

GCSE (9-1)

Moderators' report

ART AND DESIGN

J170-J176

For first teaching in 2016

J170-J176/01/02 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

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Introduction

Our Moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on centres' assessment of moderated work, based on what has been observed by our moderation team. These reports include a general commentary of accuracy of internal assessment judgements; identify good practice in relation to evidence collation and presentation and comments on the quality of Centre assessment decisions against individual Learning Objectives. This report also highlights areas where requirements have been misinterpreted and provides guidance to Centre assessors on requirements for accessing higher mark bands. Where appropriate, the report will also signpost to other sources of information that Centre assessors will find helpful.

OCR completes moderation of centre-assessed work in order to quality assure the internal assessment judgements made by assessors within a centre. Where OCR cannot confirm the Centre's marks, we may adjust them in order to align them to the national standard. Any adjustments to Centre marks are detailed on the Moderation Adjustments report, which can be downloaded from Interchange when results are issued. Centres should also refer to their individual Centre report provided after moderation has been completed. In combination, these centre-specific documents and this overall report should help to support Centres' internal assessment and moderation practice for future series.

General overview

This report reviews the 2019 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 together with creativity and imagination and present them with chances to take an individual interest in why art, craft and design matter and to be motivated and changed by studying an exciting and thought-provoking 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 range of approaches to sustain the teaching, learning and assessment of candidates. It provides chances for candidates to experiment and take risks with their work while growing their individual 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 2019, the second examination series of the OCR (9-1) GCSE Art and Design specification, the Fine Art title again attracted the largest number of entries from Centres.

The specification is designed to support Centres in managing the array of skills, knowledge and understanding required within the specification titles and areas of study offered.

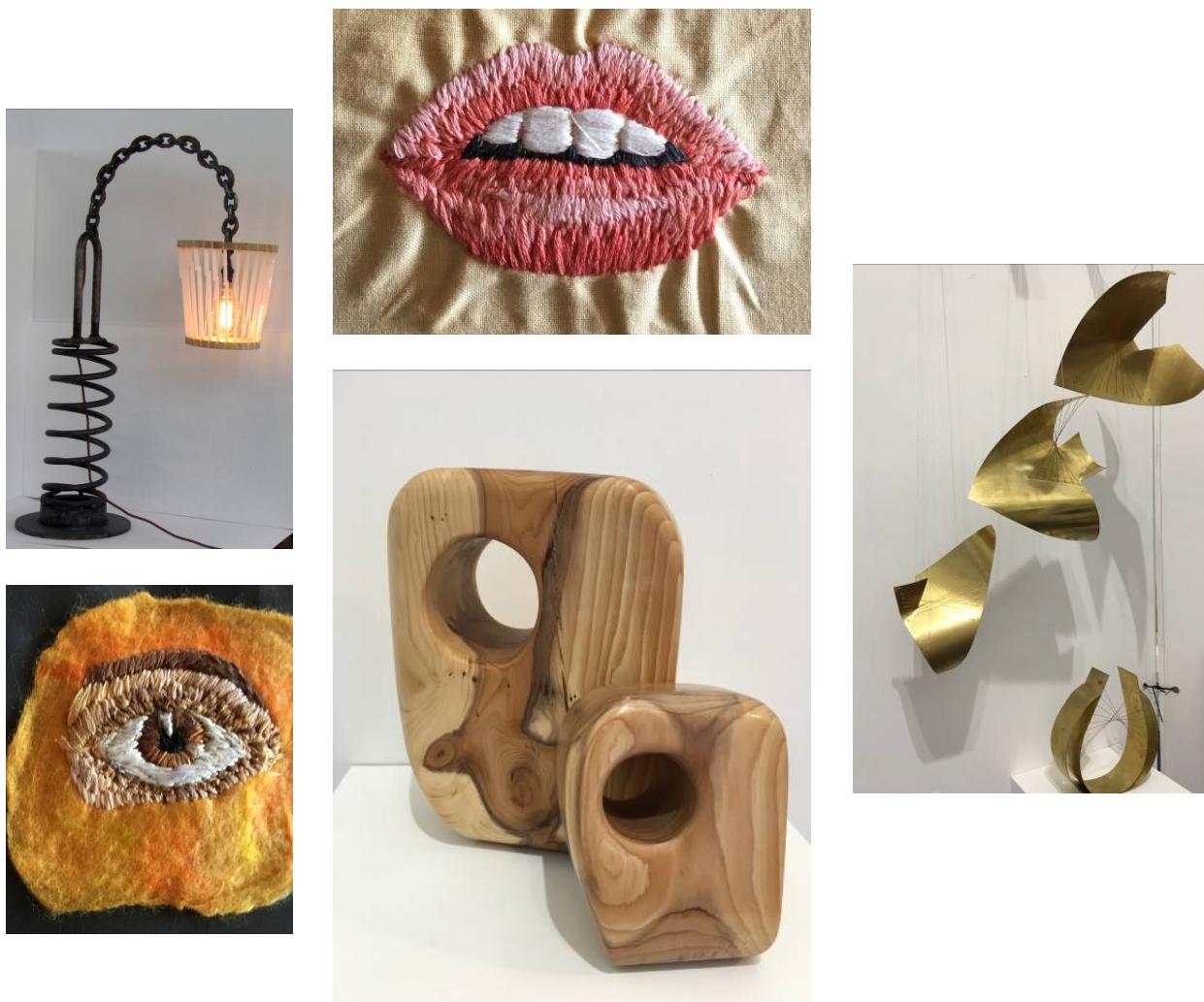
The specification forms part of an educational continuum. GCSE builds on national curriculum art, craft and design practice at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

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 explicitly 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 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



Reports submitted by moderators in 2019, informed by the indispensable preliminary conversation they held with teachers in Centres at the start of their visit, together with the ensuing study of candidates' work, have supplied convincing evidence of the success of the second OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design examination series.

In 2019, the second 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 certainly worth declaring that moderators recognised that teachers, in Centres, continued successfully to build on proven good practice to develop appropriate courses of study for the 2019 series of examinations of OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design J170 – J176.

Without doubt those teachers who found they were well placed to construct suitable courses of study sustained by long-established good practice:

- read the specification carefully and in detail
- took part in OCR continuing professional development (CPD) events
- scrutinised the wealth of informative support materials available on the OCR website
- sought elucidation or support, where necessary, from OCR's Subject Advisor for Art and Design.

Successful courses of study for the two components of the specification (Portfolio and Externally Set Task) encouraged candidates to develop credible evidence of their ability to:

- Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources (Assessment Objective 1)
- 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)

High calibre candidate submissions revealed persuasive visual research in which observations, experiences and ideas were recorded in varied, appropriate and skillful ways. Convincing candidate attainment revealed unquestionable ability to observe, select and interpret with discrimination, imagination and understanding. It is notable that moderators regularly acknowledged that candidates thrived in Centres where teachers stressed, to their credit, the value of working effectively from first hand experience in a variety of ways.

Candidate work from 2019 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 accepted by successful Centres to be vital. Notable candidate submissions customarily showed sufficient convincing evidence of progress in the development of ideas and realised quality outcomes as a result of fully exploring and reviewing an array of possible solutions and then suitably modifying and improving their work as it moved forward.

The fundamental importance of a candidate's individual, personal intention was undeniably valued in successful Centres.

To their credit many Centres showed they recognised that a detailed and thoroughly lucid visual account of the creative journey was an important constituent of candidates' submissions.

It is worth noting that many Centres appreciated that exceedingly large volumes of evidence were definitely 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 create persuasive final statements.

Although it is certainly uncalled for to present every single piece of work for assessment and moderation, it is without doubt in every candidate's best interest to select enough persuasive evidence to reflect their best performance and therefore plausibly substantiate a teacher's assessment decisions. An inadequate 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 exclusion of some obviously good quality and persuasive evidence for assessment and moderation.

In 2019 many candidates showed they understood how to use a variety of materials, processes and techniques, including information technology, to develop their knowledge, understanding and application of visual language.

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

Centres without doubt 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.

Nevertheless, 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 increase their understanding of the work of other practitioners is persuasively discovered in the degree to which such exploration informs the development of a candidate's personal ideas and outcomes in art, craft and design.

It is essential to draw attention to those GCSE candidates given the highest marks available. Candidates of the utmost quality again and again provided teachers and moderators, in 2019, with rewarding chances to see astounding outcomes that revealed astonishing ability, understanding, imagination and creativity.

Candidate work from 2019 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 before the issue of results. OCR provides all Centres with a thorough feedback report, from their moderator, with the publication of results. Centres should study and take account of the feedback report to help them, in the following series of examinations, to make persuasive assessment decisions and as a consequence achieve appropriate 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 majority of Centres offered candidates' work for moderation in the form of an exhibition display. The use of an exhibition to present work certainly provided a significant opportunity for candidates to select and arrange outcomes to 'tell the story' of their achievements persuasively 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 convincingly, helped to sustain the rationale underpinning a teacher's assessment decisions. Moderators commented in 2019 that in circumstances where candidate work was offered in folders for the moderation visit it was certainly preferable for it to be presented 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 without difficulty.

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 indisputable 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 imperative 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 (i.e. just, adequate, convincingly). Where the OCR assessment guidance was used carefully moderators discovered sound and precise 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 accurately, 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 scrupulously internally standardise across teachers, titles and components. A secure merit order is clearly especially helpful to Centres in their search for reliable internal standardisation. A persuasive merit order may well provide, for the moderator, credible evidence of precise internal standardisation and accurate assessment.

It is very important 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 crucial 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.

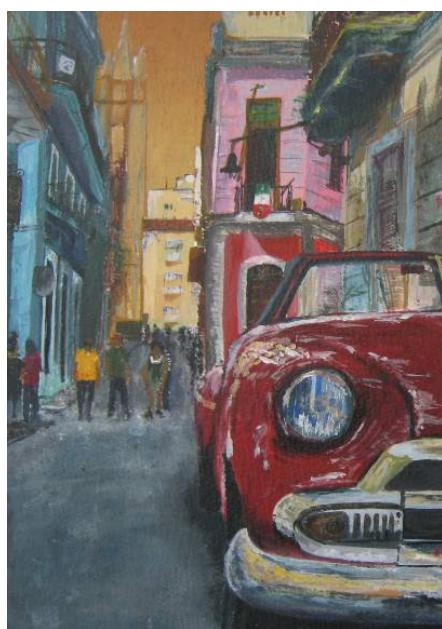
Assessment Objective 4 (Present)

A personal response with an undefined realisation of intentions.

Understanding of visual language, applying formal elements are limited and superficial.

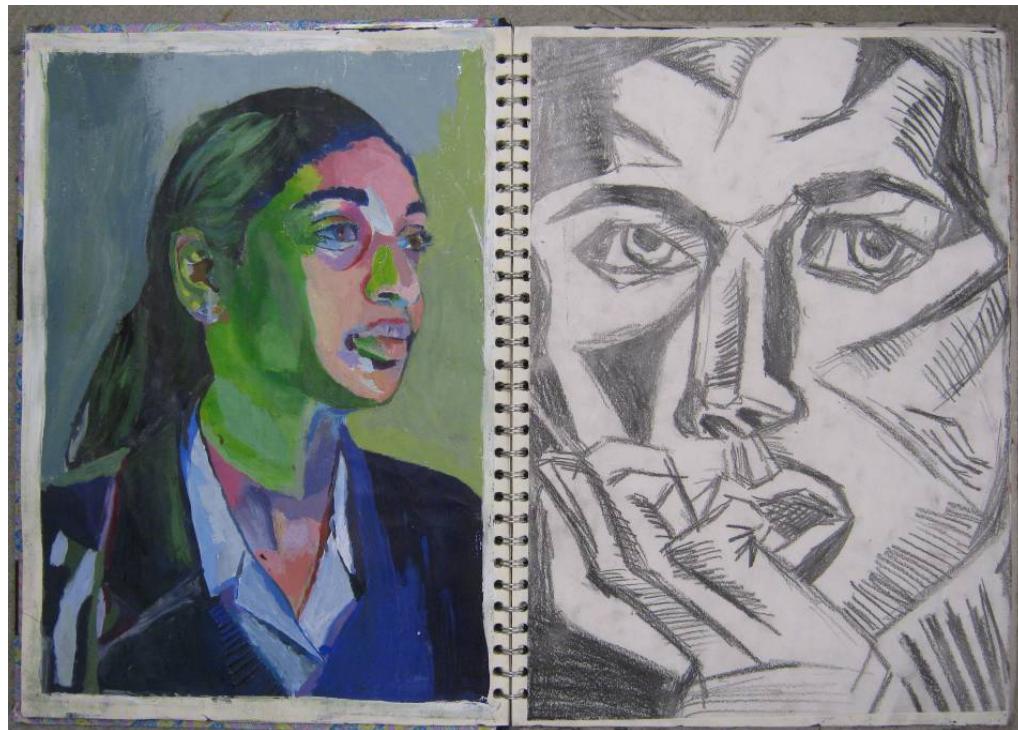
OCR makes available exemplar material, on its website and in training events for Centres, designed to promote a sound appreciation of standards within the national context.

Candidate work from 2019 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)
- Convincing 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
- 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 2019 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 produced to a Centre or candidate set starting point(s) leading to final artefact(s)/product(s)/personal outcome(s).

Component 1 (Portfolio) will consist of a project, theme or course of study.

Centres can devise starting points, activities, themes, projects, briefs, scenarios and stimuli appropriate to their candidates and resources.

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 make sure they provide evidence of meeting all four assessment objectives.

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

In 2019, moderators noted that Centres led courses of study for Component 1 which fitted their own art education setting and aimed to allow each candidate to make personal and well-informed responses. Centres offered different ways for candidates to develop their Portfolio submission.

For example:-

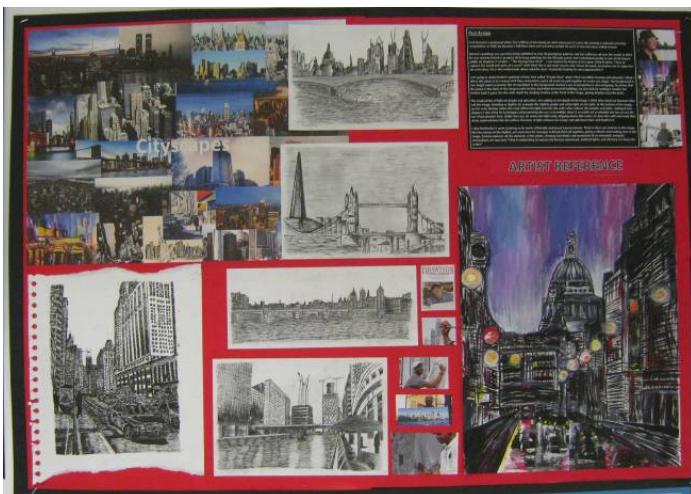
- One topic or theme for all candidates
- A free choice from a range of theme options
- A previous EST theme
- Opportunities for candidates to determine their own individual theme

Moderator reports note that Centres employed a range of Portfolio themes in 2019 including, to name but a few:-

Identity	Mental Health	Life Cycle	Contrast
Homeless	Portraiture	Water	Autobiography
Motion	Surroundings	Disguise	What Makes us Human?
Hands	Order & Disorder	Growth	Distorted/Fragmented
City Life	Ripples	Machinery	Natural Forms
Pop Art	Fears	Phobias	Celebration

Moderators' reports disclose 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, make sure that outcomes reflect the level of a candidate's ability and facilitate the documentation and communication of creative intentions.

Candidate work from 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



In 2019, moderators found that many Centres had planned schemes of work with care and offered candidates, across the ability range, opportunities to produce persuasive evidence of their achievement in all the assessment objectives. Candidates definitely 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. Without doubt, personal work of quality arose where Centres had, in addition to offering candidates a carefully planned 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 2019, that talented candidates given free rein may, undeniably, generate persuasive 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 structure where there were sufficient opportunities to consider and extend evidently personal responses.

Moderators noted that some Centres made use of EST themes from a previous examination series in their course design. Where Centres took individual possession of a previous EST theme as a starting point and tailored it appropriately, in relation to their setting, successful and engaging candidate outcomes were often the result.

In visits to many Centres in 2019, moderators encountered convincing evidence of good practice where candidates thoroughly integrated pertinent contextual encounters within their Portfolio submissions. 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.

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

Moderators reported, in 2019, noteworthy examples of candidates resisting the inclination to simply copy or transcribe sources. Some candidates, for example, having discovered an interesting painter, rather than merely copying examples using paint, had gone on to make their own direct personal interpretations which, on occasion, made practical use of different media and ways of working. Successful courses unmistakably supported candidates in appreciating that the essential purpose of a contextual encounter was to use it as a means of encouraging personal creative enterprise rather than as a starting point for a straightforward and on occasion rather sterile exercise.

Candidate work from 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



In 2019, 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.

Moderators have reported that candidates have studied a plethora of diverse and relevant practitioners in pursuit of their individual artistic concerns. A trend towards referencing contemporary art, craft and design work has continued. Lesser-known practitioners with a strong digital presence have undoubtedly opened up, for candidates, possibilities for markedly inventive outcomes.

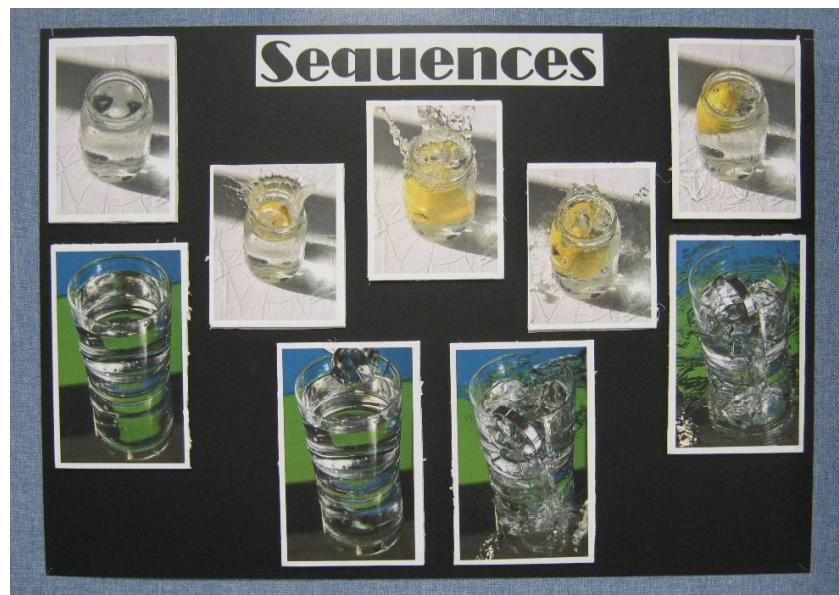
Many Centres showed a growing confidence in supporting candidates in researching, reacting, responding and reflecting. Relevant personal visual investigation and appraisal accompanied by pithy annotated explanation was found in candidates' work. However, moderators sometimes still encountered a propensity to copy biographical text from a website as evidence of contextual research, analysis and response. Centres should take care to resist any propensity 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 detailed 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 persuasively developed the potential of individual themes as a result of thorough on-going experimentation and investigation.

In 2019, many Centres clearly helped candidates to make the most of significant development and steer clear of any tendency to make rushed, uninformed and somewhat puzzling 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 poor in quality. Tactics for reviewing, refining and modifying 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 increasingly proficient use of ICT provided candidates with yet another supportive way of developing individual ideas. Candidates not only manipulated images, but also thoroughly developed ideas using ICT techniques before creating 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 underperformance in the quality, strength, array and intensity of the developmental process before realisation.

Candidate work from 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



In 2019 many candidates certainly showed they appreciated the value of bringing together sufficient visual research by recording observations utilising a range of media, materials and processes. The quality of candidates' work unquestionably gained from the thoughtful, purposeful and focused 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 skillful use of digital photography to collect visual evidence of first hand experiences (evidence that might, in the past, have been collected entirely from secondary sources) to successfully sustain personal themes.

It is worth stressing that where Centres encouraged first hand visual research 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 where moderators found that candidates had carried out 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 regularly praised, by moderators in 2019, in settings where this mode of visual research was, significantly, one of a number of techniques used by candidates. Visual research of quality, using photography as an exploratory tool, 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 heartening to note that moderators found many Centres clearly urged candidates to be aware that the range, depth and quality of primary and secondary research in due course had a direct and positive impact on the value of final statements.

Candidate work from 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



Centres must take care, however, not to over-reward the evidence offered by photography for visual research. Working in GCSE art, craft and design encourages candidates to investigate a range of materials and ways of working. Centres should recommend candidates investigate the abundance of available chances available to them to discover and indeed present convincingly their expertise in producing visual equivalents in recording observations, experiences and ideas.

In 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 visual research. In those circumstances it could be, on occasion, difficult to credibly sustain Centre assessment decisions. Evidence for first hand visual research in a candidate's body of work commonly upheld relevant assessment decisions best where some expertise with the special characteristics of a range of media was evident.

Centres, for the most part, have continued to rise 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 disconnected tasks candidates may not have reached their full potential.

It is certainly 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 surely evident that project themes might begin with instantly recognisable research activities from primary or, indeed, secondary sources. However, projects could start just as successfully, for some candidates, from exploring experimentally, materials, techniques or ways of working or grow from individual responses to contextual starting points. OCR offer, on the website, an example for Centres of project development which admirably 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 2019, that many candidates focused their development, exploration and recording studies on well-considered and relevant contextual encounters, pertinent visual information capture, a careful process of review, refinement and, commendably, personal, imaginative and perceptive development of ideas and final outcomes.

Some Centres revealed an inclination to over-reward final statements. In such cases, outcomes did not uphold Centre assessment decisions insofar as sufficient convincing evidence, of the sound use and appropriate level of understanding of the potential of materials and visual language to realise intentions, was by no means compellingly perceptible.

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 surely 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.

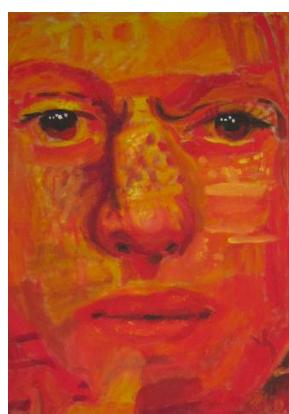
Candidate work from 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



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 pertinent 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 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



Component 2 Externally Set Task

The OCR EST offered candidates five themes in 2019 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 2019 EST themes:

- Mirror
- Boxes
- Birds
- Signs
- Dwellings

The 2019 EST was met with widespread endorsement 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 pleasing to hear, from moderators, that candidates did not rely wholly on the practitioners and contextual references suggested in the EST. Many candidates, as they did in their work for the Portfolio component of GCSE (9-1) Art and Design, 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 2019 EST.

The EST themes encouraged a range of individual responses ranging, perhaps unsurprisingly, from the cautious and somewhat literal to the refreshingly unpredictable. Candidates' responses were however, more often than not, cultivated best from a deep, as opposed to shallow, personal engagement with their chosen theme.

Mirror

Candidates explored reflections or water distortions, hyper real portraiture, mirrored buildings or objects as a starting point for their work. Responses drawing on fractured mirrors were used as a means of exploring personal vanity. Concerns about social issues inspired responses relating to mental health, depression and self image.

Boxes

Areas of social deprivation including homelessness and begging, the personal place of people in society and treasured memories encouraged some engaging outcomes.

Birds

'Birds' proved to be a popular theme with candidates to generate responses ranging from detailed naturalistic drawings and paintings to mixed media outcomes.

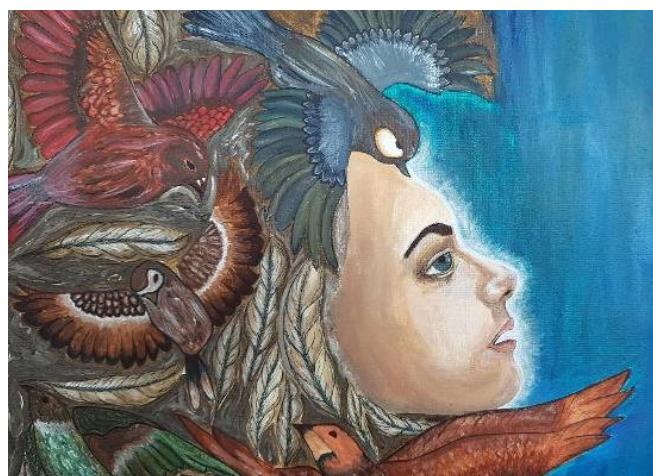
Signs

Unsurprisingly, some candidates developed final statements combining image and text relating to cosmetics, sport and logos. Street art successfully offered opportunities for primary and secondary research. References to Banksy and graffiti provoked outcomes revealing investigation and understanding of contemporary issues including youth culture and environmental concerns. Sign language presented a fruitful avenue for the development of engaging final statements.

Dwellings

Candidates explored rural and urban settings, plants and other natural forms. The theme provoked a variety of starting points including those, for example, focusing on buildings, wasp nests, beehives and shells.

Candidate work from 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



Candidate work from 2019 OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design



Some candidates spend 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 before the production of individual final statements.

Quality responses were unquestionably the result of the way in which Centres provided structural 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 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 a 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 certainly implemented a reliable 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 unquestionably 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 assign 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 at the same time sharpening technical skills often sustained the production of high quality outcomes.

Stronger responses 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 weaker responses revealed a disappointing preference, for exclusive dependence 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 to the more or less nonexistence 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 surely 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 indeed show, in their work, proficiency in recording observations, experiences and ideas.

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 counteract 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 help 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 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 to sustain 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 lacklustre 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

Summary

Centres showed, in 2019, they have continued developing 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 construct 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 sources and experiences. Significant contextual encounters and relevant 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 sufficient opportunity to develop and produce final outcomes. Furthermore, if a large amount of a candidate's 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 persuasive 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 Advisor 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 again in 2019 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 second series of examinations for OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design.

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