

## **Art and Design**

Advanced GCE A2 H560-H566

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H160-H166

# **Report on the Units**

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**June 2010**

**H160-6/H560-6/R/10**

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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.

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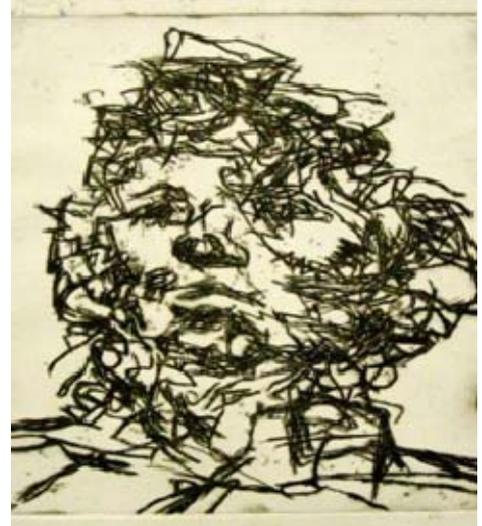
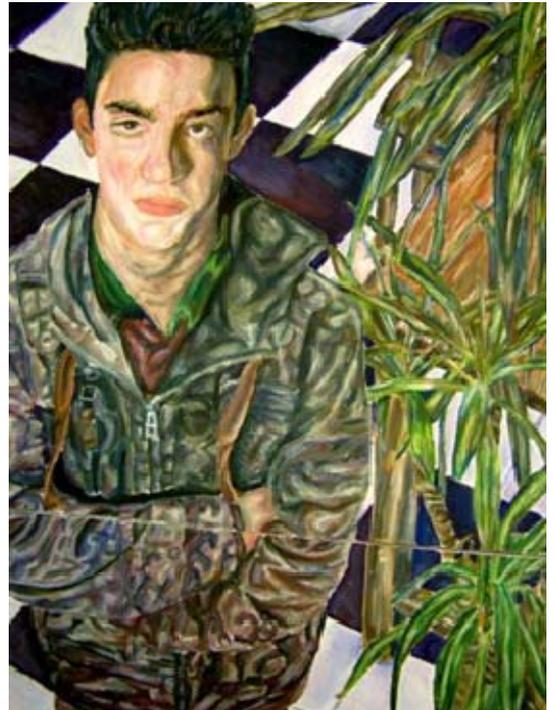
# Chief Examiner's Report

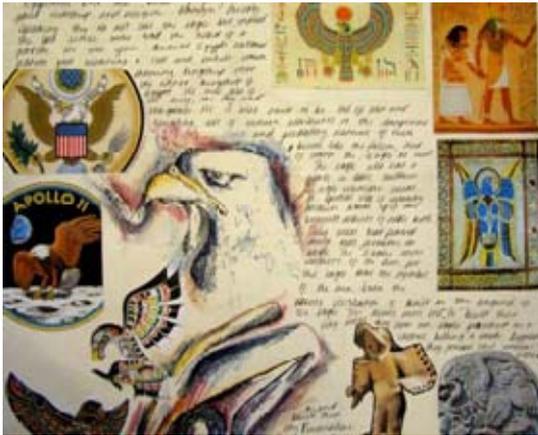
## General Comments:

- Centres enjoyed just having two units for each of the qualifications and there was a lot of support for the new course
- Moderators reported how much centres valued the feedback that was given at the end of the moderation

## In Centres

- First contact. Centres were helpful about the visit times
- Most had allocated appropriate space and were displaying unit by unit and providing maps if they have a large Centre
- The setting out of the work varied from centre to centre. Most correctly used rank order, with others using displays in the style of Art Degree shows. Maps or diagrams were provided and moderators found this to be quite acceptable but it did prolong the process. Some still are doing table top displays
- Usually quiet when moderation took place but not always – this appears to be an increasing problem
- Reports from moderators indicate that MS1s etc arrived on, or around the correct time but many centres had omitted to send the CCS 160 Authentications. Forms were ready for moderators when they arrived at the centres. Centres still have problems with the authentication and need to be aware that they only need one form for all their AS candidates and one for their A2 candidates
- Centres need to remember to send in their special consideration forms in advance
- Centres should also be thanked for being so cooperative in relation to loaning work for the Awarding process and for Inset.





### About Marking

- Some Centres seemed unsure about how to use the Assessment Objectives: whether to start with AO1 and work their way through them or to start with AO3 Record, move to AO2 Experiment and then on to develop AO3 and finally finish with AO4 Present. Although advice is offered at Inset the general guidance is to use the Assessment criteria in a way that best suits the Centre's previous approach (as no single method is preferred )
- Some concern from Centres about the marking relationship between the 2 elements of the Related Personal Study
- In general the rank order in most Centres was secure.



### Coursework Portfolio Unit 1: AS Level

- Some excellent work seen and Centres appear to be responding to the greater sense of freedom and time available that the portfolio affords. It was seen to be allowing candidates to explore their selected subject more fully. The candidates appear to be trying a wider range of both ideas, and also materials, enabling them to develop their work in more inventive ways. It is clear that candidates are exploring the use of installation as a means of developing their ideas resulting in visually creative and physically impressive work being seen. The quality, development and vitality of work produced in what is essentially 2 terms is commendable. There is a sense that the extra time available is resulting in much more personal work being undertaken.



## Report on the Units taken in June 2010

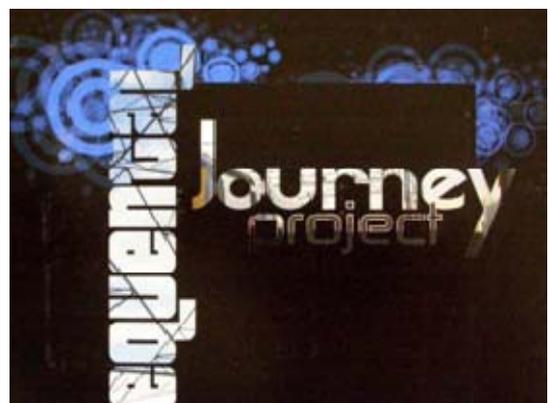
- Some Centres are doing more than one project, in some cases three. Some Centres start with an initial focused project which may cover a particular set of skills - this tends to be more evident in endorsed areas such as Textiles, Design and Graphic Communication with candidates keeping a technical journal or sketchbook in the initial parts of the course. In Fine Art sketch books with annotations are common, in relation to artists and designers who are influencing their work, and this does prepare them for making connections and understanding the context of the area or genre that they are exploring. This also is a good preparation for A2 particularly in relation to the Related Personal Study. It should be stressed that candidates are not required to write for AS and if they make brief annotations and notes then the regulations governing Quality of Written Communication do not apply. However if they do write in continuous prose then these regulations should be taken into account when assessing the candidates' work.



- It is clear that some candidates found it difficult to translate their A4 sketchbook research into a more substantial larger format piece. Such candidates may find it useful to explore the use of scale and undertake interim work outside of the sketchbook before embarking on the final realisation.
- Portfolio selection is an aspect that both Centres and candidates also need to be more conscious of. It is not necessary to show the whole course. However thoughtful selecting and editing should ensure that the work submitted is appropriate.
- **AO1 (develop)** Candidates needed to show that they are developing their work rather than merely replicating. Developing is the ability to use both their recording skills AO3 and their experimentations AO2 and combine them into a set of possible solutions. Developing can also be demonstrated by candidates working outside of their sketchbooks to explore scale. Candidates often needed to show more clearly how the processes that they were using informed personal development. This assessment objective is emphasised in the portfolio.

*Report on the Units taken in June 2010*

- **AO2 (experiment)** is an open ended process in which candidates can research the qualities of materials and processes. However they should attempt to refine and improve their work as they become more accomplished and skilful in using a particular method. This Assessment Objective is emphasised in the portfolio.
- **AO3 (record)** Recording can be explored through a wide range of materials and approaches including drawing from primary sources as well as using photography and three-dimensional studies of selected subject matter. This assessment objective is the key to the personal nature of the subject and over reliance on borrowed photographic or Internet material does not allow candidates to make the work their own. Candidates need to show evidence of editing or modification of the image. Recording was central to much of the work of successful candidates with drawing and mark-making a vital tool for observational studies from primary sources. There was a high degree of control and accuracy, as well as experimentation, in the use of media.
- **AO4 (present)** allows candidates to demonstrate a resolution to their research and present an individual personal response. Candidates do demonstrate some very impressive solutions and creative outcomes to the work they have undertaken during their course. However some candidates do find it difficult to move from exciting, small scale explorations into presenting a more significant well-resolved final piece or pieces. A key to success in this objective is for candidates to realise that they need to carefully select which work, area or idea they need to follow up. They need to consider issues such as what will work on a more ambitious scale, how easily media transpose to a more substantial solution as well as the time aspects of how long a successful solution takes to refine and carefully present.





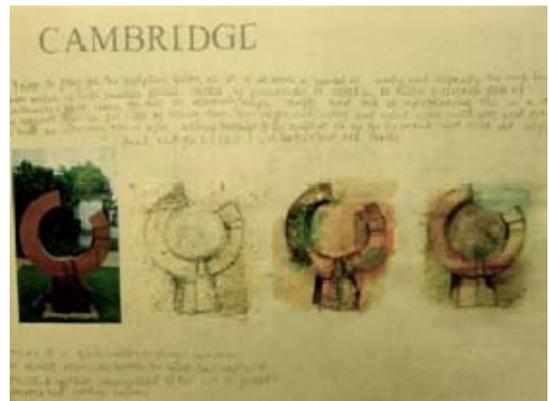
## Controlled Assignment Unit 2: AS Level

- In the best quality work, the research and preparation was extremely mature, perceptive, extensive and well organised, with strong evidence across all assessment objectives.
- Many candidates had formed intelligent and original artist connections which were observed to be appropriate to their intentions and of vital importance to the development of the idea.
- The amount of preparatory work was varied from Centre to Centre. Much of the work submitted averaged at around 3 x A1 sheets. Some Centres presented work in sketchbooks, whilst others had up to 8 x A1 sheets. Many students had refined media to a very high level. They clearly knew what worked for them and produced their best work in the later stages of development [AO1] and in presentation [AO4]. Candidates who encountered problems with this unit often had not made full use of the preparation period and lacked depth in planning, resulting in work which had only been explored in a very direct linear manner.
- Most Centres had given more than the 3 weeks' preparation time with better candidates being able to link their coursework with their Controlled Assignment. Those candidates who embarked on completely new areas of media often encountered problems. In relation to this some Centres may wish to give clearer guidance about the appropriateness of particular processes being attempted by some candidates.
- Popular questions were:
  - **'Stacked'** – this presented a good opportunity for candidates to explore both natural features such as rock formations as well as industrial settings
  - **'Orange'** – gave candidates a range of different starting points such as the fruit, the colour and a particular telephone network
  - **'Backyard'** - This question provided the possibilities of industrial and/or domestic settings which was very popular with both Fine Artists and Graphic Design candidates
  - **'Ripples'** – this question was interpreted in terms of water, sand and surfaces generally and was very popular with Textile Design candidates
- AO1 and AO2 carried more marks so candidates who made good use of the preparation time and developed their work to a high standard did well. Candidates who made pertinent connections to appropriate artists also did well as this enriched their research and more fully demonstrated their understanding.



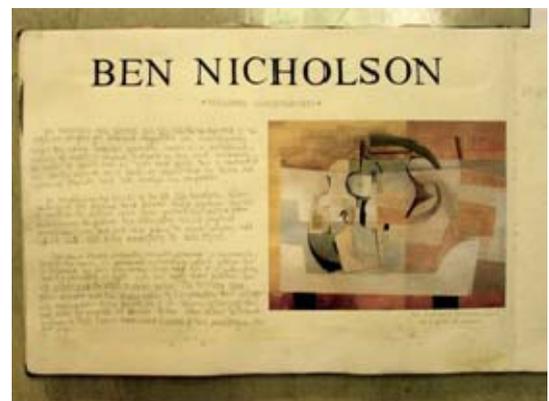
## Report on the Units taken in June 2010

- AO2 (experiment) This objective was also emphasised in this unit so again good use of the preparation period could have a significant impact on a candidate's performance. Candidates who demonstrated what they knew in relation to materials and processes did appear to perform better than candidates who moved into unfamiliar territory.
- AO3 (record) This objective was not always approached in a consistent manner and candidates who invested significant time in their initial recording, trying out a range of appropriate media, appeared to be in a better position to achieve the higher mark ranges.
- AO4 (present) Being selective in presenting the work for assessment was a key aspect of this objective. It was not necessary to show everything that had been attempted but it was better to present a more well crafted personal exploration of a particular question which had been inventively interpreted.



### Personal Investigation Unit 3: A2 Level

- Much of the work seen was of a very high standard indeed, with many Centres preferring to negotiate A2 work on a one to one basis with individual candidates. One Centre spoke of their approach to this unit as a 'journey' where their candidates had selected a theme and had developed a range of directions in practical terms leading to some highly original and personal interpretations. There was a lot of evidence that candidates were using their ideas from AS and had developed them into something far more sophisticated in this unit. Moderator comments were that some excellent work had been seen and that the artists were well integrated into the work, revealing a clear dialogue between the candidates' own explorations and how they developed their work in relation to a particular genre or approach adopted by particular artists.



Report on the Units taken in June 2010



- In relation to the Related Personal Study Centres followed a range of approaches. Some had very successfully integrated the study into their work often within the main sketchbook with the Study either identified at intervals through the sketchbook or acting as a prompt to suggest lines of enquiry. This allowed their research to be well informed and also enriched both the level of understanding as well as enabled candidates to consider aspects of a particular approach that initially would have not been obvious. Some Centres appeared to start the study much later with candidates selecting appropriate artists in the initial stages of the course and then being set a series of, for example, three one thousand word essay titles such as the “impact of techniques, methods or technologies on your selected artist/designers”. The candidates had been set the same title but because they had selected very different artists the research and outcomes resulted in very different subjects being explored and this culminated in some very incisive research. Other Centres had focused on particular skills that would be required for the Study so candidates had to select and write a detailed description of a piece of artwork of their choice that related to their work. This also involved writing a biography to place the work within a historical context. Candidates were asked to reach a conclusion as well as supply a bibliography.

Ultimately, my study of Thera Rigg has influenced me to look at Fortuny Fabrics, which share the cultural manipulation of fabric to produce elegant fashion statements, most famously illustrated by the Delphos dress. As illustrated opposite, one can see the gentle hand pleating of silk that are so tight that they form unique ruffles in the garment. Thus, they are an appropriate example of how the body has an ability to shape the clothes and the fabric accentuates the shape.



There is an interesting comparison of the work of Fortuny to the clothing of the ancient Greeks from [www.greekart.com](http://www.greekart.com) as illustrated below.




The tea gown pictured above gets its shape from the weightless material weighted by Venetian glass beads that exemplified how different weights of materials complement one another. Furthermore, coverage of the garment is vital in order to retain its form.

The wonder behind Fortuny is summed up well by [www.greekart.com](http://www.greekart.com) that his “contemporary described him as an alchemist because he never revealed the secret of the artifice he began employed in his atelier at the Palazzo Chigi in Venice. He achieved magical effects by means unexplainable to outsiders.”

Several centres had used a Gallery Study Day to generate the theme for the Personal Investigation. Once they had returned to the Centre they used the personal study as a start to practical research.

- Some candidates produced a separate related study which was similar to the Personal Study in the Legacy A2 unit. These worked well as long as they were integrated and related to the work of the candidate and did not appear merely as an adjunct to the main coursework.
- Other Centres undertook a long essay with a generic title, whilst others followed a timeline approach. These approaches and the 'dictionary' approach where candidates selected a range of artist/designers as their work developed sometimes lead to weaker candidates not exploring the subject area in sufficient depth. Instead the work became either a set of biographies or a cursory survey.
- Centres do need to consider how the Related Personal Studies should acknowledge and credit sources and references. The usual way to do this is to ask the candidate to include a bibliography.
- Many candidates are quite confident at integrating language into the study. However, legibility, quality of spelling and general grammar is all important aspects in terms of the quality of written communication. The study must be continuous prose – notes and brief annotations do not count or, if submitted as the written element, can only be considered incomplete and therefore partial.
- The Internet is a crucial tool in relation to finding information about artists and designers. However it is clear that many candidates would benefit from training at the beginning of their A2 course in the effective use of the Internet as a research instrument. Ensuring candidates use effective search engines or directories and that they understand these are tools (it is surprising how many include these in a bibliography). A directory will list things in categories and a search engine will produce a list of possible websites. The higher up the list a site is the more relevant it is likely to be, unless it's an advertisement. Candidates may benefit from this online tutorial on the use of the Internet as a research tool [www.vts.intute.ac.uk/he/tutorial/](http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/he/tutorial/)
- Photoshop is another useful application which can be used highly effectively across a range of endorsements and where again some initial training may aid candidate performance.

**AO1 (develop)** Successful candidates explored their selected subject both from a practical approach but also in terms of contextual links in their Related Personal Study. A clear structure, which emerged in their practical work, and a planned structure to their Study enabled them to do well in this objective.

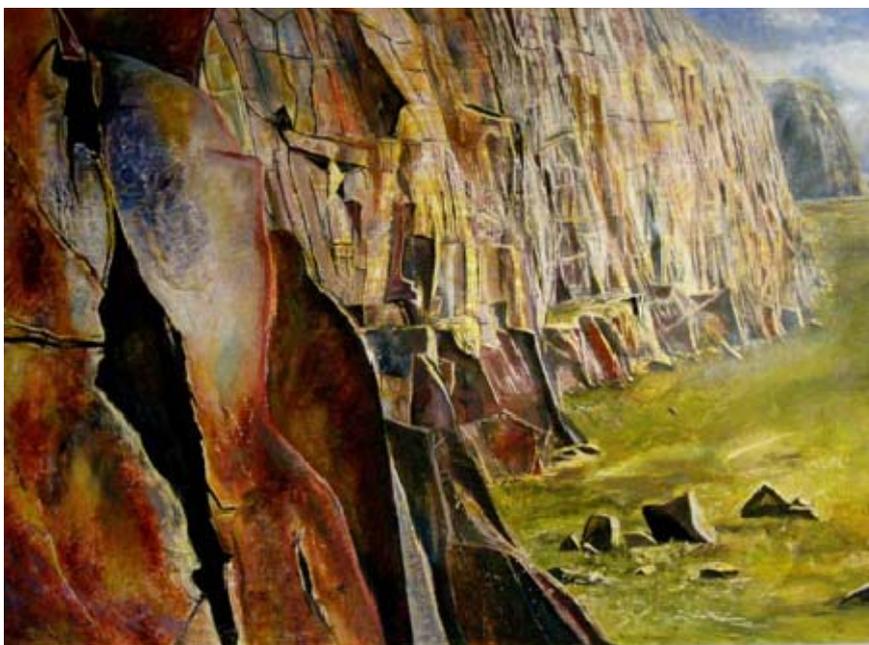
**AO2 (experiment)** Refining and crafting experimentations were key elements to success in this objective..

**AO3 (record)** Successfully combining both primary and secondary recording using drawing, marquette making and photography was a central aspect to effective initial research in this objective.

**AO4 (present)** Selecting and inventively combining elements to resolve intentions was a key aspect to succeeding in this objective, as was how a candidate's research was translated into a final piece(s).

**Controlled Assignment Unit 4: A2 Level**

- The question paper - indeed the whole unit - was well received and represents a familiar A2 unit. Although all questions may be attempted it is advised that section 4 and 5 are primarily intended for candidates offering the Critical and Contextual endorsement.
- Some exceptional work was displayed and the candidates should be congratulated on the powerful and significant work in evidence, which clearly reflected their understanding of the creative process. There was a real sense that many candidates had built on their Personal Investigation unit and selected questions that allowed them to continue with a particular set of ideas, theme or range of materials and processes. Significant amounts of work seen had a very contemporary flavour with candidates continuing to push boundaries at this level.
- Moderators reported on a range of work from Fine Art based study to Textiles. Like the AS level, Lens based work is becoming increasingly popular but it was in this medium where significant improvement from AS was evident. Much of the photography was serious and well managed, displaying a range of exciting themes selected and interpreted in inventive ways.
- Creative experimentation through materials and techniques was seen in many Centres. Very good use of sketchbooks supporting preparatory development was evident as was candidates' ability to move confidently from sketchbook experimentations to larger scale work which was ambitious and accomplished. Moderators reported far less reliance on second-hand imagery this year which gave more impact to the work. Good visual recording with excellent development was a characteristic of top Centres and candidates.
- Some Centres had not fully understood the personal development of ideas - having established a fairly directed course. Candidates in such Centres tended to have very similar submissions, had limited direction or little development evident. The work lacked progression and tended to be repetitive 'life studies' or laboured 'portraiture' as a blanket exercise for all students.



- Popular questions included:
  - **'Plumage'**- this allowed particularly textile students to explore and research the tactile aspects of feathers in relation to garments, with Fine Art candidates exploring the chromatic potential of the question
  - **'Emerging'** – this was a popular question with both photographers and fine artists and allowed candidates to enquire into staged poses of models and figures
  - **'Discarded'** – enabled candidates to research a wide range of subject matter from waste ground to recycling
  - **'Illusion'** – this provided much scope for candidates to explore ideas around painting and photography and works by Magritte appeared to figure highly in this question.
- **AO1 (develop)** Candidates' development of ideas appeared far clearer in this unit. They were often reworking in known territory. Candidates had contextual references in abundance and many of the sketch books seen suggested a pleasure taken in the developmental process. The work was clearly influenced by studies undertaken in the Personal Investigation Unit.
- **AO2 (experiment)** This assessment objective was seen as the strongest aspect of the work moderated for this unit. Many Centres were aware of the wide range of materials and processes available to enhance their candidates' work. They had looked beyond using a single art technique or process, and combinations of these were tried and experimented with to various levels.
- **AO3 (record)** Candidates worked well from primary sourced images. However, candidates in several Centres relied on images from secondary sources. Some Centres had presented evidence of a balance of primary/secondary-sourced material resulting in some sophisticated, fine art based montage work.
- Photography was widely used to record particularly in portraiture this year. Photorealist approaches were widespread with the work of Chuck Close being ever popular.
- **AO4 (present)** Presenting final responses or realised pieces featured as a strong assessment objective in terms of the achievement of candidates – many had realised intentions through exciting and ambitious outcomes which varied from large scale paintings or sculptures, textile hangings or photographs to a series of smaller works shown as a set.

## F413 & F423: Photography Lens and light based media

### GENERAL COMMENTS:

- The grade thresholds for AS Photography were awarded separately from the other AS endorsements this series.
- Photography is one of the fastest growing Art and Design endorsements and many Centres are reporting that they are either setting up a new AS Lens based photography or film course or will be doing so in the near future.
- One of the reasons cited was that it was relatively easy to set up digital photography or film making with most Centres now having significant Information Technology provision and capability. This also allows Art departments to expand the range and opportunities to increasing numbers of students wishing to study art and design.



### Coursework Portfolio Unit 1: AS Level

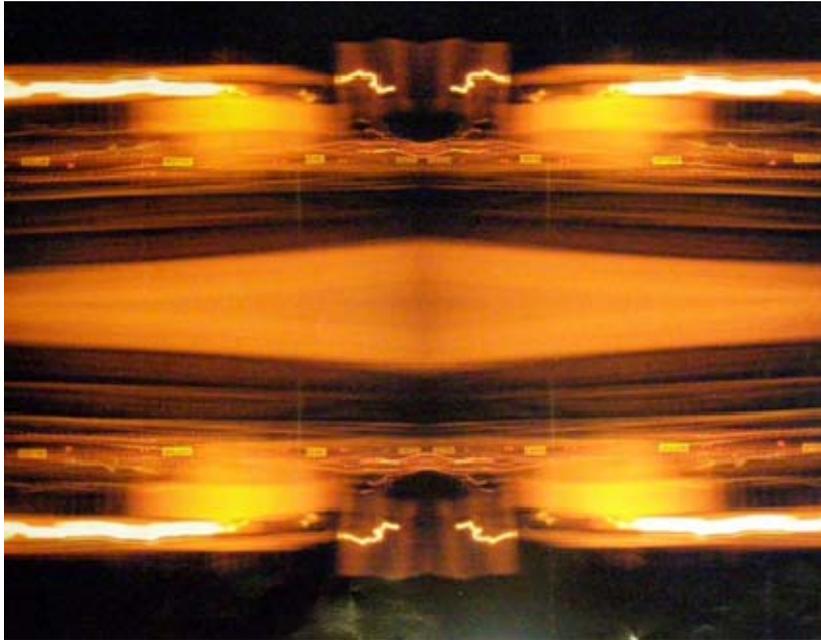
- Several Centres had started their course with a series of mini-projects or foundation exercises in which candidates are introduced to either the basics of chemical or digital photography and filmmaking. Some Centres had opted for one larger project with various strands or links by theme allowing the candidates to use a range of photographic processes. Other Centres had clearly produced a technical sketchbook that also incorporated photographers, with students learning how technical innovation goes hand in hand with a specific individual photographer's work. It was also clear that candidates following this sort of approach gained significant insight not only into the technical aspects but built up a clear picture of different genres of photography from documentary, photojournalism to fashion photography.
- Most Lens and digital candidates worked in sketchbooks. This appears to be the preferred format although some moderators reported other methods being used such as power point.





- The sketchbook approach was generally very well presented with a clear logical and progressive structure enabling candidates to refer back to both technical detail but also to particular salient individuals in the field.
- Some interesting use of digital media enhanced the candidates' investigation and development of ideas. The use of 'Photoshop' as a tool was used very effectively by many Centres with some newer art teaching staff in particular being very capable in this area.
- Some Centres had run courses where candidates had covered both chemical and digital media, whereas others had concentrated just on one aspect.
- In some Centres which did both Chemical and Digital approaches the level of technical ability appeared weaker although moderators reported that at A2 these discrepancies appeared to disappear.
- Some Centres cleverly combined chemical and digital processes with candidates taking initially chemical black and white photographs and then scanning them into a computer and digitally manipulating them. This presented significant opportunities for candidates to achieve very inventive solutions to their research work.
- **AO1 (develop)** candidates particularly at AS have the opportunity to not only combine technical processes but also to take their explorations into different areas such as three dimensions. The developmental process can be facilitated by candidates working outside of their sketchbooks to explore scale, narrative or by producing a series. Candidates should also be aware of how subject matter is a key element in the development of work in this endorsement. This assessment objective is emphasised in the portfolio.
- **AO2 (experiment)** is an open ended process in which candidates can research the qualities of materials and processes. However they should attempt to refine and improve their work as they become more accomplished and skilful

- Combining processes again gives the potential for quite creative solutions. This assessment objective is emphasised in the portfolio.
- **AO3 (record)** Recording is central to much photography and related fields and so careful framing, cropping and selection when taking and manipulating pictures or film is a key aspect of this assessment objective.
- **AO4 (present)** allows candidates to demonstrate a resolution to their research and present an individual and personal response. However candidates need to be able to identify images and pictures that are successful when deciding what to present for assessment. Scale can be used very effectively here. Sometimes very well presented small photographs can allow candidates to demonstrate some very impressive solutions and creative outcomes to the work they have undertaken during their course.



### **Controlled Assignment Unit 2: AS Level**

- Much of the photography endorsement was of a very high standard with good evidence of the manipulation of image/images. It is interesting to note the diversity in informed connections not only from the world of photography but through other artists and their work. Most candidates worked in sketchbooks. This is an area that is particularly well covered during the portfolio unit. This quite methodical approach in sketchbooks does allow candidates to formulate their ideas in a logical and clearly visual way. It makes it easier for them to grasp the direction of their journey but also allows for clear and concise assessment.
- It is also clear that candidates don't always make the correct choice in selecting work for their conclusive piece - sometimes better contact prints or digital images are evident in the research or sketchbook but not selected: this is an area that Centres may wish to consider.

*Report on the Units taken in June 2010*

- Popular questions included
  - **'Jeans'** – this allowed for significant amounts of figure and fashion photography in which social settings or contemporary backdrops played a key role
  - **'Prone Figure'** – this provided the opportunity for posed model shots in which individuals were shot in different locations and poses
  - **'Stacked'** – this presented a good opportunity for candidates to explore both natural features such as rock formations as well as industrial settings and industrial storage
  - **'Orange'** – gave candidates several different starting points and many used digital photography to good effect exploring the chromatic potential of long exposure – such as night time traffic as well as the fruit
  - **'Social'** - this provided many candidates with the opportunity to explore social gatherings, spectators, sporting events and documentary aspects of city life.
- AO1 and AO2 carried more marks so candidates who made good use of the preparation time and developed their work to a high standard did well. Candidates who made pertinent connections to appropriate photographers also did well, enriching their research and more fully demonstrating their understanding.



- AO2 (experiment) Candidates who demonstrated what they knew in relation to technical processes appeared to perform better than candidates who moved into unfamiliar territory. Successful candidates often combined familiar processes in unfamiliar ways resulting in inventive solutions.
- AO3 (record) This objective was generally well explored with significant amounts of documentary type photography being used and in which recording was a key component.
- AO4 (present) Being selective and careful in presenting work for assessment is a key aspect of this objective. Well laid out and carefully sequenced photographs which revealed a clear concept and effective journey were a central aspect in this objective.

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