
Foundation and Higher Project Qualifications

7991 and 7992

Report on the Examination

7991 and 7992

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The entry for both levels of the Project qualification was broadly similar to that of June 2016. As with last year, there were still cases where it would have been more appropriate for Centres to have entered candidates for the Foundation and not the Higher Project. A significant element of the entry for both levels of the Project involved candidates on courses below Key Stage 4. Some excellent, and in a few cases quite outstanding, submissions were seen from these candidates. However, in a few cases, the marking of these submissions did not acknowledge that the candidates were entered for a GCSE level qualification and that it was against that measure that they would be judged.

Many centres submitted marks via e-submissions in advance of the 15 May deadline, but then waited until after the deadline to send the required sample of projects to their designated moderator. If centres are able to complete their marking and submission of marks in advance of the deadline, it would help moderators if the sample were despatched as soon as possible. There were very few cases this series of centres not submitting a completed Centre Declaration Sheet with the sample. This was much appreciated by the moderation team. Moderators commented favourably upon the improved evidence for the internal moderation of centre marking. Whilst the 'reminder' in the Candidate Record Form might have been instrumental here, it did seem to be the case that a majority of centres understood the need to evidence a reliable rank order of marks.

A few centres seem not to have understood the required elements of the Project qualification as detailed on the Submission Checklist (page 2 of the Candidate Record Form, Production Log and Assessment Record), which clearly states the items that must be included and reminds centres that a failure to complete or submit a compulsory element may result in a mark of zero being awarded. Moderators saw, for example, submissions where evidence of a presentation had not been provided, or submissions where the candidate had not completed a majority of the pages of the Production Log. Moderators suspected that a few centres may not have understood the importance of looking at all of the evidence presented by candidates, in other words, the requirement for project submissions to be marked 'holistically'. A concern here was that, whereas centres provided annotation of, or comments relating to, the Report, this was not also the case for the Production Log.

Better centres had understood the importance of the Production Log in enabling candidates to evidence how they had been able to meet the assessment objectives. In these cases, entries in the Production Log were full, detailed and reflective showing clearly, for example, how candidates had chosen and focussed their title, set clear aims and objectives, established a plan of action and monitored progress against this. Far more centres had encouraged candidates to establish a clear research base prior to granting approval for a proposed title and resulting projects had clearly benefitted from this. Where centres had not seemed to appreciate the importance of the Log, it was often difficult for moderators to support a centre's marking. This did seem to be slightly more prevalent than in recent series and seemed to be more common with entries for the Foundation Project.

Moderators noted cases where centres were awarding marks in the top band for a particular assessment objective, where the evidence seen did not support the requirement for the evidence to be 'clear and detailed', instead conforming to the 'some' descriptor of the middle band (or even 'limited' descriptor for the bottom band). Whilst a deficiency in the evidence provided in the Production Log might be remedied by fuller evidence of, say, the presentation, it did seem to be the case that where the Production Log had been poorly completed this additional evidence was also lacking.

Previous reports have commented positively upon the increasing use of bibliographies and clear referencing of how source materials had been used by candidates. Submissions seen in this series, whilst containing much to support the continuation of this trend, did, in a few cases, suggest that some centres had not understood the importance of bibliographies and referencing in enabling candidates to evidence AO2 Use Resources. The range of sources evidenced by candidates was generally broadly based but some candidates did not seem to have been aware that sources beyond those found on the Internet could have been relevant and useful to their project. One or two centres seem to have encouraged all of their candidates to undertake primary research. This was frequently inappropriate for the particular title selected, did not recognise the ethical dimensions of this type of research and frequently involved a very small sample, but one upon which the candidate sought to base very generalised conclusions. Centres might, as part of their Taught Skills programme, ensure that candidates are aware of how to carry out primary research, but they should recognise that the idea of the Taught Skills programme is that it should provide candidates with a 'tool kit' of research skills upon which they are able to draw (with support at Foundation Project level, and guidance at Higher Project level) as suits their individual project.

Moderators also noted cases where candidates had devoted considerable space in their written report to discussing the process of their project and then used the presentation to showcase the project 'product'. In these cases, candidates would have better used their written report to set out their project 'product' and used their Production Log to evidence the project process, with the presentation setting out the 'project journey'.

Moderators saw an increasing number of artefact-based projects, although these were still a minority of projects seen. In most cases centres had fully understood the requirements of artefact-based projects, but unfortunately this was not always the case. Candidates from a few centres submitted artefacts taking the form of a PowerPoint presentation. Here, one would expect there to be a clearly identified 'audience' for the 'presentation' and for there to be clear evidence for the underpinning research upon which the presentation is based. What was seen, however, was the PowerPoint presentation acting as the 'report' and then being used as the presentation 'proper'. These submissions potentially fell foul of the evidence requirements and limited the ability of candidates to fully evidence how they met the assessment objectives. Centres need to recognise that where an artefact-based project is submitted there is still a requirement for a, shorter, written report to be submitted.

Centres are reminded that they are encouraged to make use of their Project Adviser when the need arises, that a variety of support material is available on the Project pages of the AQA website (including that in e-AQA Secure Key Materials) and that attendance at the free Teacher Standardising meetings is seen as helpful to those attending when preparing candidates for the qualification.

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](#)