

**GCSE (9–1)**

**Moderators' report**

# ART AND DESIGN

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**J170-J175**

For first teaching in 2016

**J170-J175/01/02 Summer 2022 series**

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## Introduction

Our moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

### Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

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## General overview/Introduction

The specification is designed to offer a flexible approach to teaching and learning to a broad range of candidates. This report reviews the 2022 series of OCR GCSE (9-1) Art & Design J170 – J176 Portfolio only.

Art and Design aims to build the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding for all art, craft and design specification titles. The specification is designed to encourage candidates to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding together with creativity and imagination and present them with chances to take an individual interest in why art, craft and design matter and to be motivated and changed by studying an exciting and thought-provoking course of study. OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design offers candidates opportunities to gain insight into the practices of individuals, organisations and creative and cultural industries. The specification supports centres in developing a range of approaches to sustain the teaching, learning and assessment of candidates. It provides chances for candidates to experiment and take risks with their work while growing their individual personally creative style. OCR's GCSE (9-1) Art and Design suite offers seven specification titles for centres to choose from covering the depth and breadth of art, craft and design and includes the use of traditional methods and digital technology. The specification titles are: • Art, Craft and Design (J170) • Fine Art (J171) • Graphic Communication (J172) • Photography (J173) • Textile Design (J174) • Three-Dimensional Design (J175) • Critical and Contextual Studies (J176).

### 2022 an unusual year

This has been a most unusual year for moderation, being the first time since 2019 that our visiting moderation teams have ventured back into centres, and very different, as without the Externally Set Task the full emphasis has been on the portfolio, still marked out of 120, and with the four assessment objectives presenting six levels of attainment but representing 100% of the final award. In general centres have responded well to the challenge of this year's single component, and overall, the standard of work seen in all the centres was impressive, correlating with previous years submissions, although there was a significant difference of opinion from centres over whether there were any benefits to just using the 100% portfolio. Some centres celebrated the additional time, especially given the variable effects of covid on attendance, using it to develop their themes and extend candidates abilities, to consolidate ideas, practice techniques and extend research and skills after over a year that was disjointed and interrupted. Other centres missed the new much shorter and urgent challenge that the External Set Task would have provided, that opportunity for their candidates to start afresh, to begin again and research something new, to provide their most successful work in a limited and focused timescale.

### The visual journey

Centres have a wide variety of approaches but one of the most notable features in 2022 was that in some candidates the journey to the final piece was significantly truncated and did not expansively tell the story of the candidates' journey from the initial starting point to the final finished piece. Sometimes there were gaps in the portfolio work, particularly in the development of composition of composition, ideas, arrangements and designs. This is a key point for future cohorts in that much of the best work seen in 2022, was thought provoking, highly skilled and produced through attention to detail in every aspect of the assessment objective demands. Perhaps the one facet that gifted students present in their work and could be seen as best practice and adopted universally, is the constant revision and necessary exploration that takes place throughout the submission. It is the lack of satisfaction 'with outcomes' the drive to improve, the seeking for perfection that permeates such submissions and reflects the maturity of the candidate

Sometimes candidates bypass the objectives, and the 'journey' becomes all too often curtailed into simple replicated images and a preconceived rehearsed example for outcome, often in a large unfamiliar scale or untried media involving collage or basic card construction. The full creative journey in an accessible and "readable" form is essential to the presentation of student work.

## Select and present

'This specification encourages candidates to select, organise and present work that represents the best of their achievement in response to the assessment objectives'

Some centres still need to recognise that selection and presentation is the key to success. Quality not quantity is the key in the highest achieving centres. Clear lines of attainment through the assessment objectives and fully discernible, selection, revision and completion are paramount. Most centres impressed on candidates that consistent quality and selection far outweighs a large quantity of unrelated and substandard work regardless of ability level. Collected images are of little value unless further advanced through transposition, enhancement and involvement. At times work journals seen in centres were reduced to 'scrapbooks' rather than sketchbooks. It is worth noting that many centres appreciated that exceedingly large volumes of evidence were not a requirement. As a result, their candidates not only presented a sensibly economical and convincingly documented developmental journey but also allocated sufficient time to create persuasive final statements. Although it is certainly uncalled for to present every single piece of work for assessment and moderation, it is without doubt in every candidate's best interest to select enough persuasive evidence to reflect their best performance and therefore plausibly substantiate a teacher's assessment decisions. In 2022 it was noticeable that candidates in J173 Photography were producing very large PowerPoints with vast numbers of different photoshoots and finished images, this needs greater selection.

## Moderation

All centres seemed delighted to have returned to visiting moderation again with centres being pleased to return to the initial discussion about how their courses were organised, how they carried out their internal moderation, what visits had taken place (very few this year) and how the use of just Component 1 (portfolio) only had been received.

When centres display the sample in rank order this greatly aids the moderation process as direct comparisons can be made. All centres would benefit from adhering to the correct moderation procedure. The sample selection is communicated in advance and rank order display is outlined in the specification booklet, yet it is not fully implemented on occasions. (The first ten on the list displayed in rank order and the last five available to view if required).

Moderators reported that centre's 'clearly take considerable satisfaction in guaranteeing that candidates' work is displayed to the best advantage for moderation.' Moderators praised the time and effort that centres invested in this vital aspect of the assessment process. Most usefully, many submissions were exhibited vertically on walls or display boards with sketchbooks or other supporting studies in quiet and private areas. Often the work was carefully labelled, identifying candidate number and name thoughtfully 'mapped' and, of vital importance, in rank order. Regrettably, there are still a small number of centres that do not conform to these moderation requirements, and this cannot be conducive to good practice for either centre or moderator. There were some inexcusable responses from centres to the important issue of moderation as follows:

- centres not giving sufficient space to view the sample properly
- centres interlacing the sample in a larger display of whole cohort achievement, made worse by failing to highlight the sampled students
- when work is produced digitally, which is increasingly the case with photography and graphical communication and has been seen filtering into other specialisms, it is important that the moderator can access more than one computer simultaneously thereby allowing the easy comparison of candidates work to take place. Centres are reminded that Additional Samples if requested should be available within the moderation area but not displayed with the main body of work.

## Internal assessment

This specification is 100% non-exam assessment, all components are internally marked and externally moderated by visit.

It is important that all centres have regard to internal assessment and moderation procedure. There are still centres where independent marking of options appears to be occurring, particularly with the difficulties amplified over the last two years.

In assessing student work, correct rank order is paramount to centre marking of submissions regardless of component. This is the initial key to effective internal centre marking and moderation decisions. This should present no problem to teachers working in tandem. Subjective comments have no place in the assessment process.

Some teachers still do not seem to understand the ultra-importance of rank order and its total effect on moderation procedures and the results. This is fundamental to the moderation process and very important that centres alleviate the main moderation difficulty in assessing, reporting and possibly remarking. The moderator is an independent experienced assessment specialist, whose role is to make sure that the agreed national standard has been applied accurately and fairly by centres, to all candidates, before grade awarding.

*'It is essential that the centre establishes a strict rank order of candidates' ability and achievement through the presented work. The assessment grid can then be implemented with further refinement through the key subheadings of "just, adequately, clearly and convincing".'*

Overall, the moderation team found the standard of marking in most centres to be acceptable.

All centres had uploaded the marks through Interchange and received a confirmation email with a list of the candidates required for moderation, ten to be displayed in rank order and the last five available to the moderator. Many centres forwarded the relevant documentation to moderators by the May 15th deadline. However, in many cases this was not done, probably because the intervening two years had caused this to be forgotten. Those centres that accelerated administrative procedures by the early submission of marks are thanked for their cooperation and good organisation. Most centres use the interactive Assessment Summary Form, and it is strongly advocated as this avoids of arithmetical errors. The Centre Marks Form (CCS443) is a mandatory requirement, and a completed copy should be sent to the moderator in advance of their visit together with a copy of the IMS1 so that they can check the totals. The centre Authentication form is not required to be sent but should be available for the moderator to see on their visit.

2022 saw moderators highlighting a tendency for some centres to be lenient across the mark ranges with many overestimating the achievements of candidates in the top mark range but underestimating the achievement of those at the bottom end of the mark range.

## The portfolio (Component 1)

A wide range of portfolio themes were used by centres. Several were those adapted from previous Externally Set Task papers. Many went for all encompassing starting points such as 'Man Made World,' or 'Natural World,' thus allowing candidates a wide base for personal selection. 'Me,' 'Myself,' 'My World,' 'Identity' or similar titles presented candidates with opportunities based on the individual candidates' culture, interests and teenage angst/concerns. The theme of 'Portraits' was a very popular genre and much evidence was seen of this theme really engaging candidates. Often this theme was used to explore mental health and well-being issues and linked to a diet of contemporary pop culture, street art and illustration. In most centres, a wide range of source material was explored. Many successful centres had used a theme that was broad enough for candidates to develop their ideas independently, something which provided a strong personal response. Visiting moderators also found some centres where the work and theme was still very teacher directed resulting in submissions of similar work that restricted the candidate's individuality and independence.

In graphics some high-end-confectionary-box designs were seen, together with Wedge shaped pizza box design, Harry Potter board games, drinks branding and Advent calendars. Interesting themes in photography ranged through sport, Surrealism, the female gaze and some Martin Parr inspired recreations of Vermeer's paintings. Individual projects chosen by the candidates were often prevailing in 3D although 'Playing', 'Contrast' and 'Possessions' were among the themes seen.

The theme of 'Sea Life' continues to inspire and enthuse candidates, providing a wealth of possible directions for the creative journey. In one centre visited, this theme was used by Textile Design candidates to create portfolios that highlighted the plight of marine animals suffering plastic pollution, with jelly fish made from distorted plastic bottles and knitted sculptural wall- hangings and garments created as octopus costumes.

## AO1 'Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding'.

Candidates' knowledge and understanding of a range of relevant work from current practice, past practice and different cultures frequently revealed their appreciation of continuity and change in art, craft and design. Centres without doubt urged candidates to make critical and contextual references as part of their documentation of their creative journey. Generally, candidates understood the importance and relevance of making suitable connections to their study, often exploring obscure but meaningful sources as well as more well-known and easily accessible ones. Unfortunately, there were fewer visits to galleries and museums this year although there were examples of candidates making personal trips, especially to local art galleries and museums something which positively impacted on the candidates work. There was a wealth of historical, cultural, modern and contemporary practitioners referenced across the whole range of the specialisms. A centre using the critical and contextual specialism studied local artists and how they interpreted the local landscape, seascape and fruits of the sea. It was noticeable how Candidates in the Graphical Communication specialism studied and created typography and a range of contemporary marketing and promotional design while three-dimensional design candidates should give further consideration not to just to the classic interior and exterior traditions of three-dimensional design, but also reference contemporary designers, linked with relevance to their designs being created and made.

A considerable number of centres, to their credit, encouraged candidates to investigate and analyse contextual encounters and document the progress of their creative journey primarily through visual language. Nevertheless, candidates in centres acknowledged that relevant annotation could serve to clarify, in a body of work, their understanding (and that of teachers and moderators) of:

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

The notion of annotation does not imply a demand for extensive written text.

Contextual reference is still seen in some centres as the “add on assessment objective”. At times students covered Assessment Objective 1 by simply collecting images related to intent via various internet search engines and then pasted the material into journals. This was given unwarranted marks in some centres. Contextual reference is seen at its best when the candidate becomes totally immersed in their chosen sources by culture, gallery visits, holidays, family, personal interest, teenage angst, local environments or a growing awareness of political issues. The selection of critical resources then becomes highly relevant rather than appended.

## AO2 ‘Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes’

Much emphasis was placed on providing candidates with opportunities to explore the qualities of a diverse range of materials, processes and technique with relevant and well-intentioned progression. Refining ideas through exploring and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes varied from centre to centre. There were many exciting and inventive examples of exploring of media, materials, techniques and processes combined with a critical review of the work produced. The most successful submissions were those in which media had led to refinement rather than repetition which tended to inhibit ideas and stifle development. Exploration should have purpose and genuinely assist in the development of the idea because extensive experimentation can sometimes lead to candidates merely reverting to reproducing initial imagery and therefore the potential benefits of the exploration and change are underdeveloped.



### AO3 'Record ideas, observations, and insights relevant to their intentions as work progresses'

Recording for many candidates is usually about drawing and photography, although recording encompasses a whole range of mark making activities from freehand machine stitching, to modelling in clay and many other forms of craftwork. The moderation team saw much highly skilled 'recording' which led to concentrated engagement with, and discovery of, both the subject matter and an enlightenment into the candidates' own skills and thinking. Often this was augmented by useful annotation, although sometimes it was purely descriptive. However, where this helped explain the work and to understand the candidates thinking and direction, this is a useful supplement to recording. While much strong observational drawing was witnessed, equally draughtsmanship of an inconsistent quality was seen. Reference to secondary sources or the candidates' own photographs is a perfectly legitimate recording practice but some seemed unaware that accuracy in transcription is vital. However, there was a wide variation in the quality and emphasis that many of the specialisms placed on recording. In Graphical Communication and three-dimensional design, it was noted that drawing skills were at times weak but enhanced by digital processes to make the most of the potential. However, a focus on a higher more developed level would have enriched potential ideas. Recording of the production of a piece of work in progress successfully supported the process of making and final designs in both 3D and textiles where the various stages were recorded with clarity.

Photography is an important part of the recording process. Mobile phone cameras are becoming increasingly advanced, if used as a recording medium then further selection and considered editing are required. Manipulation and artistic justification must be carefully considered and contribute to thought provoking skill-based outcomes. The key to successful photography submissions is quality of image, mastery of technique, revision, selection and presentation. Considerations of viewpoint, composition, light and location, indeed the 'formal elements' are important. In the photography specialism it is essential that centres deliver from the carefully written specification and avoid a concentration on technical 'know how.' Art and Design Photography should always be presented for moderation as achievement through quality of image and not as a technical exercise of the candidate's abilities to manipulate imagery through digital editing using on-trend apps.

### AO4 'Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language'

The moderation team reported many submissions that were excellent examples of well-developed and sophisticated responses with genuine exploration, well considered development of ideas and often adventurous experimentation in media. On the other hand, pieces were seen that felt as if direction had been lost or were a 'hotch-potch' of sometimes unrelated snatches of ideas. Outstanding examples were seen across all the specialisms although occasionally candidates appear to believe that 'bigger means better' when often they do not have the time, skill or medium to achieve the result they wish for.

Teachers continue to indicate that most candidates were proud of their responses and felt that they had selected and presented the work to the best of their ability. Some candidates did not select their most successful works and included a plethora of work that did not develop into a sophisticated response. Rather they showed the full body of work produced because they did not appreciate this was unnecessary and that a mixture of work of an inconsistent standard was potentially a disadvantage.

Sometimes shortcomings in meeting the requirements of Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 3 clearly resulted in unresolved final pieces. Correspondingly some centres were inclined towards generosity in marking the work produced through the assessment objectives, especially in respect of Objective 4.

Consideration must be given to the whole submission and not just the final piece(s). It is highly improbable that under achievement in responding to the demands of Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 3 will produce greater success in respect of Assessment Objective 4. Attainment in Assessment Objective 4 is primarily dependant on performance in the preceding studies and not just the final piece(s).

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