
Foundation and Higher Project Qualification

7991 and 7992

Report on the Examination

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Entries for both levels of the Project qualification showed a decline compared with Summer 2015. Moderators commented, however, upon the generally high quality of Projects seen in the samples of work inspected.

As in recent series, moderators expressed a concern that some candidates had been entered, inappropriately, for the Level 2 Higher Project, with a Level 1 Foundation Project entry being seen as more appropriate. This was especially felt to be a concern with younger, KS3 entries – a growing element of the entry – where some candidates lack the maturity to engage effectively with the Level 2 Higher Project process. Centres are reminded that whereas Level 2 Higher Project candidates should work with general guidance from their supervisors, it is appropriate for those working with the Level 1 Foundation Project to be more closely supported. Supervisors should keep the proposed level of entry for candidates under review and be prepared to enter candidates for the Level 1 Foundation Project where appropriate.

Moderators were impressed by the quality and breadth of many of the taught skills programmes outlined by centres on page 3 of the production log. The taught skills programme is an essential component of the Project qualifications, without which candidates would not be equipped to complete their Projects successfully. Where centres provided only the most minimal overview of their programme moderators were disappointed, but not surprised, that candidate outcomes were of a low quality. An additional concern was that, in a few cases, centres adopted a minimalist approach to the Project, with Project proposals lacking appropriate titles, the Production Log containing only the briefest entries - often single sentences, and very basic Project outcomes that often failed to meet the minimum word count. In these cases it was difficult to see how the Project outcomes represented the 30 hours of independent study set out in the Project Specifications.

Of the expected Project outcomes, moderators were much encouraged by the way that centres have evidenced the Presentation. Previous Reports on the Examination have emphasised the possibilities afforded to centres regarding the evidencing of the assessment objectives through the Presentation 'question and answer' session. It is pleasing to note that the 'message seems to have got through' to centres and this has certainly contributed to the evidence available for the 'holistic' marking of the Projects. Some of the moderation team saw Projects where candidates seem to have been encouraged to emphasise the project outcome to the detriment of the project process. In these cases entries in the Production Log were either brief, or focused largely upon the progress being made in 'completing the report', often emphasising how the candidate's plan of action was being closely followed and there being no need for any 'changes' to what the candidate was doing. This demonstrated a misunderstanding of the Project 'process', and especially of the importance of the place of the research which should be undertaken to inform the Project outcome. Significantly, such candidates produced too little evidence to show how they met the Project assessment objectives.

Comment has been made in previous Reports on the Examination regarding artefact based Projects. These are becoming a little more common with a suggestion that some centres are encouraging candidates to consider the merits of such Projects. A concern remains that there is often a lack of understanding of the nature of such Projects and the advice from a previous Report is reproduced here. "Candidates (often) seem to have been encouraged by their supervisor, to create an artefact without there being a clear rationale for this, and with the creation of the artefact receiving scant comment in either the production log or report. Centres are reminded that decisions regarding the project outcomes are the candidates, in discussion with their supervisor, and that it is inappropriate for centres to promote a 'preferred outcome'." It must also be emphasised that an artefact based Project should be accompanied by a written report.

On a positive note, moderators emphasised how a majority of candidates had been taught to reference their reports and to construct bibliographies and had applied these skills well. Indeed, it is now unusual to see, especially Level 2 Projects, where this is not the case. It was also evident that many centres had clearly emphasised to their candidates the importance of evidencing the skills that they had employed, with growing numbers of candidates making direct reference to these.

The marking of Projects was generally felt to be good with centres making extensive use of the opportunities afforded by a careful and detailed completion of the Record of Marks page of the Log, and by a careful annotation of the candidate submissions. There were still a few centres however, where there was a lack of understanding of the detail needed for a candidate to be placed in the top band of a particular assessment objective. Centres who understood the importance of the internal moderation of their marking were much more successful in generating a reliable rank order of marks. There was much excellent practice in this respect and Centre Coordinators are to be congratulated upon their efforts.

On a final note, moderators were much encouraged by the number of candidates who commented in glowing terms upon their 'project journey' and how rewarding they had found the process.

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](#)