

Art and Design

Advanced GCE A2 H560-H566

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H160-H166

Report on the Units

June 2009

H160-6/H560-6/MS/R/09

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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 syllabus 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

Introduction

This report focuses on the introduction of the new AS in Centres. This new specification has only two units for the AS in contrast with the old three. Centres were positive about the teaching of this new specification especially with the introduction of the new portfolio. It is the purpose of this report to share the many good ideas and strategies that Centres have developed. It is testament to the hard work undertaken by both Centres and candidates that such high quality work was seen this year, the first year of this course.

To support these changes OCR provided Inset and all Centres that are undertaking this course, are urged to attend these sessions where real student work can be analysed with colleagues and different teaching approaches are discussed. The new specifications have different marking criteria and Centres need to ensure that they mark to these new criteria and that their teaching practices reflect these new demands. Centres should check the website for guidance for centres and other useful support material. Centres need to be aware that attending Inset should help avoid problems and alert them to key dates, effective teaching strategies and accurate marking reflecting the new assessment objectives.

This report contains information on both the new AS units that were taken this year and information from the pilot study of the new A2, which will be taught to all students this coming academic year. This activity was selected as this would be the first time that the personal study would be combined with the students' own coursework within one unit and therefore would not carry a separate set of marks. This unit also required the student to relate their study to their own practice. It was felt that Centres would appreciate guidance on these new requirements.

Portfolio: F410-5

The change to this from the legacy specification was welcomed. Some Centres had found two research projects a challenge and saw in the portfolio a closer match between the teaching and assessment approaches. The new one unit coursework structure was more in tune with the way the students were taught and the timescale that was available. Centres saw this unit as a natural evolution from the legacy unit one (research projects) and unit two (personal investigation). Centres found that in practice they could combine these two units easily. Some centres need to be aware however that there are new assessment objectives. Elements of the old critical and contextual objective are now to be found embedded in the new assessment objectives.

In this unit students are not required to submit prose although most student did annotate their sketchbooks and this was successful and informed. However it is suggested that students undertake written analysis so that they have the opportunity to practise and develop their writing skills, which are required for A2. It is important for Centres to realise that brief annotations are not assessed according to QWC - quality of written communication - but if they write in prose they will be assessed this way. Teachers need to be aware of the difference between teaching and assessment and the significance of selection. It is therefore good practice to encourage students to write about their own and others' work but it may not be in their interests to submit all of their writing. Selection is a crucial aspect to their portfolio.

The developmental approach proved to be, with Centres, the most popular with teachers starting a project with all students and then students continuing the project by following their own interests and strengths. Visits to galleries and museums really extended students' work and their level of engagement.

There was, as expected, increasing use of IT. This was clearly evident in photography with the use of Photoshop in particular, but IT was also being used as a research tool in Fine Art. This

could be very effective, enabling students to explore ideas quickly and effectively. However some weaker students tried to mask their low level of drawing skill by using IT. Such students need to be encouraged to practise and develop their own drawing skills rather than use IT to ignore this vital skill.

Photography students used Photoshop significantly. This had clearly enhanced the standard of much of the work that was produced and it was good to see such effective use of technology. However moderators have commented that there is a need for students to be actively encouraged to demonstrate their skills in areas such as chemical photography, which appears to be declining.

Centres adopted a range of approaches to the teaching of this unit. Most Centres did one project based on a theme, idea, material or process and this proved very successful. However in some Centres the portfolio was effectively two different projects. The former approach had the advantage of being similar to the teaching that had been undertaken under the legacy. However the challenge when adopting such an approach was to ensure that the portfolio did not appear disjointed with candidates only developing a superficial level of skill in some areas. Centres should be encouraged to link these two projects either by theme, idea or subject as this enables candidates to explore in greater depth and build on their strengths.

In other Centres the approach to the single project was more student-driven with candidates exploring their own interests. The advantage of such an approach was that the work produced was personal and often very creative and enthusiastic. However the challenge in this approach was the development of the candidates' skills, which in some centres appeared to be underdeveloped.

In some centres following the single project approach, the teaching was more prescribed with all students following the same set of activities. This has the advantage that all students have covered a certain range of skills in depth. The challenge when adopting this approach is that all the work can look very similar and the students can experience difficulty in demonstrating a personal response. It seems therefore that probably the best approach for most students is going to be a mixture of the two approaches whereby there are sections of the course where skills are delivered and mastered by students and sections where students are able to develop their own personal research and response.

It appears that whichever approach is adopted by the Centres, weaker students' submissions are characterised by an overdependence on the Internet and tendency to use secondary images at the expense of first-hand observation. Moderators also observed that scale could be an issue with some students. Many of the students are familiar with the scale required for their A4 sketchbook but need specific guidance as to how to increase their scale. Guided movement from A4 to A2 and A1 may be helpful to students who find the use of scale a challenge.

Controlled Assignment: F421-5

It appeared that some Centres ordered the legacy rather than the new AS paper and Centres need to ensure that extra attention is paid to codings whilst there is a legacy and a new specification being offered at the same time. Nearly all of the problems were resolved by the time of moderation. That said, the new examination paper was welcomed and moderators reported that Centres felt that it gave their candidates opportunity to demonstrate their potential. It is worth mentioning now that next summer there will be two different A2 papers, the legacy and the new A2 and that Centres need to make sure that they order the correct paper by checking the codings carefully with their examination officer. It must be remembered that pre-issued examination papers for a summer series are despatched on the basis of *estimated entries* with a deadline in the previous autumn, not final entries.

There was a change in emphasis in this unit from the legacy with more emphasis on 'present'. However students need to be encouraged to remember that the time allotted is still only five hours. For many, this is a shorter time scale than for their GCSE and they need therefore not to be overly ambitious in what they produce. Students need to try to bring their work to some sort of realisation. Some Centres were unsure about the exact amount of guidance that is allowed before the examination. Again, attending Inset and checking teacher support on the website should help resolve these problems and queries as they arise. Some students are unrealistic about what can be achieved in the five hours and therefore discussion about this would be helpful and is allowed. Students should also be aware of their strengths from their course and they should be encouraged to play to these qualities in the examination. Discussion about their strengths is also allowed.

Popular questions included *Chromatic, Reflect, Faded, Hidden, Meteorological, Pipes and Tubes* and *Insects*. In the *Chromatic* question moderators reported some highly successful textile submissions exploring a rich array of pattern and colour and this was also true of painting approaches in Fine Art. *Reflect* gave considerable possibilities in relation to images in mirrors as well as images being inverted: this was especially the case on Photography. *Faded* and *Hidden* provided exciting possibilities in Photography, as well as in Fine Art. *Meteorological* provided an excellent starting point for many photographers who used this as a digital landscape photographic exploration in which the use of Photoshop filters allowed candidates to produce some quite spectacular imagery.

Moderation Process

Contact with the Centres was usually efficient and prompt, enabling Centres to select a date, which was mutually convenient. Most work was displayed vertically in a quiet room and this aided the moderation process, although few Centres did this by rank order and by Unit, which is the method by which moderation should take place. The feedback was much appreciated by Centres as it helped them to understand more about the new marking criteria

This was a new course, with, as has been said, new marking criteria. In many Centres, especially those who had not attended Inset, there were more mark scalings and those that were made tended to be on a larger scale. That said, most Centres were secure in their rank order. The trend tended to be to over-mark. The four assessment objectives are not arranged in a developmental manner and Centres should be aware that they could use it developmentally as they so wish. *Record* for example, which is usually the first area that one looks at when assessing work, is actually assessment objective three so it might make greater sense to the internal assessor to look at this assessment objective first. The Centre could look at assessment objective two second (*experiment*) and then look at assessment objective one which is *develop* and finally assessment objective four *present*.

Although there was evidence of internal moderation within the endorsements, there seemed to be issues across endorsements. Centres should also check the paperwork for simple arithmetical mistakes as these slow down the moderation process. There were more requests for second opinions this year and Centres should try to make this request within 48 hours of the original moderation. Attending Inset is vital, as Art teachers have to understand the new criteria as they both teach and assess students' work.

Next year these two units, Specialist project and Personal study will be combined and it would seem appropriate here to look at how some Centres have approached the teaching of the new unit. OCR ran a mini-pilot for the new Unit 3. Several schools and colleges were involved. They all taught the new Unit 3 this year, which are a combination of the legacy Specialist Project and the Personal Study. A specialist team was then sent in to mark this work. This work was given two sets of marks as it was marked against the criteria for the legacy. The aim of the mini pilot was to explore ways in which the new Unit 3 could be taught and to share these findings with centres to help them plan and implement these changes successfully. All the centres adopted

Report on the Units taken in June 2009

different approaches and they will be explained and the comparative advantages and disadvantages identified.

Centre A

Centre A decided to allow students to select their own artists in the summer term of Year 12. These students then carried on their investigations during the autumn term of Year 13. Their choices had been based on their interests during Year 12.

The advantage of such a system was that the actual final outcomes were very different from each other and their personal study work was well integrated and related well to their own work. However weaker candidates often produced final pieces, which resembled pastiches of the artist that they had selected.

Centre B

This centre allowed students to select their artists as their work developed in Year 13. They would identify that their work resembled artist X and therefore they would write about this artist. When their work diverged and developed along the lines of a different artist then they too would change and explore the work of that artist in their related study.

The advantage of such an approach is that it encouraged students' work to develop and the selection and related qualities in the submissions were impressive. However weaker candidates' related study could appear to be like a dictionary of artists, lacking a common thread or theme and without a beginning, middle and an end.

Centre C

This centre adopted a legacy-like approach whereby students explored an artist of their own choice in a separate sketchbook. This was initiated in Year 12 as a follow up to a gallery visit where all candidates were required to write a mini personal study of about 500 to 800 words.

The advantage of this was that it was a familiar approach for the centre, because it was similar to the legacy, and it also enabled students to try out their ideas in Year 12. This experience also clarified the students' thinking for Year 13 work.

Centre D

This centre decided to divide up the students' sketchbook at the beginning of Year 13 and students were told to allocate 8 double pages in their A3 sketchbook to their related study. These pages had to be spread out throughout the A3 sketchbook. Students did their own work in their sketchbook and when they reached one of their double pages they undertook their related personal study. Each double page had a purpose such as an introduction, a comparison, a bibliography and each double page had to include about three hundred words. This was effectively a book within a book. Such an approach worked well with most students, as they liked the segmented approach to the written work. They could see clearly how their own work and their related study developed in parallel. However weaker candidates often selected an artist early on and then found that their work went in a different direction to the related study

All of these approaches have advantages and disadvantages and it is hoped that by sharing these findings centres will be able to build on the best elements of the mini pilot and where necessary develop planning strategies that will overcome the potential pitfalls in each of the approaches.

F416 Coursework Portfolio

General Comments: Unlike practical Art this course was a new venture with a very different Portfolio structure and its own specific criteria.

The new specification was very well received by centres and had been successfully integrated into schemes of work. Teachers saw the course as a logical development of ways of working from the old AS.

No-one expressed any major concern over the new Specification, and most seemed to have been to INSET. There were no queries over methods or levels of Assessment. The cohort was increased with some new centres.

F416: Coursework Portfolio

Different approaches were taken for this Unit, but all Centres were aware of the requirements and these were being met.

Portfolio content

1. The 20 works: Generally thoroughly covered. In some cases teachers had chosen too wide a time frame and had lost sight of the thematic groupings leading to cursory and rushed analysis.
2. The two essays: Where this was approached in a formal manner they were well done. Some centres had simply extended sketchbook analysis and consequently the standard was limited
3. The Timeline: Generally well done and a useful learning tool for students.

Timelines were in evidence in all submissions – these varied from providing the chronology for the whole course and were therefore embedded within the notebook, to very specific topics (i.e. the female nude); others used the timeline to provide a general historical framework for the other selected elements of the course.

Some centres had clearly identified separate pieces of writing, but others were 'embedded' within the notebooks, but these were still discernible. Only one centre had various written pieces which were harder to differentiate as 'essays'. Nonetheless, there was a good standard of independent writing and visual analysis.

Almost all students appeared to have gallery experience, but they needed to ensure that this was clearly documented. Again, I think that this is something that they now find so commonplace, that they fail to mention it!!

Certainly no-one appeared to be doing any less work!! And overall the quality was of a very high standard. As usual, candidates who choose this Endorsement seem to take their work seriously and demonstrate a great deal of enthusiasm for the subject.

Coursework Portfolio: Use of assessment objectives

Objective 1 (Develop)

Most teachers had used the chronological nature of Art History to structure their courses and there was a clear sense of developing understanding and skills as students progressed. A greater emphasis on critical skills would better equip students to make observations independent from received information.

Objective 2 (Experiment)

As is to some extent inevitable at this level, description rather than analysis predominates in the folio. Where centres had used the two essays to revisit topics from the 20 works students were able to review and refine knowledge learnt. It would be good to see students developing a greater understanding of the varied interpretations possible within critical studies and consequently a more personal voice in essays. Similarly, opportunities for creative presentation of the timeline were not often followed, with this too often being a simple list of dates and images. The more challenging responses developed richer annotation and developed the contextual potential of this element. One centre successfully used it as a whole class exercise dividing Plato to NATO so that each student had a different period to explore.

Objective 3 (Record)

The use of language to record observations is good, with teachers focusing on student's critical skills in the early part of their courses and developing specialist vocabulary. Local resources are widely used and responses to first-hand experiences of Art were plentiful. It would be good to see these visits more fully developed as in some student's workbooks notation in galleries was not developed into more substantial responses when back in the studio. Photography was used to record architectural research though the standards were disappointing.

Objective 4 (Present)

Good use of ICT by most centres helped students to combine image and text clearly and effectively. Some centres had encouraged hand-written responses to ensure original comment. This certainly helped to develop essay skills and obviate plagiarism but where these were the final outcome, the results lacked the graphic impact and care that time spent on presentation of final submissions can give.

F426 Controlled Assignment:

Most centres had interpreted this component as a teacher-guided project and in many centres all students had answered the same question; this was a successful strategy as it allowed resources to be effectively focused and for the students to do their very best. Thorough Art Historical presentations and lectures from teachers had given students a firm foundation from which to develop their own interpretation of the question. Where the paper had been distributed with little support or introduction students had been unable to build effectively upon the skills from the folio.

In some centres there was inadequate differentiation between preparation work and the 5 hour assignment. Centres need to ensure that the conditions for the conduct of the assignment are appropriate.

Apart from a handful of weaker candidates, the standard of work seen was truly excellent. They responded well to the wider range of questions, and it seemed as if there was now something suitable for both practical and theory based entries. All candidates seemed to be comfortable with this format and used the Controlled Assignment to demonstrate the consolidation of critical thinking and a visual response. This was clearly shown in a broad range of preparatory studies.

There was a wide range of questions answered from both sections of the paper (Le Corbusier, Gericault and Moore were the favourites).

Qu. 16: Some very broad ranging responses, which included non-traditional works such as Serrano. One candidate developed their work through questioning the difference between the portrayal of the physical or spiritual qualities of the Crucifixion.

Qu. 17: Some interesting presentation as a gallery exhibit and models.

Qu. 18: Very good responses from a practical arts course, in which research into colour theory developed into candidates' own work in textiles and painting.

Qu. 19: This seemed to be the 'catch-all' for those either lacking confidence or knowledge of any of the other artists mentioned: 2 candidates chose this and actually presented a reasonable standard of research but this was largely based on their own practice.

Qu. 20: Some good responses seen, often an excellent choice of artists including Hopper.

Qu. 21: Some good illustrated essays. Very thorough and in-depth research often shown.

Qu. 22: Excellent preparatory studies for both options B and C, although the fashion items for B were weaker than the drawings; the design for the Museum based on a cliff on the south-coast of England was excellent, with outstanding research.

Qu. 23: Option C was popular and research was good but final results tended to be predictable (but these students were not graphic designers).

Most Centres had been on INSET, all moderators felt marking was a fair reflection of the levels of attainment – these did however, remain generally high!

The application of assessment criteria to the remodelled structure was adhered to effectively by moderators.

One centre had told students to answer all questions within one section of the question paper.

Grade Thresholds

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Art and Design (H160-H166)

Advanced GCE Art and Design (H560-H566)

June 2009 Examination Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
F410	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
F411	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
F412	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
F413	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
F414	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
F415	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
F416	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
F421	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	80	64	56	48	40	32	0
F422	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	80	64	56	48	40	32	0
F423	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	80	64	56	48	40	32	0
F424	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	80	64	56	48	40	32	0
F425	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	80	64	56	48	40	32	0
F426	Raw	100	84	73	63	53	43	0
	UMS	80	64	56	48	40	32	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
H160-H166	200	160	140	120	100	80	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
H160	24.9	47.9	70.0	85.2	93.3	100	566
H161	24.1	47.4	69.7	85.2	93.6	100	4194
H162	21.4	46.0	68.6	82.3	92.8	100	854
H163	22.4	48.1	74.2	89.1	96.4	100	2639
H164	26.7	50.6	71.9	86.8	94.6	100	1056
H165	21.1	43.9	63.9	75.0	93.9	100	186
H166	39.5	65.4	84.4	93.7	98.0	100	211

9706 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:
http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums_results.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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