
Foundation and Higher **Project Qualifications**

7991 and 7992

Report on the Examination

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January 2018

Version: 1.0

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The entry for both levels of the Project qualification was broadly similar to that for January 2017. It was pleasing to note that centres had selected the appropriate level of entry for their candidates, and, in a few cases where this might not have been the case, moderators wondered whether some very competent candidates might have been successful in the Level 2 Higher Project and not the Level 1 Foundation Project for which they were entered. As with previous series a significant element of the entry involved candidates on courses below Key Stage 4. It is sometimes the case that centres fail to appreciate that the measure against which candidates following the Project qualification are assessed is that of a GCSE level qualification but few examples were seen of this misconception in this series.

In the main, centres evidenced having a sound understanding of the AQA standard with marks being fairly awarded against each of the assessment objectives. In the very best centres candidates evidenced a clear understanding of the project assessment objectives and also provided clear evidence of the skills they had employed in completing their projects.

Centres entering candidates this series generally had a sound understanding of the role of the supervisor in ensuring that candidates appreciated the importance of the AQA production log. Most production logs provided full and detailed evidence of the candidates' project journey. Few centres encouraged candidates to use alternative 'diaries' that added little useful information but frequently persuaded candidates to use the AQA log less fully. A small number of candidates appeared to have completed sections of the log retrospectively and not concurrent with phases of the project. This might have resulted in candidates failing to use the log to accurately record the reasons for decisions being made and how they might have responded to problems encountered. It was often the case that differences in candidates' overall performance was mostly influenced by how effectively they had used the production log. It remained the case, however, that Level 1 Foundation candidates generally made a less full use of their logs and centres might better support these candidates by ensuring that they understand the importance of this document.

It was of concern that a few Level 2 Higher Project supervisors appeared to misunderstand one aspect of their role. Examples were seen of supervisors providing resources for candidates and of them indicating a particular approach that candidates should take to their projects. This 'over-direction' by supervisors removes from the candidate the ability to evidence how they managed their project and potentially diminishes evidence for AO1 Manage.

Moderators were encouraged by the evidence of a robust project approval process in many centres. Candidates had been encouraged to evidence that they had considered a number of potentially useful sources at the Initial Ideas stage, and this contributed to the viability of the proposed project. Candidates were frequently challenged to review the focus and wording of their titles and moderators noted very few inappropriate titles, for example, those set out as a single word or short phrase.

A concern remains that there still seems to be a misunderstanding in a few centres regarding the purpose of the mid-project review. This has been commented upon in past reports and centres should note that this review meeting should mark the completion, by the candidate, of the research phase of their project and an agreement as to the final title and nature of the outcome. Once this formal agreement has been reached, then the candidate should move on to the production phase of their project. As in previous series a few centres encouraged candidates to start planning and drafting their report prior to the mid-project review. This is not appropriate and does not evidence a sound understanding of the project process.

Most projects seen provided clear evidence of supervisors recording how candidates had been able to respond to questions asked of them in their presentations. The presentation 'question and

answer' session offers the candidate a final opportunity to fully evidence their project journey. However, instances were seen of a 'bank' of common questions being used by supervisors, and moderators wondered whether candidates were served well by such an approach.

A few centres seemed to have raised the expectation that all candidates would use both primary and secondary research methods without giving sufficient thought as to the suitability of this approach. Whilst it is entirely appropriate for candidates to be introduced to a range of research methods in the taught skills programme, it is for the candidate to select from these, those that are appropriate to their particular project. Centres should not raise expectations that all students should use a stated range. This 'blanket' approach has the potential to diminish the marks awardable for both AO2 Use resources and AO3 Develop & realise.

There was no clear pattern in adjustments made to centre marking, except in so far as marks were sometimes awarded at the top of a particular mark band where the evidence submitted did not support this. Statements from supervisors asserting that candidates had performed at a particular level, but without evidence to support this, are not appropriate. Where marks have been adjusted centres are strongly advised to attend the AQA standardisation meetings to ensure that the assessment criteria are understood and applied correctly in future submissions.

In the great majority of cases centres submitted marks promptly via e-submissions, and in many cases, in advance of the January 10th 'deadline'. In a few cases, however, centres delayed submitting the required sample of their projects until after January 10th. Centres are encouraged to ensure that the correct candidate mark is submitted. A few centres submitted incorrect marks and the correction of these arithmetic errors delayed the completion of the moderation of centre marking. In the majority of centres, where a number of supervisors are involved in the marking of projects, clear evidence for the internal moderation of marking is required. This was generally well evidenced in submissions seen in this series but there were instances of a lack of clarity as to how marks had been changed with confusion as to the 'definitive' mark. Problems such as these delayed the completion of the moderation of centre marking.

Work was presented in an appropriate format with virtually no unwieldy ring- binders being used, and with the separate parts of the project outcome – the log, written report and presentation – being clearly indicated. This facilitated moderation and centres are congratulated for their efficiency. Moderators did see, however, some instances of candidates submitting 'print-offs' of all sources that they had used. This is unnecessary and centres should ensure that candidates are taught how to accurately reference sources that they have used. There were few instances of the Centre Declaration Sheet not being enclosed with the sample of work.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

[UMS conversion calculator](#)