



## **GCSE**

## **Art and Design**

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J160 – J167**

**OCR Report to Centres June 2014**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates 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.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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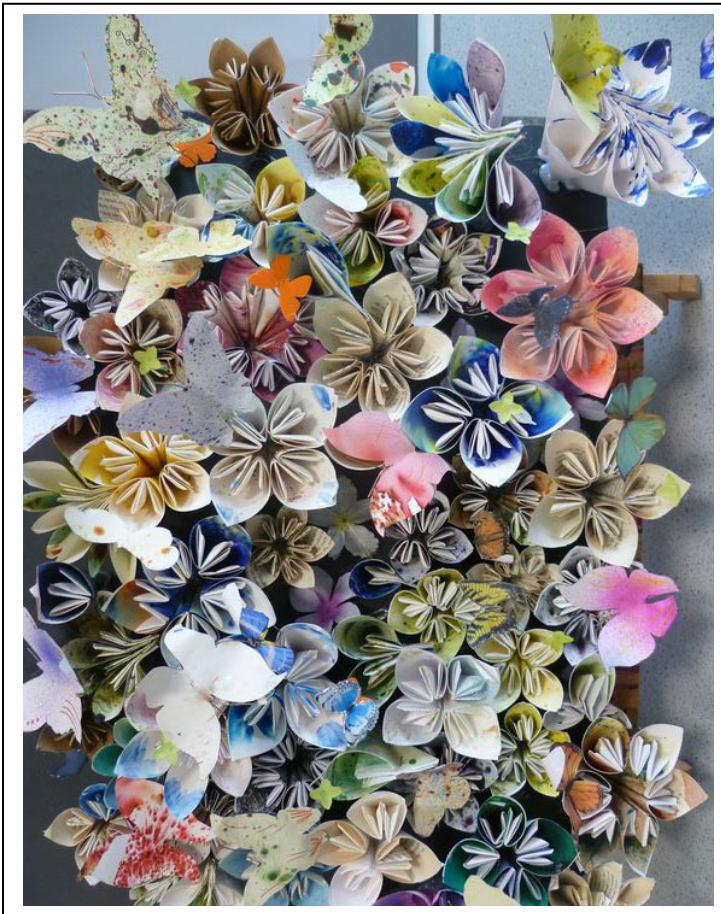
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## Art and Design

**OCR GCSE in Art and Design: J160**

**OCR GCSE in Art and Design: Fine Art J161**

**OCR GCSE in Art and Design: Graphic Communication J162**

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# Art and Design Units A110 – A127

## General Comments

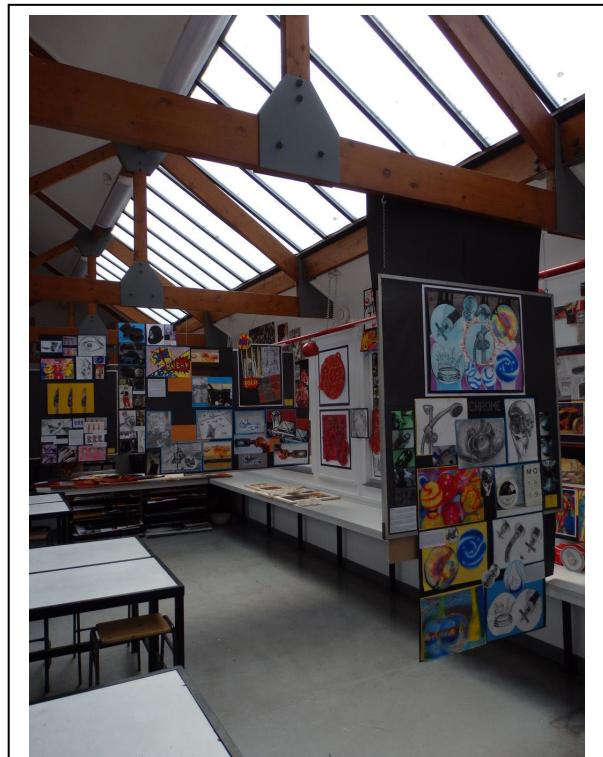
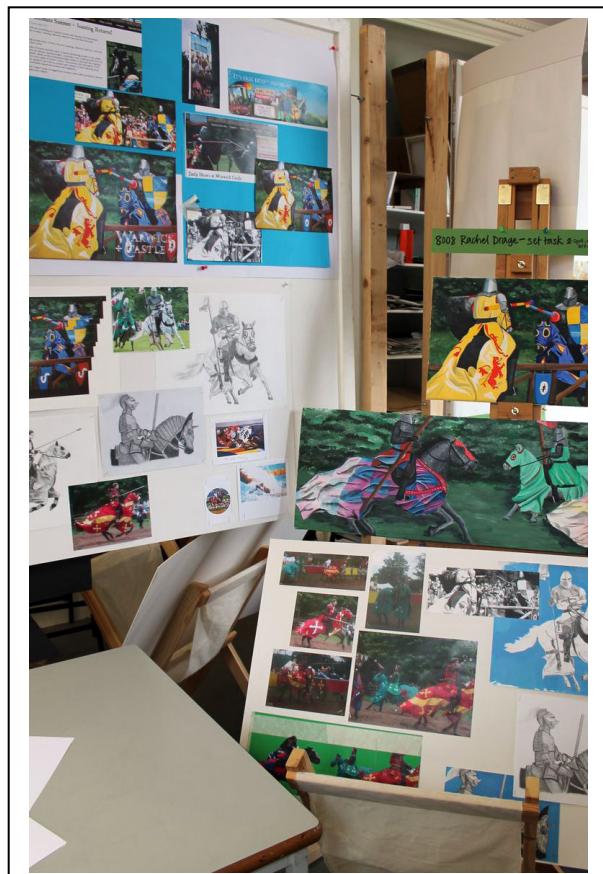
The GCSE Art and Design specification has become firmly established and continues to be well received by teachers and candidates alike.

The majority of candidates continue to benefit from well delivered courses, which had been carefully designed to take full advantage of the strengths of the qualification. Unendorsed and Fine Art pathways remain the most popular approaches to study. The other endorsements, often supported by subject specialists, are significant areas of delivery in some Centres, which have the appropriate physical resources to facilitate delivery. Photography – Lens and Light-based Media (J163) is particularly notable for the continuing increase in the number of candidate entries. Contextual Studies (J166) entries have also risen especially in those Centres where candidates undertake more than one GCSE Art and Design endorsement. Similarly, Applied Art and Design (J167), which meets the needs of those candidates seeking a more vocational pathway within the subject, has won further adherents and is now also delivered by Design and Technology Department.

Work for moderation continues to be very well displayed, with most centres going to considerable effort to showcase work and to meet the needs of the moderation process. Work was generally presented in ideal locations with minimal or no disruption. All Centres were aware of the requirement to display the work in separate rank orders per unit which aided the moderation process.

However and regrettably to report a minority of Centres did not give due consideration to the necessity of quiet and private accommodation for the moderation process. Other Centres simply piled folders on tables, in cramped room spaces, which did not facilitate moderation.

**Centres are also reminded that the moderation samples must be exhibited in merit order by unit.**



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The loan work for the purposes of Grade Award, Standardisation and Training is essential to the well-being of the qualifications and OCR acknowledges Centres' and Team Leaders collaboration in this respect. The dispatch of 'moderation samples' is an important undertaking and whilst every reasonable precaution as regards safety and security is taken whilst these are in OCR's care Centres are urged to package three dimensional and other fragile work appropriately.

Again in 2014 Centres are thanked for their co-operation in making visit arrangements. Other aspects of administration were generally equally efficient. Most Centres met the May 15 deadline for the dispatch of mark-sheets to OCR. Similarly, the majority correctly forwarded the Assessment Summary Form (GCW930) and the Centre Authentication Form (CCS160) with the MS1s to the moderator. Nonetheless, the Centre Authentication Form was frequently completed for each Unit rather than the qualification overall. It was gratifying that the advice given in respect of the 'inter-active' Centre Authentication and Assessment Summary forms had been taken. The use of the latter resulted in the incidence of 'arithmetical or transcriptional error' being reduced.

Orders of merit were generally dependable. However, the levels of assessment, although generally more reliable than 2013, could on occasion prove unreliable and were consequently adjusted to meet the OCR national standard. A small number of re-marks were required.

Centres' staff generally accepted that moderators could not give verbal feedback at the conclusion of the moderation and looked forward to receiving a more detailed written report in August. Centre reports should be read in conjunction with this overarching final report.



### SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

**Download and use the Assessment Summary Form GCW930, which is available on the OCR web site. This option allows for the entry and addition of marks, thus avoiding arithmetical errors.**

***Display the Portfolio and Set Task in two separate rank orders.***

***Clearly identify individual units and highlight final outcomes.***

***Centres are reminded that in addition to the work sampled for the purposes of moderation all submissions must be readily available.***



## Art and Design Portfolio

In 2014 the majority of work seen was for the Art and Design A110 and Fine Art A111 units. The other areas of study were also represented with Critical and Contextual Studies A116 and Applied Art and Design A117 being well supported. New entries are evident in 3D Design many of which are Design and Technology Departments entering candidates in the Art and Design Suite of qualifications. Photography is universal and expanding across all endorsements apart from being a well subscribed discipline in its own right. Likewise digital approaches continue to flourish. Work in three dimensions is often a feature of Unendorsed, Fine Art and Graphic Communications submissions, which reflects the multi-disciplinary approach adopted by many candidates.

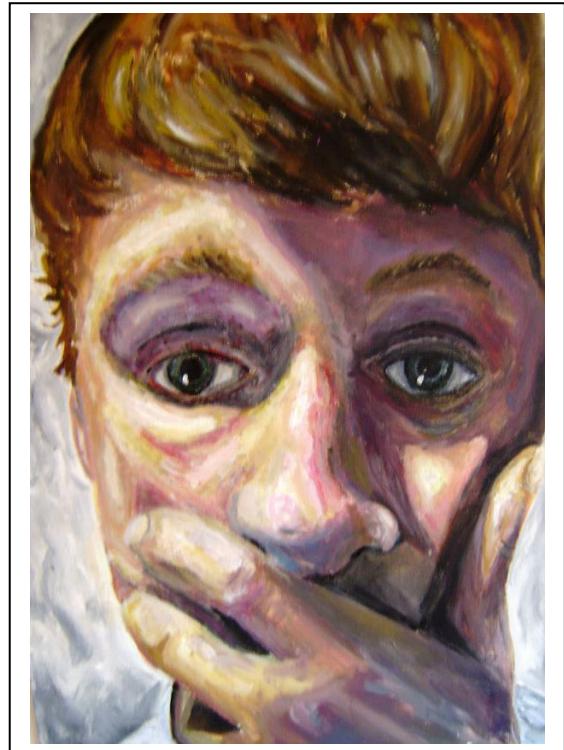
Centres often made good use of local cultural sources and resources, resulting in strong, personal development. External resources and cultural references were often really well used in centres that encouraged the candidates to engage with their local environment, leading to really interesting and individual investigations into local museum collections, architecture and landscape.

In most Centres the approach to the Portfolio was usually thematic, focused and well-sustained with the requirements of the Assessment Objectives been met in equal measure.

In keeping with recent sessions use of worksheets, rather than sketchbooks, for preparatory studies continues to be prevalent. This approach may assist greater selection in the choice of work presented for assessment. Certainly weaker candidates were less inclined to substantiate submissions by including superfluous material. Now, irrespective of the means of presentation, with the emphasis on 'quality rather than quantity' this tendency appears to be in decline.

As in 2013 most candidates made excellent use of sketchbooks, journals and diaries but it is still evident that some candidates became somewhat obsessive with presentation and the decoration of pages. Inconsistency of achievement within the submission can be detrimental to accurate assessment. In this respect, Centres are reminded that the purpose of moderation is to assess the best of candidates' achievement using a selected sample, which will determine the outcome for all candidates.

Centres encouraged and supported candidates to produce individual portfolios. In the best examples it was evident that candidates benefited from a course structured so as to ensure coverage of the Assessment Objectives without becoming too prescriptive. However, some Centres encouraged engagement with the Objectives in too rigid a manner, which did little to promote the full review, modification and consolidation of ideas as the work progressed towards final outcomes.



## OCR Report to Centres – June 2014

Once again and regrettably moderators continue to report that some candidates in their Portfolio submissions had presented sketchbooks filled with collage and magazine 'cut outs'. This practice inhibits genuine involvement in a creative subject.

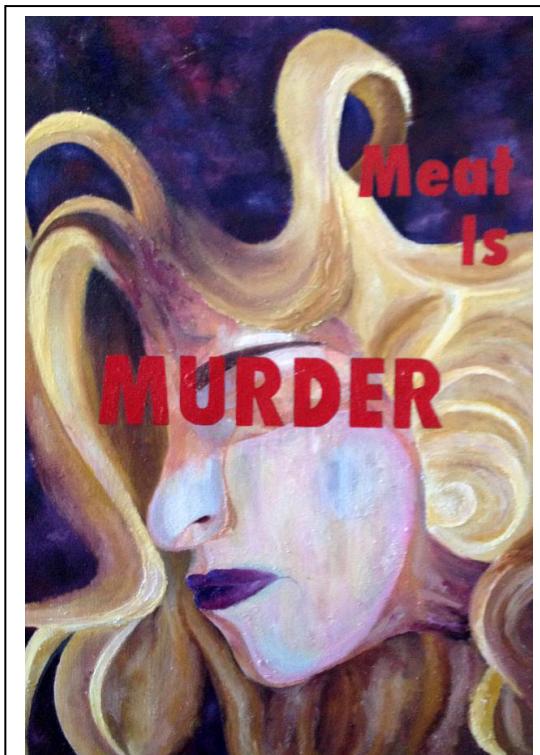
It is pleasing to report that even more submissions show candidates selecting and presenting their work for assessment. Some candidates produced large quantities of work but failed to develop their ideas in sufficient depth. Candidates should be guided by their teachers and consider carefully the extent to which their initial intentions are selected and presented in their submissions. Successful candidates provided evidence of a creative journey undertaken with a genuine sense of purpose. Less accomplished work was often fragmented and poorly executed.

Some Centres are not supporting the principle of selecting and presenting for assessment however they are a very small minority of the whole. When all the work produced throughout the course is submitted invariably it results in inconsistency in levels of achievement and this will be responded to in the moderation process.

**Once again Centres are reminded to impress upon candidates the importance of distinctly acknowledging reference material. Candidates may utilise research, quotations and other evidence in their submissions but they must identify their sources. It is also important that candidates differentiate between their own work and that of other practitioners.**

Centres are also reminded to impress upon candidates that when they are communicating in writing they should ensure that text is legible and spelling, punctuation and grammar accurate so that meaning is clear. Furthermore, Centres are reminded that candidates are required to present information in a form that suits its purpose by using an appropriate structure and style of writing.

Once again this year, the exploration of artists' work and 'mind mapping' of themes remained a purposeful activity. However, some candidates are encouraged to go to great lengths to present worksheets about a wide variety of often very disparate artists, without evidence of how this connects with or informs their own work. Similarly, when researching themes candidates sometimes generated much visual investigation but failed to appropriately consider how they might select and develop specific ideas.



## Assessment Objective 1 – Develop

Candidates showed strong emphasis on developing ideas by the investigation of images, objects and other contextual source material which was evident in the work sampled. Many candidates showed independent, well-informed investigations. The stronger presentations were approached confidently, displaying perceptive cultural understanding, often in a strongly visual manner with less need for written forms which tended to be more the case with less confident explorations.

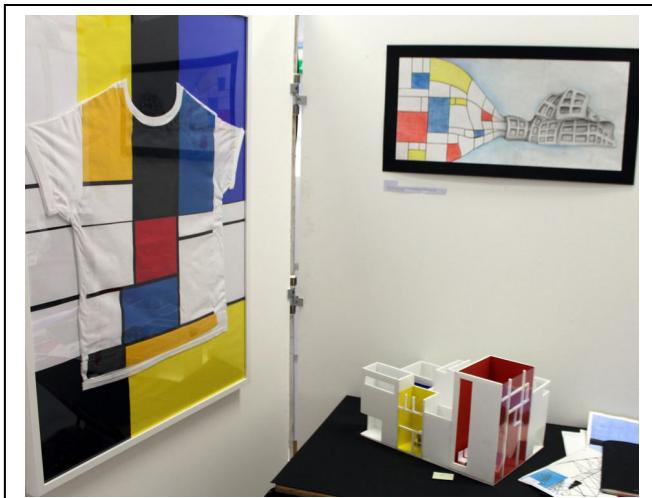
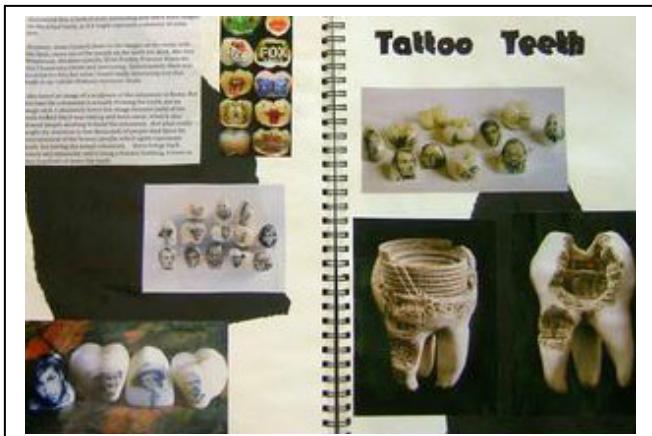
In the best work, candidates produced highly thoughtful and analytical annotation, which demonstrated true engagement with the work of others and a clear understanding of how this informed their own practice.

Again in 2013 ethnic themes founded on the study of a variety of sources, including once again the ever popular Aboriginal Art, African masks, Indian miniatures and Japanese prints.

Sources and inspirations varied from exploring aspects of portraiture or candidate's home locality, to inspiration from the internet. While others related to personal explorations into an aspect of work from a range of artists, craftspeople or artefacts. The majority of candidates clearly identified artists and cultures and understood the need to make them relevant to the outcome while the weakest explorations tended to be thinly based on basic biographical information and "bolted on" rather than engaged with in any meaningful way.

It is candidates' responses to 'artworks' in which critical evaluations are made and appreciation of context shown that positively informs the development of ideas.

Some Centres encouraged reference to contemporary sources, which stimulated candidates' imaginations and led to some well-considered links being forged. As in 2013, Banksy and other graffiti artists again proved popular to some candidates however the work showed superficial understanding with obvious and predictable interpretations.



### SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

**Use a wide range of sources to develop ideas and establish a balance between the use of media and photographic imagery. Avoid too much reliance on secondary sources from the Internet or magazines. At the core of much of the most successful work, across a range of endorsements, was the development of drawing skills as a means of researching and investigating, and developing ideas. In some cases drawings were successfully presented as final outcomes.**

## Assessment Objective 2 – Experiment

The purposeful and considered refinement of ideas through a consistent and sustained ability to experiment using a wide range of media and materials was evident in much of the work sampled. A strong and consistent ability in selecting resources independently and using them thoughtfully and systematically with an on-going review and modification of work was evident in the stronger, more successful realisations sampled.

In some Centres candidates were prompted to experiment with a wide range of materials and techniques at the expense of selecting and refining. This Objective was at its best when candidates were encouraged to link it closely with AO1 and build on investigations into the working processes and approaches of the practitioners studied.

In Photography some candidates engaged with some very exciting contemporary photographers' techniques and approaches, including experimentation with projecting and printing onto unusual surfaces, which gave a highly expressive effect.

While candidate's use of an ever wider range of facilities and resources has clearly expanded opportunity for very unusual interpretations and explorations, some of the most successfully developed work sampled was produced by skilful investigation through the use of a selective range of tools, processes and resources.

Once again printmaking was undertaken widely. Textiles candidates, as always, employed a diversity of techniques and media and demonstrated a keen and well-informed interest in designers.

Critical and Contextual Studies candidates continue to show not only sound research skills but the ability to be experimental and selective when refining ideas towards practical outcomes.

Applied candidates displayed creativity in resolving design problems and presented convincing practical solutions when responding to vocationally orientated or commercially orientated briefs.

Regrettably in less successful work, the basic skills of handling materials or techniques failed to be developed making it difficult for candidates to successfully explore or refine ideas and fully realise their intentions.



### SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

#### *Make the most of local resources:*

1. ***Museums or galleries.***
2. ***Botanical gardens, parks and zoos etc***
3. ***Artists and designers***
4. ***Community Arts Centres***
5. ***Workshops or artists in residence***
6. ***Exhibitions or studio visits***
7. ***Carnivals, fairs and parades***

***Successful work often provided evidence of a coherent journey, with a genuine sense of purpose.***

***More successful candidates demonstrated that not only that they had learnt from the work of others but also simultaneously developed their own visual language.***

## Assessment Objective 3 – Record

Many candidates displayed a strength and consistency in their ability to record ideas, insights and observations and this was central to their art studies.

Considerable focus and attention had been given by the Centres in working from observational recording. While a very significant amount of direct observation along with photographic source material was evident from the work sampled, there was also, although entirely permissible, an increasing amount of secondary source material which could have instead been worked from primary observational resources.

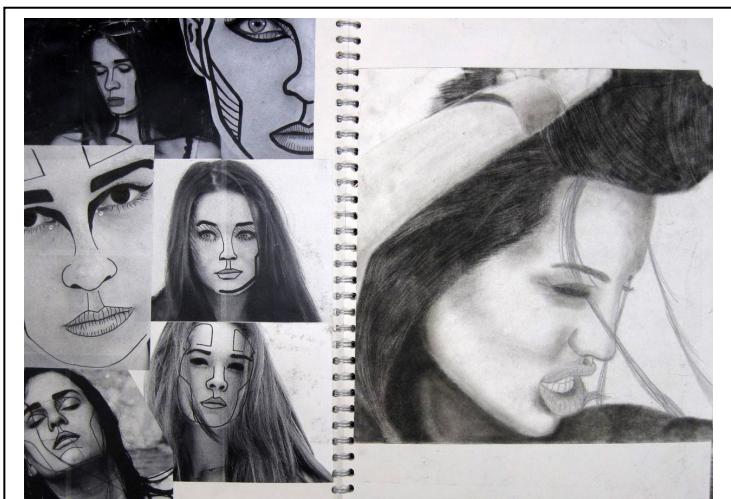
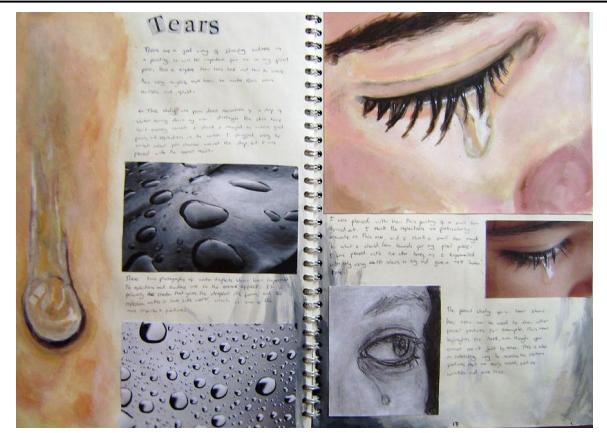
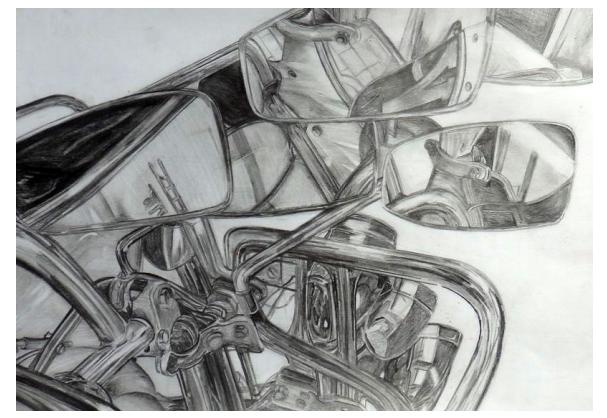
For some candidates the advancement of observational skills is a neglected aspect of their studies and those who substituted thoughtful recording with poorly selected collections of images from magazines and elsewhere were sadly misguided.

Many other candidates go to a great deal of trouble to obtain good quality and exciting source material for recording. In contrast weaker candidates still tend to be over reliant on secondary sourced material.

**When 'found' imagery is gathered from the Internet or elsewhere candidates must acknowledge their sources.**

Photography, particularly digital, continues to be a major method of recording across all endorsements.

For many candidates observations were well linked to intentions but for others the discrete approach to AO1 and AO2 prevented candidates fully exploiting the knowledge and skills gained from development and exploration to expand their methods of recording.



## OCR Report to Centres – June 2014

Centres are reminded that candidates may record their ideas, feelings, insights and observations in any way that is appropriate to intentions and this is not the sole domain of drawing and photography. Indeed, successful candidates often record their thought processes, opinions and responses to experience in a range of different ways.

**Again in 2014 Centres are reminded that the quality of written language is assessable. Moderators reported once again and with some concern:-**

***“Unfortunately the frequency of poor spelling, grammar and punctuation was alarming.”***

**The quality of recording invariably impacts throughout all the assessment objectives and in the best submissions candidates ensure that the standard of work produced remains consistent throughout.**



#### SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

**Present the work in a way that clearly shows the creative journey through the Assessment Objectives.**

**Empty plastic bottles, cans, packaging and other throwaway items are just some of the free materials used by Centres in respect of AO3.**

## Assessment Objective 4 – Present

Candidates successfully planned, reviewed and developed their work to present some strong and personal responses in their outcomes. The wide range of artistic and cultural influences where the students had made contextual connections was varied and frequently very personal. The great majority of candidates work sampled had developed creative outcomes through taking elements of the styles, character or techniques they had found in their cultural/contextual influences or their chosen artistic influence and used them to good effect in their own work.

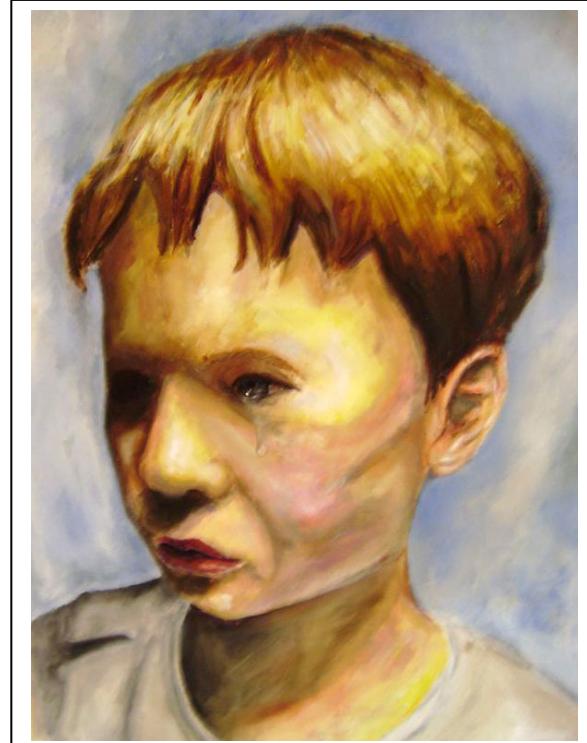
Moderators reported again in 2013 that there are unfortunately still some instances of candidates presenting all of their coursework for assessment whereas being discriminating would have been more advantageous in terms of meeting the requirements of Assessment Objective 4. Moderators' recommendations of Centres' levels of assessment are founded on the evidence seen in the moderation sample and the responsibility for being selective rests entirely with candidates.

The strongest candidates continue to produce exceptional outcomes, which impressed with the sophisticated use of detail, colour, scale and technique. These candidates made connections with contexts and the work of other practitioners that demonstrated insight and sound critical and analytical understanding.

Conversely in some instances candidates simply transposed an image from the preparatory phases and, although sometimes well executed, this did little to disclose the narrative of the creative journey.

Moderators reported that submissions are at their best when there was a 'journey' leading to an edited presentation of work which evidenced clear and insightful connections between elements, but also imaginative and personal expression.

**Some Centres still seem to be presenting 'the course', rather than guiding candidates to select and present work, which best evidenced not just their skills but strengths through the Assessment Objectives.**



### SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

***In the OCR-set Task candidates should avoid using unfamiliar materials or techniques in the production of the final outcomes, especially during the ten hours supervised period when guidance by the teacher may not be given.***

## OCR-Set Task

The 2014 OCR-set Task paper promoted responses that were almost invariably lively and well intentioned. Moderation confirmed that the range of starting points provided a platform for all candidates to display their individual creativity and technical skills to the best advantage.

Most teachers previewed the paper upon receipt and were thus well primed for its distribution to candidates early in the Spring Term. Candidates largely took advantage of the extended preparatory period and consequently most submissions were well sustained throughout the Assessment Objectives.

It was reassuring to see candidates in the lower mark range showing fewer tendencies to select predictable solutions, such as the direct copying of secondary sourced material with insufficient emphasis on development and exploration. However, less successful candidates could be ambitious and produce a significant quantity of work but lacked the technical abilities to fully realise their intentions.

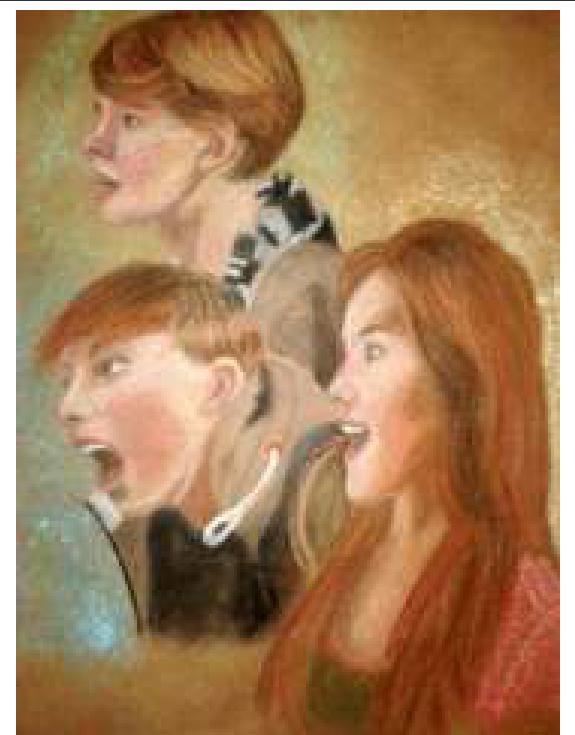
As usual Centres mainly supported candidates well by building on the experiences gained during the Portfolio unit and nurturing candidates' investigations into individual lines of enquiry.

In Photography submissions much of the work had been produced digitally, it could be difficult to distinguish what had been achieved in the ten hours of supervised time.

Candidates' choice from Section 1 Written Starting Points was distributed evenly :

**'Sandwich'** - a popular starting point that generated many different approaches and the use of a considerable range of materials. A significant number of responses involved investigations utilising lenses based media. Many submissions included explorations in three dimensions. Contextual sources such as Cleas Oldenburg, Warhol and American photorealist Ralph Goings were explored. Whilst some candidates considered themes such as generalised food industry MacDonalds and Subway.

**'Spill drop break'** – was extremely popular particularly with photographic imagery. Encouraged some accomplished recording from observation of coloured ink dispersing into liquids. Imaginative responses evolved inspired by the work of Alberto Seveso. Many candidates responded to the work of Jackson Pollock generating an experimental approach, exploring paint being spilt, splashed, dripped and dropped influenced by the artist Agnes Toth and Celia Agnes.



### SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

*Teachers should open the paper when it arrives in the centre to enable them to prepare teaching and learning resources to support the candidate in the preparatory period.*

*The Set Task paper is generated from the provisional entry lists submitted to OCR by the centre in the autumn term.*

**'Present'** – well subscribed, both across the endorsements and the ability range. Inspired by the paintings of Wayne Thiebaud and Debbie Millar. The more successful responses utilised them theme of celebration whereby other submissions relied upon predictable imagery such as bows and wrapping paper.

**'Weave'** – a popular question particularly with the textiles and photography submissions allowed for individual interpretations, which encompassed the culture of hair weaving and plaits explored through paper, collage, and digital imagery.

**'Chrome'** – was a popular question for digital explorations, influenced by the work of Bobby Crews who explores importing sections of shiny surfaces into his paintings. Candidates often relied upon household objects such as taps leading to some strong observational drawings. Connections were also made to photo realism and motor vehicles'. Including reflections in car wing mirrors, head lamps and motor bikes were effectively explored.

**'Headdresses'** - responses to this starting point tended to be very popular with fine art and textile candidates. Cultural explorations were evident as candidate's sought inspiration from fashion through the ages, festivals carnivals and celebration events, with explorations in millinery and mixed media resulting in 3 dimensional wigs and fascinator. Many candidates selecting this question made connections to portraiture.

**'Dental care'** – Many submissions were supported by candidates who explored photography. Submissions allowed for humorous and personal connections with braces proving popular. Although diverse, interpretations were almost invariably colourful and in some cases led to three dimensional submissions.

The Section 2 Visual Starting Points were more inviting than previously with **'Profile'** and **'Montage'** equally winning much attention. Whilst some responses being inspired by Luceun Freud, Francis Bacon, Chuck Close and other famous 'portrait artists'. Profile was often responded too with the support of digital recording. Montage widely appealed across endorsements with strong connections to photography and David Hockney joiners.

Critical and Contextual candidates undertook all Section 3 starting points.

Section 4 'Applied' with subsection 'A' being very popular amongst submissions including visits to local venue for theatrical productions which facilitated an agenda for the brief incorporating the client for site specific work.



## Critical and Contextual Studies

This endorsement again attracted a good following especially from Centres wishing to offer their candidates the opportunity to follow a course that is underpinned by contextual research, reference and finding practical solutions.

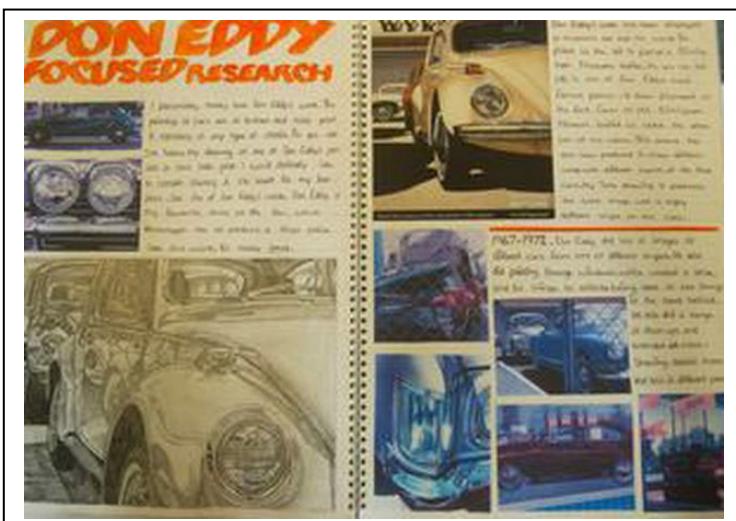
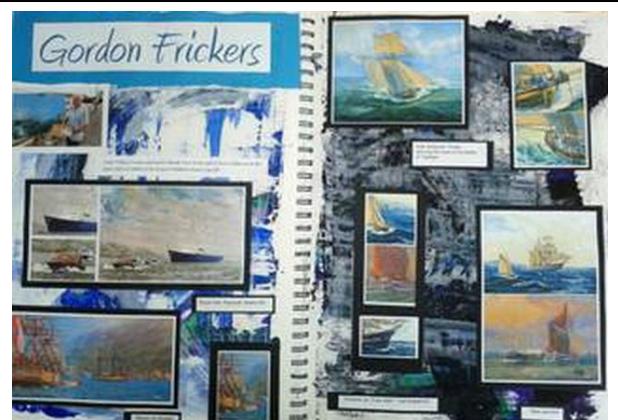
Moderators once again commented positively on the wide variety of subjects and themes undertaken.

Predominantly candidates made highly personal responses to art and design works through their own practical work.

Good practice is often shown when practical work is frequently supported by thoughtful written observations that demonstrated commendable levels of critical understanding and appreciation.

Once again it was encouraging to note that most candidates successfully avoided repeating factual information gathered from the Internet and made a genuine attempt to be interpretive and insightful. Not surprisingly candidates' performance in Assessment Objective 1 was almost invariably strong, impacting positively on the rest of the submission.

Some Centres encourage candidates to reduce the amount of historical or factual information gathered and concentrate on documenting, critical analysis and personal evaluations.



### SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

***Introduce a programme of research using a range of different approaches, from sketching, to photography, to collecting pictures and items. Ask your candidates to edit and annotate their research.***

## Applied Art and Design

Once again in 2014 an increasing number of candidates are taking this endorsement.

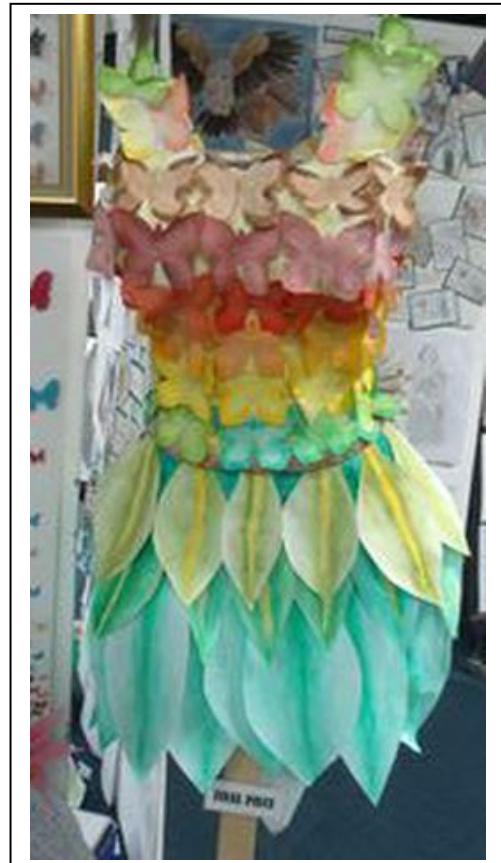
Pleasingly much ingenuity is shown in devising vocationally or commercially orientated briefs, which often established commercial clients and target audiences with whom candidates could readily identify. Working within such parameters far from being restrictive continues to promote the creativity of many candidates who display much originality of thought in resolving design problems and presenting convincing solutions.

Candidates continue to research a broad spectrum of commercial, industrial or design contexts and made connections with a considerable array of practitioners, equally from the fields of Design, Industry and Applied Arts. Although candidates had the latitude to work within the broad areas of study identified by the endorsements the approach was frequently multi-disciplinary with candidates demonstrating much versatility in exploring the potential of an impressively extensive assortment of 2D and 3D media, resources, materials, techniques and processes.

Once again in 2014 it was common practice in some Centres to establish a series of deadlines throughout the year of work for candidates to follow.

Annotation in Applied Art and Design can refer to specific design issues such as materials, structure and alternative approaches to making supplemented by specific fashion, textile, graphic design, architectural or product design terminology.

Candidates should give proper attention to the design process in a vocational context so that the gap between research and final outcome is bridged by developmental stages.



### SHARING BEST PRACTICE:

***Candidates should remember that the work should be seen 'in a vocational context' and that the 'work must be supported by relevant work of their own'.***

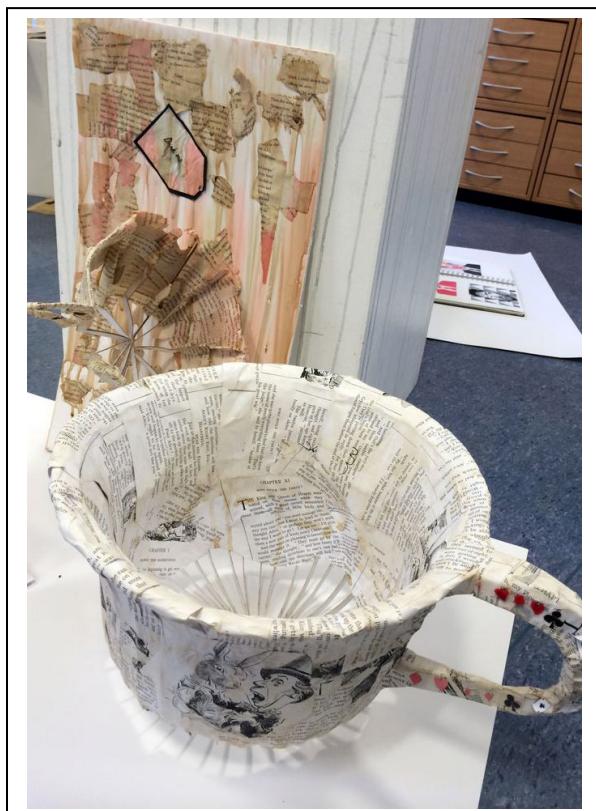
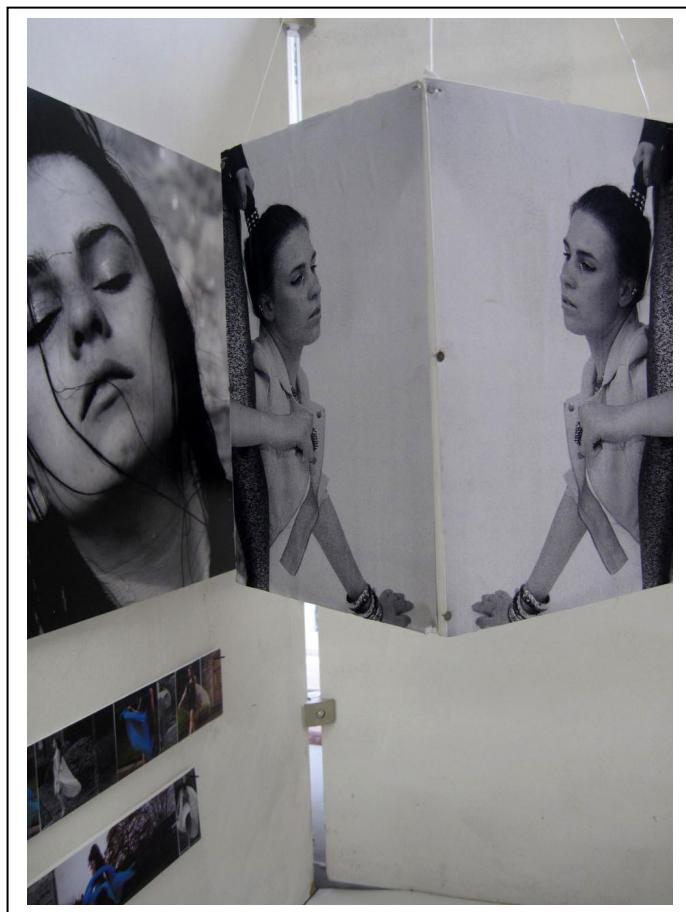
## Summary and Guidance

All Centres should find it significant that this 2014 session clearly showed the OCR GCSE Art and Design specification greatly helped candidates achieve in all the endorsements and make full use of the creative and skills based opportunities afforded.

2014 also confirmed that Centres continue to take advantage of the wider choice of endorsements and candidates' submissions distinctly demonstrated the broadest possible range of approaches at GCSE.

**The number of D&T departments entering their candidates in either the 3D Design or Textiles endorsement continued to grow in 2014.**

The opportunities presented in this Art and Design specification allows for greater flexibility in designing course structures and delivery. Moreover, the assessment burden is alleviated by reductions in the amount of work and space required for moderation.

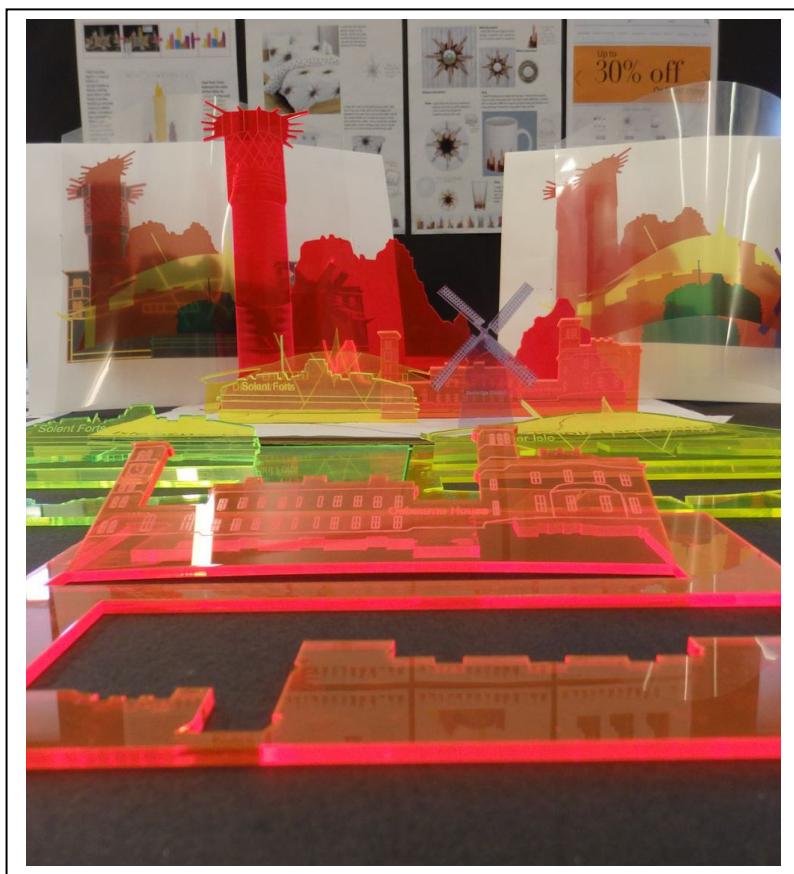


## OCR Report to Centres – June 2014

Reassuringly moderators' report that informed teaching, well conceived course structures and appropriate resources ensured that candidates performed to their full potential in both Units. Teachers in the vast majority of Centres achieve this and they are commended for the constructive assistance, support and guidance given to their candidates.

Centres are reminded that applications for Special Consideration must be made well in advance of the moderation visit. This responsibility lies entirely with Centres as the moderator cannot activate the procedure. It is advisable to notify the moderator of such cases when forwarding documentation for the May 15 deadline.

**Once again in 2014 the use of ICT was a significant feature of work across all endorsements. The Internet enabled candidates to access the work of a wide range of artists, designers and craftspeople. However, teachers and lecturers need to maintain their vigilance in monitoring the websites used and steer candidates away from inappropriate material.**

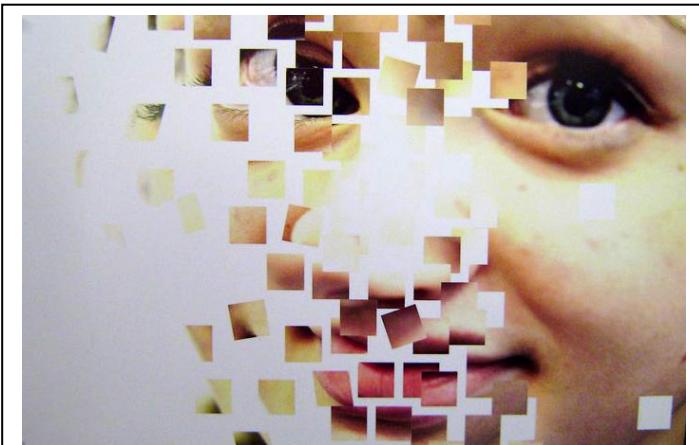


## OCR Report to Centres – June 2014

OCR thanks the many teachers for their encouragement which was much appreciated and the suggestions made greatly informed the support materials for both candidates and teachers.

Further information regarding professional development for 2014-2015 will be available on the OCR website, [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) or by contacting OCR Training on 02476 496398 or by email to [professionaldevelopment@ocr.org.uk](mailto:professionaldevelopment@ocr.org.uk) in September 2014.

Teachers are reminded that they can join the OCR Art and Design e-list via the OCR website. The e-list covers all Art and Design specifications and can be used as a forum to ask questions, share good practice and resources and to contact colleagues delivering the OCR specifications in your local area. All OCR senior examining and moderating personnel are members of the e-list and would welcome any questions, comments or feedback from teachers regarding this report.



**The exemplar photographs used in this report show a small selection of the work displayed for moderation and they are reproduced with the permission of the Centres concerned. OCR would like to thank all the candidates, teachers and moderators who made this possible.**

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