GCSE (9-1)

Art & Design

J170-J176

OCR Report to Centres June 2018

About this Examiner Report to Centres

This report on the 2018 Summer assessments aims to highlight:

- areas where students were more successful

- main areas where students may need additional support and some reflection

- points of advice for future examinations

It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

The report also includes links and brief information on:

- A reminder of our **post-results services** including **reviews of results**

- Link to **grade boundaries**

- **Further support that you can expect from OCR**, such as our Active Results service and CPD programme

Reviews of results

If any of your students' results are not as expected you may wish to consider one of our reviews of results services. For full information about the options available visit the OCR website. If University places are at stake you may wish to consider priority service 2 reviews of marking which have an earlier deadline to ensure your reviews are processed in time for university applications: http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/stage-5-post-results-services/enquiries-about-results/service-2-priority-service-2-2a-2b/

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other assessments, can be found on the OCR website .

Further support from OCR

active results

Active Results offers a unique perspective on results data and greater opportunities to understand students' performance.

It allows you to:

- Review reports on the **performance of individual candidates**, cohorts of students and whole centres

- **Analyse results** at question and/or topic level

- **Compare your centre** with OCR national averages or similar OCR centres.

- Identify areas of the curriculum where students excel or struggle and help **pinpoint strengths and weaknesses** of students and teaching departments.

http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/support-and-tools/active-results/getting-started/

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General Certificate of Secondary Education (9-1) Art & Design (J170-J176)

OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Introduction

This report reviews the 2018 series of OCR GCSE (9-1) Art & Design J170 – J176 examinations.

OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design aims to build the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding for all art, craft and design specification titles.

The specification is designed to encourage candidates to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding alongside creativity and imagination and provide them with opportunities to take a personal interest in why art, craft and design matter and to be inspired and changed by studying an exciting and stimulating course of study. OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design offers candidates opportunities to gain insight into the practices of individuals, organisations and creative and cultural industries.

The specification supports centres in developing a variety of approaches to sustain the teaching, learning and assessment of candidates. It provides chances for candidates to experiment and take risks with their work whilst developing their personal style.

OCR's GCSE (9-1) Art and Design suite offers seven specification titles for centres to choose from covering the depth and breadth of art, craft and design and includes the use of traditional methods and digital technology.

The specification titles are:
- Art, Craft and Design (J170)
- Fine Art (J171)
- Graphic Communication (J172)
- Photography (J173)
- Textile Design (J174)
- Three-Dimensional Design (J175)
- Critical and Contextual Studies (J176)

In 2018, the first examination series of the OCR (9-1) GCSE Art and Design specification, the Fine Art title attracted the largest number of entries from centres.

The specification is designed to support centres in overseeing the multiplicity of skills, knowledge and understanding required within the specification titles and areas of study offered. The specification forms part of an educational continuum. GCSE builds on national curriculum art, craft and design practice at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

The national curriculum in England acknowledges that the study of art, craft and design education should engage, inspire and challenge candidates, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As candidates progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art, craft and design. They should also know how art, craft and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

It is worth noting, therefore, that the OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design specification encourages candidates to:

- actively engage in the creative process of art, craft and design in order to develop as effective and independent candidates, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- develop creative, imaginative and intuitive capabilities when exploring and making images, artefacts and products
- become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials and techniques
- develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills
- develop and refine ideas and proposals, personal outcomes or solutions with increasing independence
- acquire and develop technical skills through working with a broad range of media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies with purpose and intent
- develop knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures
- develop an awareness of the different roles and individual work practices evident in the production of art, craft and design in the creative and cultural industries
- develop an awareness of the purposes, intentions and functions of art, craft and design in a variety of contexts and as appropriate to their own work
- demonstrate safe working practices in art, craft and design.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

General Comments

Reports submitted by moderators in 2018, informed by the essential initial discussion they held with teachers in centres at the start of their visit, together with the subsequent study of candidates' work, have supplied persuasive evidence of the success of the first OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design examination series.

In 2018, the first year for entries for OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design, centres provided courses that supported candidates in their efforts to:

- develop ideas through investigations and demonstrate critical understanding of sources
- produce material informed by context that is relevant to the development of their ideas
- refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with media appropriate to their chosen specification title and area(s) of study
- record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses
- present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions.

It is worth mentioning that moderators acknowledged that teachers, in centres, recognised that the OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design J170 – J176 specification maintained the flexibility of the outgoing legacy specification (OCR GCSE Art and Design J160 - J167). Centres clearly appreciated the essential continuity between OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design J170 – J176 and the legacy specification and successfully built on proven good practice to develop appropriate courses of study.

Teachers who found they were well placed to construct suitable courses of study sustained by long-established good practice:
- read the specification carefully and thoroughly
- accessed OCR CPD events
- scrutinised the wealth of informative support materials available on the OCR website
- sought clarification or support, where necessary, from OCR's Subject Adviser for Art and Design.

Successful courses of study for the two components of the specification (Portfolio and Externally Set Task) encouraged candidates to develop convincing evidence of their ability to:
- Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources (Assessment Objective 1)

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- Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes (Assessment Objective 2)
- Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses (Assessment Objective 3)
- Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language (Assessment Objective 4).

Good quality candidate submissions revealed persuasive visual research in which observations, experiences and ideas were recorded in varied, appropriate and skilful ways. Convincing candidate attainment revealed indubitable ability to observe, select and interpret with discrimination, imagination and understanding. It is notable that moderators routinely acknowledged that candidates thrived in centres where teachers stressed, to their credit, the value of working successfully from first-hand experience in a range of ways.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

The significance and importance of pursuing and documenting a creative visual journey, informed by critical and cultural contexts, is clearly recognised by successful centres to be vital. Notable candidate submissions invariably showed sufficient convincing evidence of progress in the development of ideas and realised quality outcomes as a result of fully exploring and reviewing a range of possible solutions and then suitably modifying their work as it advanced.

The central importance of a candidate's individual, personal intention was unquestionably valued in successful centres.

To their credit, many centres showed they recognised that a detailed intelligible visual account of the creative journey was an important constituent of candidates' submissions. However, it is

worth noting that centres appreciated that exceedingly large volumes of evidence were not a requirement. As a result, their candidates not only presented a sensibly economical and convincingly documented developmental journey but also allocated sufficient time to produce compelling final outcomes.

Although it is unnecessary to present every single piece of work for assessment and moderation, it is in every candidate's best interest to select sufficient convincing evidence to reflect their best performance and therefore plausibly substantiate a teacher's assessment decisions. An imperfect understanding of the expectation, in the specification, that candidates should select, organise and present work that represents the best of their achievement in response to the assessment objectives may, on occasion, have led to the omission of some conspicuously good quality and persuasive evidence for assessment and moderation.

In 2018, many candidates showed they understood how to use a range of materials, processes and techniques, including information technology, to develop their knowledge, understanding and use of visual language.

Many candidates' knowledge and understanding of a range of relevant work from current practice, past practice and different cultures revealed their appreciation of continuity and change in art, craft and design.

Centres undoubtedly urged candidates to make critical and contextual references as part of their documentation of a creative journey. A significant number of centres, to their credit, encouraged candidates to investigate and analyse contextual encounters and document the progress of their creative journey primarily through visual language.

Nonetheless, candidates in centres acknowledged that relevant annotation could serve to clarify, in a body of work, their understanding (and that of teachers and moderators) of:

- What am I doing?
- How am I doing it?
- Why am I doing it?
- What contextual encounters have I had?
- How have those contextual encounters generally influenced me?
- Why and how do those contextual encounters directly relate to, and openly support, the growth of my creative endeavours?

The notion of annotation does not imply a demand for extensive written text. A movement away from dissertation (a lengthy and formal written treatment) and toward annotation (a short explanatory or critical note added to visual evidence) is to be welcomed. It is, perhaps, worth stressing that a central reason why candidates should investigate and develop their understanding of the work of other practitioners is persuasively discovered in the degree to which such exploration informs the growth of a candidate's personal ideas and outcomes in art, craft and design.

It is essential, in these general comments about the first series of the OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design examination, to draw attention to those GCSE candidates credited the highest marks available i..120 in Component 1 (Portfolio) and 80 in Component 2 (Externally Set Task). Candidates of the highest quality repeatedly provided teachers and moderators with gratifying opportunities to see astonishing outcomes that revealed extraordinary ability, understanding, imagination and creativity.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design
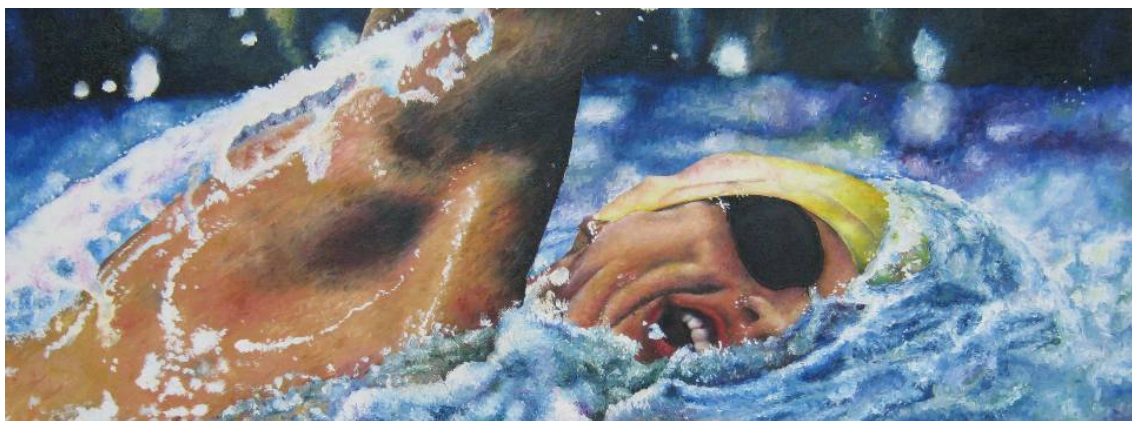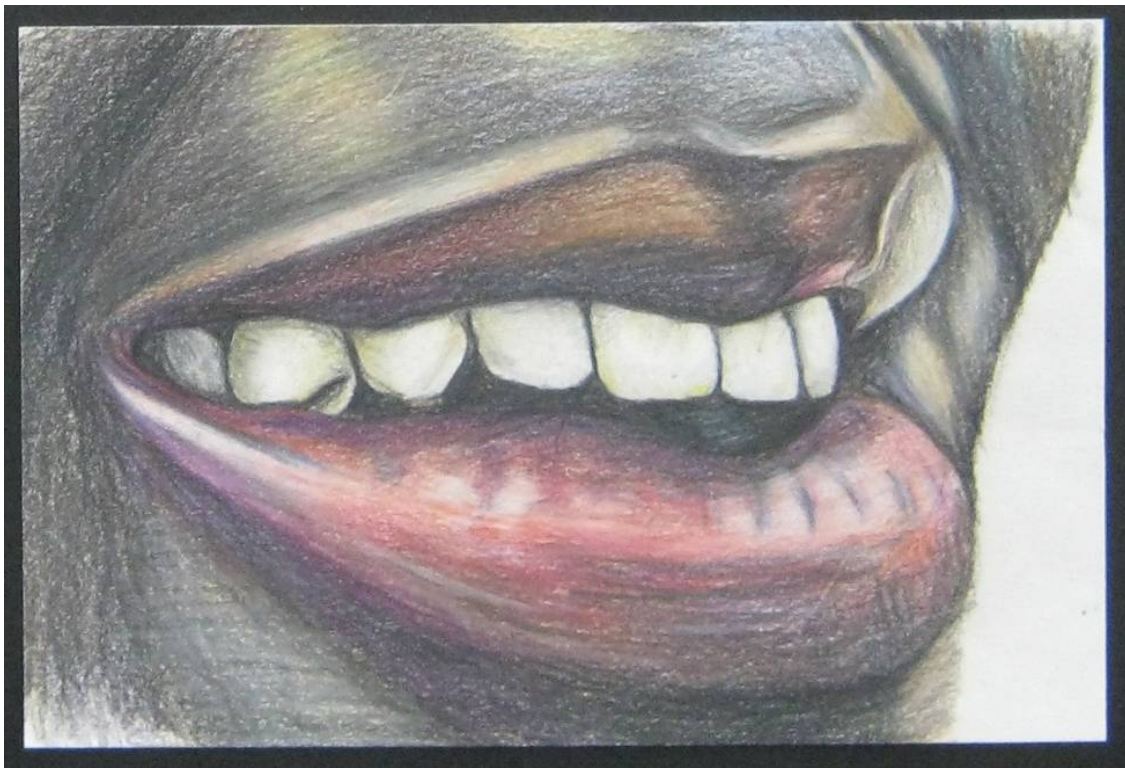
Administration and Moderation

Assessment and moderation guidance for centres is provided by OCR and available on their website. Where centres consulted and adhered to the guidance, assessment and moderation processes were completed successfully and efficiently.

Moderators are not permitted to offer verbal feedback as part of the moderation visit or prior to the issue of results. OCR provides all centres with a detailed feedback report, from their moderator, with the publication of results. Centres should study and take account of the feedback report to enable them, in subsequent examination series, to make persuasive assessment decisions and therefore achieve suitable moderation outcomes.

The Centre Marks Forms, CCS443 for Component 1 (Portfolio) and CCS444 for Component 2 (Externally Set Task) completed by centres, detail how the total mark submitted for a candidate has been achieved. The forms must be made available for a moderator's visit to the centre.   It is worth reminding centres of the need for scrupulous accuracy when submitting teachers' assessment marks to OCR by the published deadline. Centres are strongly advised to use the interactive mark forms CCS443 and CCS444 available for download from the OCR website to avoid arithmetical errors in calculating a candidate's total mark for each component. Candidate marks are submitted to OCR online. On receipt of marks, OCR provides centres with details of the sample candidates required for the moderation visit. Guidance concerning the selected sample is available on the OCR website but centres should note that the work of all candidates in the sample must be readily available for the moderation visit.

Moderators commented that where centre marks had been submitted online by the deadline there was a valuable opportunity for both centres and moderators to prepare thoroughly for the moderation visit.

The bulk of centres offered candidates' work for moderation in the form of an exhibition display. The use of an exhibition to present work certainly provided an important opportunity for candidates to select and arrange outcomes to 'tell the story' of their achievements convincingly for both the teacher assessor and the moderator. Centres subject to constraints of space and unable to display candidates' work as an exhibition submitted the work in folders. Candidates who had been encouraged to arrange their folder carefully to reveal evidence of their creative journey and achievements compellingly, helped uphold the rationale underpinning a teacher's assessment decisions. Moderators commented that in circumstances where candidate work

was presented in folders for the moderation visit it was certainly more comfortable for it to be offered on tables rather than on the floor surface.

Centres must present candidate work, clearly labelled, in an identifiable separate order of merit for each title and component (Portfolio and the Externally Set Task) for the moderation visit. Moderators always found layout maps helpful, where appropriate, to locate every candidate's work easily. The time and care that many heads of department took to describe and explain in some detail, for moderators, the approach taken in their centre toward course design and delivery, assessment and internal standardisation measures was always appreciated. Centres should recognise the genuine value of the initial discussion as it always offered a vital opportunity for the visiting moderator to gain a good understanding of the evidence offered, by candidates, of their attainment in relation to the four assessment objectives.

It is vital that centres mark their candidates' work using the assessment guidance available in the specification and on the OCR website together with the GCSE assessment grid for teachers. Centres should take care to place their teacher assessed candidate marks for the assessment objectives accurately in relation to an attainment level (1-6) and in a credible position within an attainment level (ie just, adequate, convincingly). Where the OCR assessment guidance was used carefully, moderators discovered sound and accurate judgements, credible merit orders and reliable standardisation across all titles, disciplines and teaching groups. It is worth reminding centres that teachers submit marks. In the interests of marking precisely, centres should always avoid any temptation to make grade assumptions as a guide to assessing the evidence found in a candidate's body of work.

It is worth highlighting, in this report, the significance of precise internal standardisation. Centres must take care to painstakingly internally standardise across teachers, titles and components. A secure merit order is clearly very helpful to centres in their search for reliable internal standardisation. A compelling merit order may well provide, for the moderator, credible evidence of precise internal standardisation and accurate assessment.

It is imperative for centres to note that faithfulness to assessment guidance must function consistently for both the Portfolio and the Externally Set Task (EST). Although the quantity of work presented for the two components may be different, the assessment guidance requirements remain constant.

It is very important that centres secure a realistic grasp of the visual characteristics of the six levels of attainment in the national context for GCSE (9-1) Art and Design. For example, at level

1 (limited) centres must seek to take hold of the salient features of candidate attainment where (from the specification):

Assessment Objective 1 (Develop)

Ideas are undefined with limited reference to contextual sources, with evidence of superficial investigation.
Demonstrates a limited critical understanding of sources.

Assessment Objective 2 (Refine)

Superficial refinement with a limited selection of media, materials, techniques and processes.
Limited evidence of the exploration of work as it develops.

Assessment Objective 3 (Record)

Superficial recording of ideas, observations and insights showing minimal links to intention.
Limited ability to reflect on work and progress.

Assessment Objective 4 (Present)

A personal response with an undefined realisation of intentions.
Understanding of visual language, applying formal elements are limited and superficial.

OCR makes available exemplar material, on its website and in training events for centres, designed to promote a sound appreciation of standards within the national context.

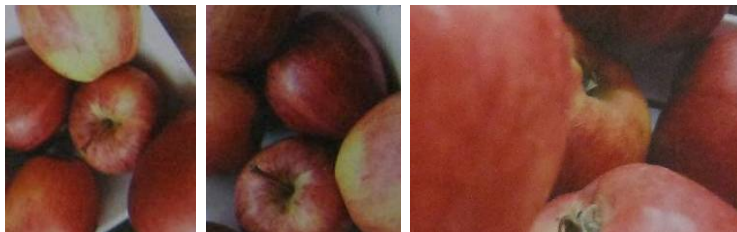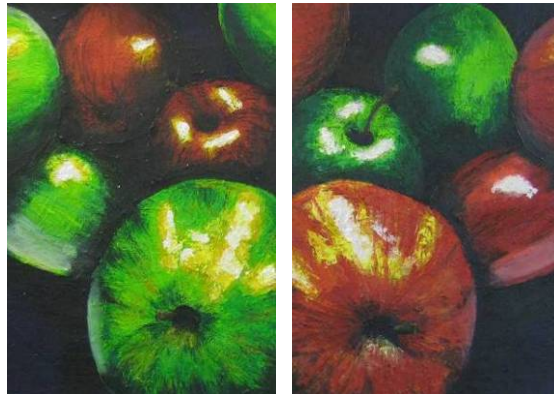**Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design**
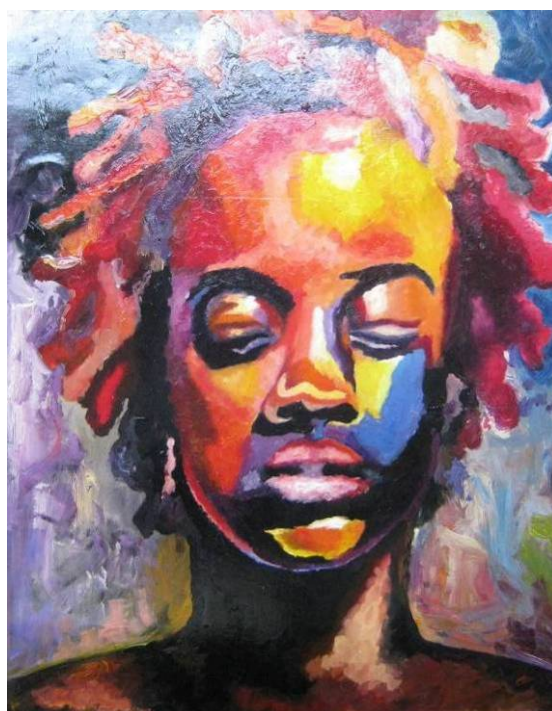
Good Practice:

- Complete candidate submissions

- Rigorous observance of assessment and moderation processes set out in the guidance from OCR

- Accurate teacher assessment level decisions (1-6) and attainment judgements within a level (just, adequately, convincingly)

- Credible orders of merit

- Portfolio and EST samples presented separately and clearly identified with a map, if appropriate, to enable moderators to find every candidate's work

- An informative discussion with a head of department or centre representative that details the centre's approach toward course design and delivery, the character of the visual evidence, assessment and internal standardisation procedures

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- Accurate use of assessment guidance and a good grasp of the visual characteristics of the six levels of attainment in the national context for GCSE Art and Design (9-1) to sustain assessment decisions
- Credible internal standardisation for the Portfolio and EST within and across all titles and teaching groups.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

Component 1 Portfolio

For Component 1 (Portfolio) of the OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design specification candidates complete a body of work for assessment.

The Portfolio is a body of work produced to a centre or learner set starting point(s) leading to final artefact(s)/product(s)/personal outcome(s).

Material provided by OCR to help centres devise starting points, activities, theme(s), projects, briefs, scenarios and stimuli is available on the OCR website.

For Component 1, centres can devise starting points, activities, themes, projects, briefs, scenarios and stimuli appropriate to their candidates and resources. The work for Component 1 activities, themes, projects etc., may be separate in focus or interconnected. Candidates should be encouraged to develop personal final outcomes and show the growth and progress of ideas through supporting studies. It is worth emphasising in this report that candidates should carefully select, organise and present work to ensure they provide evidence of meeting all four assessment objectives.

In 2018, moderators noted that centres led courses of study for Component 1 which fitted their own art education setting and allowed each candidate to make personal and well-informed responses. Moderator reports note that centres employed a range of Portfolio themes in 2018 including, to name but a few, Portraits, A Sense of Place, Natural Forms, Identity, Celebration, Pop Art and, Fears and Phobias.

Moderators' reports reveal that centres, through their GCSE courses, seek to support the interests of a wide range of abilities, promote high expectations in relation to practical skills, effectively develop self-confidence, ensure that outcomes reflect the level of a candidate's ability and facilitate the documentation and communication of creative intentions.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

In 2018, moderators found that many centres had designed schemes of work with care and offered candidates, across the ability range, opportunities to produce convincing evidence of their achievement in all the assessment objectives. Candidates undoubtedly gained from courses that presented a structure within which to not only develop knowledge and understanding of other practitioners' work that genuinely served the growth of rationally focused ideas and individual outcomes, but also to enlarge their proficiency with creative processes, techniques for research and the use of media. Undoubtedly, personal work of quality arose where centres had, in addition to offering candidates a well thought-out developmental framework, also successfully provided them with opportunities to decide on their own routes through which to explore and progress individual responses using varied scale, media and technical processes. Moderators acknowledged, in 2018, that talented candidates given free rein may, undeniably, produce compelling work of high quality. However, it was noted, the work of candidates across the ability range was best supported within a well thought-out, non-prescriptive framework where there were sufficient opportunities to consider and extend evidently personal responses.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

It was noted, by moderators, that centres frequently made use of EST themes from the legacy specification in their course design. Where centres took individual possession of a previous EST theme as a starting point and customised it appropriately, in relation to their setting, successful and engaging candidate outcomes were often the result.

In visits to many centres in 2018, moderators encountered persuasive evidence of good practice where candidates scrupulously incorporated relevant contextual encounters within their Portfolio projects. Used as a starting point, the wider context, in some cases through educational visits or artists in residence, sustained candidates in securing genuine insight into a range of creative practices.

**Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design**

Discerning judgements about sources and perceptive responses to contextual encounters inevitably served to enable candidates to reveal explicitly the significance of their appreciation of sources for purposeful development of individual outcomes.

Moderators reported, in 2018, meeting notable examples of candidates resisting the inclination to simply copy or transcribe sources. Striking examples of candidates going beyond simple attempts to copy were met. Some candidates, for example, having discovered an interesting

painter, rather than only copying examples using paint, had gone on to make their own direct personal interpretations which, on occasion, made noteworthy practical use of different media and ways of working. Successful courses unambiguously supported candidates in appreciating that the fundamental purpose of a contextual encounter was to use it as a means of encouraging personal creative endeavour rather than as a starting point for a straightforward and sometimes rather sterile exercise.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design
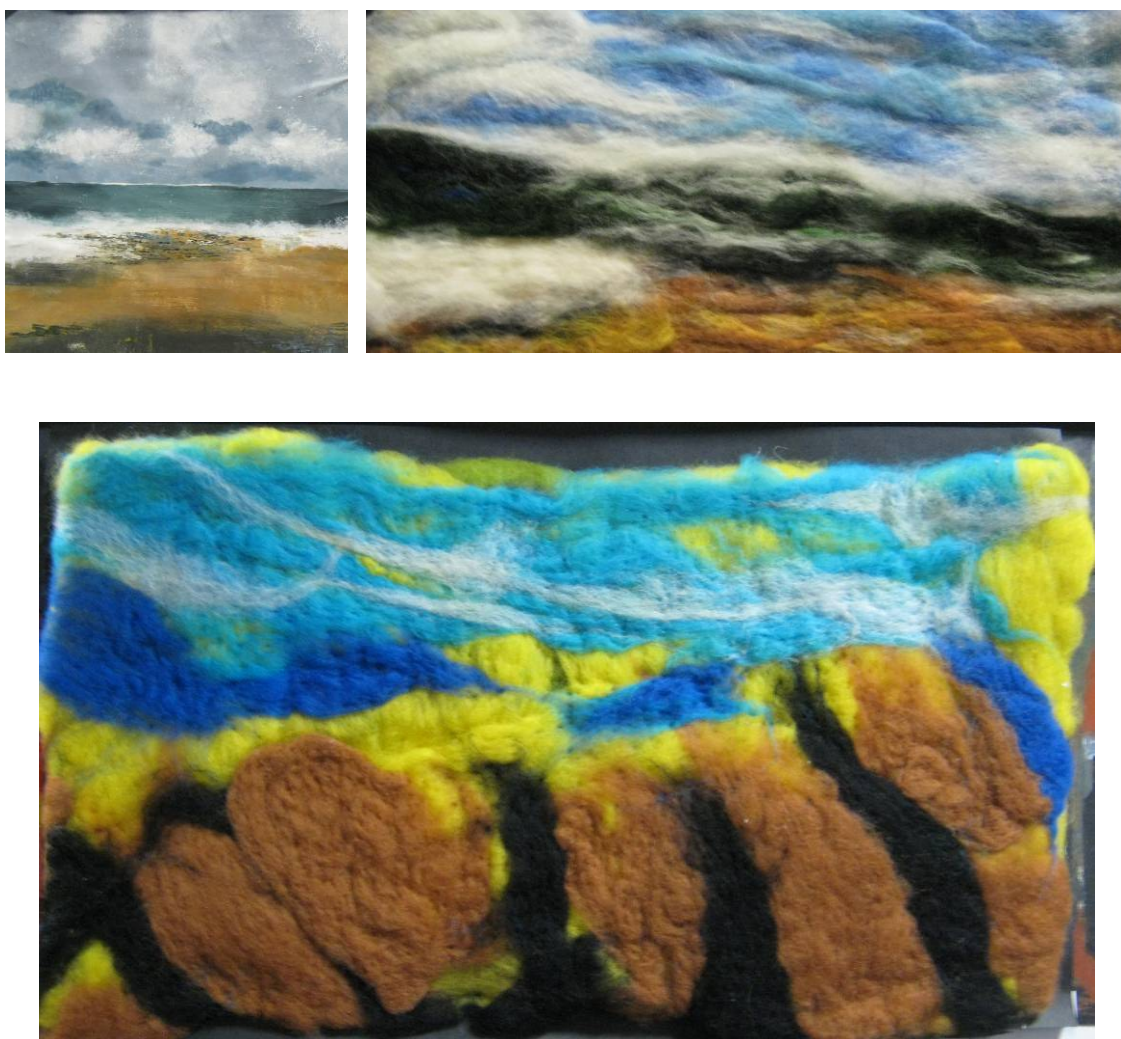
In 2018, moderators have drawn attention to how visits to galleries, museums and other places of visual interest not only motivated many candidates but also informed the progress of their personal creative endeavours.

Many centres showed a rising confidence in supporting candidates in researching, reacting, responding and reflecting. Relevant personal visual investigation and appraisal accompanied by succinct annotated explanation was found in candidates' work. However, moderators

sometimes encountered, predominantly amongst lower ability candidates, a propensity to copy biographical text from a website as evidence of contextual research, analysis and response. Centres should take care to resist any tendency to over-reward explicitly biographical or simply descriptive evidence which reveals little in the way of a candidate's contextual understanding or the value of contextual encounters for the progress and realisation of their personal outcomes.

Moderators have noted that many centres made sure their candidates gave the review, refinement and modification of their work as it developed sufficiently thorough attention to support the production of their finest outcomes. Having generated exciting ideas from a contextual encounter and information gathering or from a visual research starting point, many candidates convincingly developed the potential of individual themes as a result of thorough ongoing experimentation and investigation.

In 2018, many centres clearly helped candidates to make the most of significant development and steer clear of any tendency to make rushed, uninformed and somewhat perplexing leaps to the final outcome. However, in some cases, to the clear disadvantage of the quality of final statements, a process of review, refine and modify was treated superficially. Where candidates appeared to move practically from the outset to the realisation of final statements the outcomes could frequently be lower ability in quality. Reviewing, refining and modifying tactics offer essential chances to not only refine skills but also decide on appropriate media, scale, design and ways of working to ascertain the best route to persuasive realisation of outcomes. Notably, the ever-growing adept use of ICT provided candidates with yet another supportive way of developing individual ideas. Moderators have reported examples of candidates not only manipulating images, but also thoroughly developing ideas using ICT techniques prior to producing persuasively engaging final outcomes. A range of materials and ways of working was often seen, by moderators, to have been offered to candidates. However, in some cases candidates' confidence and expertise in using materials and ways of working may have been limited by a shortfall in the quality, strength, array and intensity of the developmental process leading up to realisation.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design
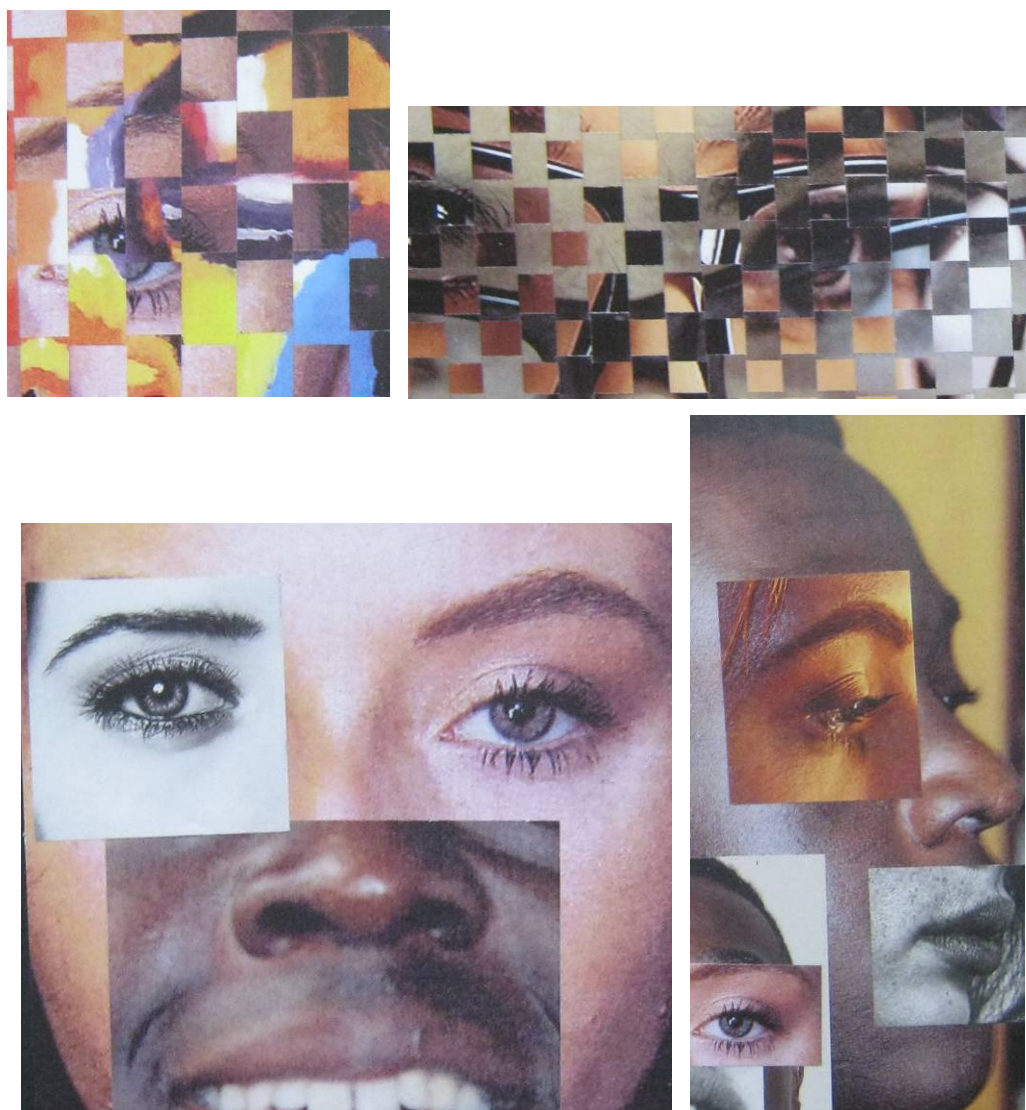
Many candidates showed they appreciated the value of assembling sufficient visual research by recording first-hand observations utilising a range of media, materials and processes. The quality of candidates' work unquestionably gained from the thoughtful and purposeful collection of information and recording of observations from a range of primary and secondary sources. Moderators noted that many centres, to their credit, supported candidates in the astute, knowledgeable and skilful use of digital photography to bring together visual evidence of first-hand experiences (evidence that might, in the past, have been collected entirely from second-hand sources) to successfully sustain personal themes.

It is worth stressing that where centres encouraged first-hand visual research rather than the extensive or, indeed, exclusive use of secondary sources, candidates achieved genuine individual progress not only in respect of greater than ever technical expertise but also the ability to fully develop engaging personal outcomes. Moderators reported many persuasive examples

of good practice where the inventive, although by no means exclusive, use of digital photography actively supported first-hand visual research.

It is important to note that, generally speaking, where moderators found that candidates had carried out first-hand research in several different ways, the quality of the complete body of visual source material was credibly enhanced. The intelligent, selective and focused use of photography for gathering observations was routinely praised, by moderators in 2018, in settings where this mode of visual research was, significantly, one of a number of techniques used by candidates. It should be borne in mind that visual research of quality, using photography as an exploratory tool, as a rule came about in centres where the impact of composition, point of view, lighting, shutter speed and technical fluency had been tackled productively with candidates to move them away from the limitation of a basic snapshot. It is encouraging to note that moderators found many centres clearly urged candidates to be aware that the range, depth and quality of primary and secondary research ultimately had a direct and positive impact on the merit of final statements.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

It must be stressed, in this report, that centres must take care not to over-reward the evidence offered by photography (principally, but not exclusively, in art and design, Fine Art, textiles and three-dimensional design) for visual research skills. Moderators noted, in 2018, a conspicuous tendency in some centres, to over-reward in assessment decisions concerned with visual research principally where, in truth, scant evidence was offered.

Working in GCSE art, craft and design encourages candidates to explore a range of materials and ways of working. Centres should recommend candidates investigate the plethora of available chances available to them to discover and present convincingly their expertise in producing visual equivalents in recording observations, experiences and ideas.

It is worth emphasising that several moderators commented, in 2018, that in relation to some specification titles (for example, Fine Art) a number of candidates presented a significant volume of digital photographs to the almost total exclusion of other types of first-hand evidence. In those circumstances, assessment evidence for visual research in the form of entirely digital photography sources meant that it was difficult to credibly sustain centre assessment decisions. Evidence for first-hand visual research in a candidate's body of work regularly upheld relevant assessment decisions best where some proficiency with the special characteristics of a range of media was evident.

Some moderators did report that some candidates relied almost entirely on rather mediocre secondary sources.

Centres, for the most part, have risen to the challenge of achieving a secure understanding of the mark range (maximum mark 120) for assessment criteria in relation to Component 1.

In general, when all four assessment objectives were seen to be mutually helpful and interconnected in contributing to the quality of the work presented for the Portfolio component, candidates performed at their best. In contrast, where the development of evidence for the assessment objectives appeared to have been tackled as a series of discrete tasks candidates may not have reached their full potential.

It is worth emphasising that the assessment objectives are interrelated and they may be approached in any order in work for Portfolio and, indeed, EST activities. It is evident that project themes might begin with unambiguous research activities from first-hand sources. However, projects could start just as effectively, for some candidates, from exploring experimentally, materials, techniques or ways of working or, indeed, grow from individual responses to contextual starting points. OCR offer, on the website, an example for centres of project development which illustrates the above remarks.

Portfolio development, exploration and recording studies, in essence, serve to provide evidence of the candidate's 'creative journey' and have the potential, as indeed do final statements, to

disclose the quality of research, sources, observations, insights, contextual encounters, visual analysis, review, refinement, selection, experimentation, growth and realisation.

Moderators reported, in 2018, that many candidates focused their development, exploration and recording studies on well-considered and relevant contextual encounters, applicable visual information capture, a careful process of review, refinement and, commendably, personal, imaginative and perceptive development of ideas and final outcomes. However, in some centres, moderators found an inclination to over-reward final outcomes.

In some cases, outcomes did not sustain centre assessment decisions insofar as sufficient convincing evidence, of the sound use and appropriate level of understanding of the potential of materials to realise intentions, was by no means compellingly perceptible.

It is worth repeating that it is crucial, in an effort to avoid assessment leniency, that decisions are securely established using the OCR assessment guidance and convincingly corroborated by sufficient persuasive evidence. It is clear that, in making credible assessment decisions, there is an important distinction to be drawn between identifying the straightforward presence of evidence for an assessment objective and judging its quality and value in a candidate's Portfolio work.

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

Good Practice:

- Well-structured and flexible courses that equipped candidates with secure visual language skills
- Courses that made available to candidates chances to show their grasp of a variety of creative processes and methods for research, their use of an array of media and

techniques, and reveal how the different ways in which art, craft and design practitioners might be understood to sustain the development of ideas

- Courses that emphasised the purpose and significance of visual research and the use of primary sources such as first-hand observational studies and visits to galleries, museums and other places of interest

- Work in which relevant contextual study was tellingly connected to the focus of projects and the development of individual ideas

- Supporting studies that revealed thoughts, ideas, experimentation, and contextual links and showed review, refinement and development on the journey to personal outcomes

- Courses which stressed and promoted the production of ambitious and imaginative final outcomes using a variety of media and scale

- Firm understanding of the inter-relationship of the four assessment objectives and compelling recognition of the need for enough credible and appropriate evidence of a candidate's level of achievement to uphold assessment decisions

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

Component 2 Externally Set Task

The OCR EST offered candidates five themes in 2018 from which to develop preparatory work and one or more personal outcomes based on investigations suggested by eight relevant starting point options presented in the paper.

OCR offered candidates the following five 2018 EST themes:

- Hinge
- Frozen
- Contrast
- Ring
- Horses

The 2018 EST was met with widespread approval from centres. The themes were seen to be accessible to candidates and the suggested starting point options supported them in developing their work.

Moderators noted how the images and text starting point options provided different ways in which the five themes had motivated candidates by moving them to use their personal experiences and interests in the development of ideas and the production of individual outcomes.

It was rewarding to hear, from moderators, that candidates did not rely wholly on the practitioners and contextual references suggested in the EST. Many candidates, to their credit, carried out relevant personal research centred on other contemporary practitioners and cultural references which connected to the development of their own creative interpretations of a theme. Candidate research, both self-directed and centre recommended or guided, using libraries, the internet, visits to galleries, museums and other places of interest featured regularly in work submitted for the 2018 EST.

The EST themes encouraged an assortment of individual responses ranging from the cautious and somewhat literal to the refreshingly unpredictable. Candidates' responses were however, more often than not, cultivated where candidates used the guidance and suggestions, contained in the EST, as a way of encouraging a deep, as opposed to shallow, personal engagement with their chosen theme.

Gears, tools and mechanical folding fastenings appeared regularly in responses to the 'Hinge' theme but some candidates also used the pivots and moving parts found in skeleton structures to inspire creative responses

A few rather predictable outcomes, originating from the cinematic world were offered in response to the 'Frozen' theme. However, some candidates fruitfully explored rural and urban settings, plants and other natural forms. Landscape under ice and heavy snow, still life arrangements including ice cream or frozen desserts and several circumstances in which low temperatures created interesting and startling visual effects offered fruitful avenues for exploration by candidates.

The 'Contrast' theme certainly proved to be the most popular choice made by candidates. Visual, emotional, cultural, media, ways of working and interpersonal relationship contrasts figured prominently in the work of candidates with a focus on rough/smooth, light/dark, colour/monochrome, rich/poor, young/old, or war/peace contrasts underpinning the development of many responses.

Jewellery and the planets proved inspirational for the work of a number of candidates in relation to the 'Ring' theme.

Candidates with personal enthusiasm for equine pursuits inevitably found the 'Horses' theme particularly appealing. A number of candidates offered to some extent literal, albeit well-crafted, responses. However, some candidates offered persuasively individual outcomes.

Occasionally some candidates seemed to have spent a disproportionate amount of time exploring a starting point at a surface level working systematically through several image or textual suggestions outlined in the EST. Predictably, such an approach could easily become an obstacle not only in the search for a personal focus but also for sufficient time being available for reviewing, refining, modifying and developing ideas and realisation skills prior to the production of individual final statements.

Quality responses were unquestionably the result of the way in which centres provided guidance for candidates throughout the preparatory period to support their involvement in activities, during the formative stages, designed to resist shallow development and superficial responses to the EST. Some centres, for example, encouraged candidates to focus, at the start of the preparatory period, on apposite first-hand visual research. Elsewhere, centres urged candidates to explore, from the outset, the potential of the wider context of art, craft and design for their

personal work. Without doubt, a considered preparatory period structure and relevant activities genuinely supported candidates' efforts to go deeper into the theme and develop personal responses built on the knowledge, understanding and expertise gained through Portfolio work.

Where candidates built on strengths and experiences obtained during the development of their Portfolio work, they implemented a dependable approach to producing persuasive supporting evidence that documented their journey through visual research, experimentation, development of ideas and focused encounters with artists and cultures.

Visits to centres showed that the finest EST work had irrefutably grown from high standard Portfolio experiences and practices. However, the need to review, refine and modify work in progress was not always well met in the EST. Some candidates did not allocate adequate time to meaningful research, investigation of ideas and development before producing their final statements. Selecting and 'fine tuning' the very best improvement of an idea and simultaneously honing technical skills often sustained the production of high quality outcomes.

Stronger candidates made purposeful journeys of discovery in which self-directed choices, investigations, first-hand research and analysis established evocative connections between visual and contextual sources and their own work. In contrast, some lower ability candidates relied too exclusively on pedestrian secondary sources.

Visual research, utilising a candidate's own photography, was certainly powerful where it was selective, well thought-out and purposeful. However, it should be noted, where candidates presented a substantial volume of digital photographs almost to the exclusion of evidence from first-hand resources that exploited the special characteristics of other media, some centre assessment decisions could not be credibly sustained. Working in art and design raises the importance of exploring a range of media and ways of working. Centres should advocate the practical exploration of the many opportunities and ways available, in art, craft and design, for candidates to discover, develop and show, in their work, proficiency in recording observations, experiences and ideas.

Moderators reported, in 2018, a tendency in some centres, to over-reward in the assessment of candidates' work for the EST. Clearly, assessment guidance must function consistently for both the Portfolio and EST components. The amount of work presented for the EST may differ from that offered in the Portfolio component but the assessment guidance requirements remain constant. As noted already in this report, it is crucial, in an effort to counter leniency that EST

assessment decisions draw on the assessment guidance available and are compellingly substantiated by sufficient plausible evidence.

Good Practice:

- A considered series of preparatory studies to enable candidates to achieve sound, compelling and well-crafted, imaginative personal responses

- Appropriate, inspirational sources and contextual encounters and analysis often supported at first hand through gallery, museum or other locations for candidate visits

- Comprehensive first-hand observation and research, including (but not entirely) that obtained from the proficient use of a candidate's own photography, to support the development of outcomes

- Ample, focused, meaningful and persistent preparatory work that sustained the growth of ideas

- Convincing application of media and techniques that made possible a high standard of realisation of creative ideas and intentions

- Effective time management by candidates during their developmental journey for essential review, refinement and modification

- Resistance, on the part of candidates, to succumb to the temptation to depend on secondary sources or unrelated primary sources and pursue a safe, literal and constraining interpretation of their chosen EST theme

- Precise centre marking corroborated by compelling evidence

Candidate work from 2018 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design
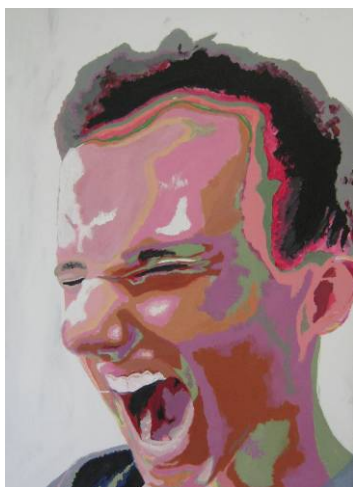
Summary

Centres showed, in 2018, they have developed confidence in their knowledge and understanding of the OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design specification and the demands it makes on both teachers and candidates. For the most part, centres have built on long-established good practice to build suitable courses of study.

First rate teaching and the application of a well thought-out approach to the coverage of assessment objectives ensured that many candidates performed to the best of their ability in both components of the GCSE examination.

Candidates who achieved first rate results did so because centres emphasised recording visually, in a range of ways, from first-hand experiences. Significant contextual encounters and pertinent sources inspired individual and conspicuously personal outcomes. Persistent, careful, discerning and thorough research, visual analysis, development of ideas and sharpening of technical skills, regularly contributed to high quality candidate work.

Centres should acknowledge the need, for candidates, to maintain a fitting balance between the volume of supporting studies and development work and providing ample opportunity to develop and produce final outcomes. Furthermore, if a large amount of candidates' work is restricted in terms of both scale and media their artistic development and confidence may be, to some extent, constrained. It is also worth remembering that a candidate's creative visual journey continues and undoubtedly may well be enhanced during the production of final outcomes.

Large volumes of evidence are not a requirement of OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design. Sensible and shrewd selection from the work produced by a candidate can undoubtedly tell the story of a creative journey in a convincing way. It is, on the other hand, in every candidate's best interest to be completely sure that a sufficient amount of convincing quality evidence is offered for assessment to plausibly and unquestionably endorse assessment judgements.

Centres are reminded that careful scrutiny of the specification and the range of support available on the OCR website, training offered by OCR and the help available from OCR's Subject Adviser for Art and Design provide routes to developing precise understanding of the specification and its associated assessment principles and practice.

Good Practice:

- Precise assessment using the available OCR guidance and a secure grasp of the visual characteristics of the six levels of attainment in relation to the four assessment objectives
- Reliable centre support for the OCR assessment and moderation processes
- Well-structured, non-prescriptive and flexible courses that offered all candidates a secure foundation of visual language skills and best practice time-management support to develop Portfolio and EST outcomes

OCR acknowledges the co-operation of centres in releasing work, selected from the moderation samples, for Award, Standardisation and other purposes. The co-operation of centres in allowing work to be photographed from the moderation samples for educational purposes is appreciated.

Finally, it must be said that centres are to be highly praised for the encouraging ways in which, through the provision of sound courses, they faced up to the challenge of supporting their candidates in achieving remarkable personal creative successes in the first series of examinations for OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design.