhibitions/studios, the evidence for this criterion was recorded with more confidence and the feedback reported this year reconfirms this.
- Well planned and managed overseas trips which offered candidates the opportunity to engage with a new culture and live work in museums and galleries had often produced very personal, lively and often visually engaging records.
- Most centres had organised gallery visits and some centres had undertaken visits to relevant venues directly related to, and supporting assignments.

c. use contextual references in your work
- The research of historical and contextual references has continued to grow, resulting in portfolios that showed a broader range of knowledge and understanding.
- The best evidence showed relevant study that was challenging the students' critical thinking and influencing and informing the development of their ideas.
- The weaker evidence indicated that little attempt at any real in-depth analysis or understanding of the communication, relevance and context of the work and how such study can be used in the students' own work. Sometimes understanding will have developed through discussion, but the extended essay should allow for the development of more in-depth and independent analysis.

Raising Achievement-
- *Continue to support students in their selection of references from a range of sources. The use of web resources has extended the referencing in contemporary design and this should continue and be extended.*

- *The portfolio should contain visually inspiring and relevant references. The extended study allows for a more in-depth analysis of the work of others'. If the research and analytical skills that are a prerequisite for a successful extended study are developed early in the programme, this learning could be applied to subsequent referencing throughout the entire programme.*

- *Engagement with live work will often provoke a more immediate and enthusiastic response from students and aid their understanding. Opportunities for this should continue to be developed.*

6910 Unit 10: Professional Practice and Progression

a. investigation and analysis of professional practice
- Once again, good evidence was generated when local artists and designers were invited in to demonstrate or talk about their work. This provided the opportunity for students to engage with and report directly on the work of a practitioner.
- If at all possible, practitioners should be chosen who can offer relevant support to students' own progression interests. In cases where this occurred the impact on

the students' understanding of their personal progress and ambition was substantial.

- Generally, work was limited in terms of the reported evidence of the study of the day-to-day working life of a practitioner.

b. application and development of professional practice in own work

- Once again, those centres who had engaged with a practitioner or had arranged work placement reported the positive impact this had made on the students' approach to their own study.
- The 'application' of professional practice has improved. Design briefs requiring attention to presentation showed this visually. Other work showed improved sequential processing supported by careful ad considered presentation, but this was still underdeveloped in many of the weaker portfolios.

c. investigation and allocation of health and safety and legal requirements

- Evidence indicated that where delivery had closely adhered to the detail of the assessment criteria as outlined in the 'What you need to learn' section of the Unit Specification, and the comments on the grids closely related to the required evidence, the assessment decisions were likely to be accurate.
- The evidence of health and safety and legal requirements varied in quality, but was often included as log sheets or downloaded information from the internet. The Specification outlines the need for students to summarise, understand and apply appropriate information into their working practice. Some centres have worked hard to integrate this work into their delivery, but many centres are still giving scant attention to this criterion.

d. appropriate standards of professional working.

- The evidence that shows students undertaking a professional approach to their work usually comes from records of the personal observation and interaction between student and peers and student and tutor. Oral and written feedback given to students along with personal monitoring and self-assessment can be very supportive in helping students to manage their workload. The best practice this year showed witness statements and feedback sheets to students.
- Moderators have identified additional evidence by looking at the organization and care taken with presentation of all work.

Raising Achievement-

- *Take every opportunity available to extend study of professional practice through visiting practitioners, visits to practitioners, availability of case studies, video, film, or internet information on practitioners.*
- *Case studies which support individual learning should be extended wherever possible.*
- *Focus the students' research more directly on the day-to-day working of a practitioner .Personal contact therefore, often provides the best opportunity for students to learn about and understand professional working life in the creative industries.*

6912, 6913, 6914 The Optional units

The work presented for these units was sometimes very dependent on evidence that adhered to the requirements of Unit 11, with evidence with 12 and 13 being merely extensions to the work. Sometimes Unit 11 was closely linked with these units, so much so, that a large body of work addressed two units. Unit 14 was often an exception to this as it was usually a new direction for students and teachers, and sometimes involved assistance from specialist teachers.
Once again, Unit 14 was attempted by few centres although some innovative work was seen from well resourced centres with sufficient expertise.
Unit 12 has a 'Fine Art' title that offers choice from the fields of conceptual art, printmaking, painting and drawing, sculpture, design crafts etc. Many centres opted for the delivery of this unit.

6912 Unit 12: Fine Art

 a. Recording of experiences or information to develop intentions
- As in the previous year, many reports indicated that a separate body of work had been generated for this unit and that the responses to the briefs set had once again been of a very high standard showing innovation in ideas development and application, skilful handling and combinations of media.

b. use of materials, processes and technology, or a combination of materials, processes and technology to develop ideas
- This unit offered students the opportunity to extend technical language and the understanding of concepts with which to develop ideas in fine art. The evidence often showed work that was developed with greater independence, but this factor was often determined by the quality of the brief presented to the students.
- Sometimes the response was to a single word starting point or a choice of theme, sometimes new ways of working were encouraged and this had often provoked a greater visual awareness and approach to recording and expressing ideas.
- In their assessment decisions most centres had considered work from across the portfolio that addressed this criterion.

c. the ability to analyse, refine and present a personal, coherent and informed response realising intentions

- The ability to analyse and refine work was often dependent on skills developed in the AS year (particularly in the work for Unit 6 or Units 6 and 7) as unit 12 was often the first unit delivered at the start of the A2 year. Evidence showed that this refinement was essential for the successful realisation of intentions and was clearly seen in the better work, whist the weaker work showed limited understanding and the application of very basic concepts.

d. the ability to evaluate the creative potential and effectiveness of the developed idea.
- Effective evaluation was confidently expressed by higher achieving students.
- Due to the extensiveness of evidence for this unit there was much visual evaluation. Many students had showed the 'value' of their emerging ideas through the confident use of technical language and sequential development via working drawings in sketchbooks and on worksheets. Weaker work showed limited evidence and it was sometimes difficult to determine the students' ability to make decisions about the effectiveness of their work. Some delivery teams had

organised group critiques specifically to support and develop these evaluative skills and this excellent practice had helped the less confident students.

6913 Unit 13: Design

The design work presented this year showed an improvement in addressing the rigours of the design process and the constraints and challenges that one would normally associate with working to a design brief. This had often come about via better formulated design briefs following a closer scrutiny of the Unit Specification. The all important presentation was improved, particularly in the stronger portfolios, but weaker evidence once again showed limited understanding of how to order, mount and display work. The acquisition of these skills and their application to this task should show the characteristics of real work in the design sector. Samples of display in the real world could be used and analysed to support this skill which can again be applied in Unit 11.

a. resolving the needs of a brief to develop intentions
- A much wider range of design briefs were developed this year, although Graphic design remained the most popular option. Other briefs on subjects as varied as shoe design, interior design and packaging design were also in evidence.
- It was reported that the success of the evidence addressing this criterion was, as would be expected, dependent on the quality and detail of the brief and the students' ability to address both the aesthetic and the functional aspects.

b. development of a range of ideas in response to a brief
- The breadth and quality of the range was dependent on the amount of time allocated to the unit, when it was delivered in the A2 programme and how closely it followed or linked with Unit 12. There was evidence of some very successful development work that shared a common starting point (theme) with the work in fine art for Unit 12.
- Once again, there were reports that an organised and methodical approach to design briefs were the most likely to lead to strong development work and successful outcomes. The weaker evidence nearly always reflected limited ability to understand and respond appropriately to the brief, with students losing their way, impetus and often, interest. As reported in Unit 11, constraints – client requirements, time and material - strictly adhered to, can provide a supportive framework for learning.

c. production and presentation of a design solution
- It was reported last year that some work had developed well through the design process stages of research and development to fall at the last hurdle – that of the production and presentation of a design solution. It was felt that there had been improvements this year, with more careful production and considered presentation of the final solutions.

d. evaluation of the creative potential and effectiveness of the developed idea
- The evaluations were more often related to how the work was produced rather than focused on the potential and effectiveness of the idea in relation to the brief. Time should be given to the practice of reflecting on the work produced and exploring its potential. This will often be done in project critique time through discussion. The recognition that work offers potential for further ideas

and recording this potential in note form would extend the evidence for this strand.

Raising Standards –
- *Focus on presentation of the design solution so that the work shows context and is in a suitable format to present to a client.*
- *Candidates should be supported and then encouraged to understand the importance of presenting work in a professional and appropriate format designed to meet the needs of their client.*
- *Make time for the discussion, review and recording of the potential of the developed ideas.*

6914 Unit 14: Multimedia

Essentially, the unit aims to encompass traditional equipment and new technological hardware, software and media processes.
Once again, this unit had not been widely delivered and this was perhaps a reflection of the limited resources available to centres. Many of those offering this unit have made considerable developments in both provision and delivery. New projects have been developed which allow access and skills building with new Multimedia, and the success of much of this work reflected the commitment some centres have made in developing this specialist area.

In some centres Multimedia was confused to a degree with Mixed Media. This was reported last year and unfortunately some confusion still remains in one or two centres resulting in inappropriate evidence was presented.
The scrutiny of the Specification is essential, so that centres can determine if their resources and expertise are adequate to deliver this unit.

a. a record of information to develop intentions
- The evidence for this stand was usually well catalogued photographs and computer generated images, often supported by technical notes and annotations on process.
- Intentions were usually identified through carefully devised briefs and developed through story boards or a series of photographs etc.
- The evidence of the documenting of computer editing processes in the form of screen grabs has improved, but in some cases still needs to be improved and more extensively and carefully logged.

b. development of multimedia ideas by combining technology media processes
- There is still evidence of traditional as well as digital development, particularly in centres that can access darkrooms. Generally the work was digital and included photography, video editing, PowerPoint and web design.
-

c. analysis, refinement and presentation of a personal, coherent and informed response realising intentions
- On the whole the work usually very well presented with accompanying analysis and evaluation.

Raising Standards-

- *Centres must ensure that processes are recorded and presented. It is suggested that one way of doing this might be via the generation and presentation of screen grabs and illustrated technical logs.*
- *It is essential that video and film work be presented in an accessible format so that they can be easily viewed. (For further support please refer to the CD to Centres 2008).*

Statistics

Unit 1 2D and 3D Visual Language (6901)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24

Unit 2 Materials, Techniques and Processes (6902)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24

Unit 3 Visual Communication and Meaning (6903)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24

Unit 4 Working in 2D (6904)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24

Unit 5 Working in 3D (6905)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24

Unit 6 Develop Set Ideas (6906)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24

Unit 7 Produce Set Ideas (6907)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24

Unit 8 Personal and Portfolio Development (6908)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	50	44	38	32	26

Unit 9 Contextual References (6909)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	50	44	38	32	26

Unit 10 Professional Practice and Progression (6910)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	50	44	38	32	26

Unit 11 Develop and Produce Own Ideas (6911)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	50	44	38	32	26

Unit 12 Fine Art (6912)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	50	44	38	32	26

Unit 13 Design (6913)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	50	44	38	32	26

Unit 14 Multimedia (6914)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	50	44	38	32	26