



General Certificate of Education

Applied Art and Design
8511/8513/8516/8519

Report on the Examination

2006 examination – January series

- AD03 Working to a brief

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Unit 3 – Working to a brief

General

This was the first opportunity for centres to enter candidates for this unit. The majority of centres understood the requirements of the unit and were able to work through the design process within the range of set briefs. There was a strong vocational flavour to the outcomes and in the use of research information. It was evident that most centres had provided appropriate teaching and learning time for this unit. This unit within the new specification was well received by centres and the revised format, and approach to assessment, was seen as an improvement on the equivalent Advanced VCE unit.

Response to the briefs

Candidates were required to work to one of the set briefs: carrying out research, paying particular attention to the constraints set by the brief and to the requirements of the client; developing alternative ideas and producing a Design Proposal and an evaluation in the supervised five hour period. Candidates were asked for the equivalent of not less than two, and not more than four A1 sheets (or a sketchbook or other suitable form) of research and developmental work and most candidates met this requirement.

The vocational process was followed by the majority of candidates and the tasks set out in the Candidate Guidance document, whilst not necessarily being used in their entirety were, nevertheless, noted and used by many candidates. Many teachers commented on the usefulness of the tasks and understood that, if completed, candidates would cover the assessment objectives. It would benefit candidates if they talked through the tasks and the assessment objectives with teachers prior to starting the brief.

The five hours of supervised time was generally handled well with most candidates completing the necessary work in the time. Centres that had organised the test time to include time for the evaluation (which has to be written within the five hours of supervised time) were generally more successful. It is important for candidates to check the requirements of the Design Proposal for their particular brief in order that they leave time to complete all aspects.

The theme for this series was *dance* and this was well received with many candidates producing a creative response to their chosen brief. Briefs 1, 2 and 4 were the most popular with fewer responses to Briefs 3 and 5.

Brief 1 asked for a Design Proposal for a costume design. Many candidates answered this very well with some exciting and inventive outcomes. Research covered both historical and contemporary designs and some candidates visited dance performances to help with ideas. Candidates were less successful in meeting the requirements of the Design Proposal, which asked for the front and back of the design, together with an action picture of the dance.

Brief 2 was a Design Proposal for the front and back of the programme for the dance festival. The most successful candidates produced some exceptional designs, using ICT both in the preparation and in the Design Proposal. The best designs showed the vigorous movement and excitement of dance, usually through abstraction, and the ability to see the front and back of the programme as a single design. Less successful responses showed some difficulties in composition as well as in the choice of font and its placement.

Brief 3 was the production of a Design Proposal for a boxed souvenir. There were very few responses to this brief and some candidates did not produce a successful Design Proposal for the net of the box.

Brief 4 was for a set and backdrop and the Design Proposal asked for a plan of the set together with a view from the viewpoint of someone sitting in the audience. Many responses produced one or the other and those that presented both sometimes failed to see it in three dimensions. The best answers showed an understanding of the practicalities of set design and that the dancers themselves were the focus for the audience. The lack of 3D work was disappointing and relevant maquettes, or similar models, would have enhanced the understanding of this brief.

Brief 5 was a Design Proposal for a large 3D object to be placed in the centre of the stage. There were few responses to this brief but there were some interesting outcomes, especially when linked to relevant research.

Assessment

The accuracy of assessment varied across centres but with a tendency towards leniency. Where centres had used the marking grid with care and understood the differences between mark bands, there was greater accuracy. It is important that candidates consider all of the requirements of their chosen brief when completing the Design Proposal in the five hours of supervised time, otherwise statements in the marking criteria covering the brief will not have been addressed. The bullet points in the assessment criteria banner indicate the requirements of the unit.

Administration

The majority of centres had the correct documentation available although in some cases the Candidate Record Forms were for the incorrect unit. The reverse of the form had space for teachers' concluding comments but few teachers completed this. A comment about reasons for awarding marks and whether the candidate has worked independently is very helpful for the visiting moderator. Presentation of work varied from centre to centre with many having work available in individual folders. This method facilitates moderation although wall displays are also acceptable. Since there is a requirement in this unit for evaluation and, since most candidates annotate preparatory work, it is important that, if work is displayed, it is accessible and easy to read. The majority of centres provided the selected sample of work and had other candidates' work available as required.

Recommendations

Centre specific issues will have been identified in the visiting moderator's feedback report. However, there are general issues that have relevance to centres. The two areas that should be addressed in future series are:

- research – although there was evidence of some excellent research it was not always relevant to the brief. Research should be linked to the chosen brief, be focused and be vocationally relevant. It is also beneficial to include research that is contemporary and which candidates can relate to
- evaluation – there were some exceptionally strong evaluations where candidates had discussed the requirements of the brief and explained, using visual language, how they had or had not answered it, how it was fit for purpose and how improvements could be made. However, the majority of candidates wrote descriptive evaluations of the process and development of their designs which could be seen in their work and lacked analysis. Evaluative comments can be made formatively in the preparatory work through annotation but the summative evaluation should be written in the five hours of supervised time. It is important that candidates are guided as to how to write an evaluation.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Unit 3 – Working to a brief

Unit	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
Working to a brief AD03	60	60	32.9	12.6

In Applied GCE examinations, scaled marks are the same as raw marks.

Unit 3 – Working to a brief (150 candidates)

Grade	Max. mark	A	B	C	D	E
Scaled Boundary Mark	60	50	43	36	29	23
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Definitions

Boundary Mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

Mean Mark: is the sum of all candidates' marks divided by the number of candidates. In order to compare mean marks for different components, the mean mark (scaled) should be expressed as a percentage of the maximum mark (scaled).

Standard Deviation: a measure of the spread of candidates' marks. In most components, approximately two-thirds of all candidates lie in a range of plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean, and approximately 95% of all candidates lie in a range of plus or minus two standard deviations from the mean. In order to compare the standard deviations for different components, the standard deviation (scaled) should be expressed as a percentage of the maximum mark (scaled).

Uniform Mark: a score on a standard scale which indicates a candidate's performance. The lowest uniform mark for grade A is always 80% of the maximum uniform mark for the unit, similarly grade B is 70%, grade C is 60%, grade D is 50% and grade E is 40%. A candidate's total scaled mark for each unit is converted to a uniform mark and the uniform marks for the units which count towards the AS or A Level qualification are added in order to determine the candidate's overall grade.