

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2013

International GCSE
Fine Art (4FA0), Graphic Design
(4GC0), Photography (4PY0),
Textiles (4TE0).

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Introduction

Entries for this year's International GCSE specification came from many countries including, Bangladesh, Bermuda, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, France, Falkland Islands, Germany, Greece, Qatar, Russia, Oman, Kuwait, India, Kenya, Libya, Macau, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri-Lanka, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States of America. All entries for the examination once again showed the rich cultural diversity of the various countries making submissions.

The International GCSE specification aims to provide all centres with the framework to develop and devise courses for Art and Design across all four endorsements:

- Fine Art
- Graphic Design.
- Photography
- Textiles



The specification is 100% examination externally set and marked. Centres can enter students for more than one endorsement in any one examination session. This is an option an increasing number of centres are taking advantage of. Fine art continues to be the most popular endorsement chosen by centres followed by graphic design, photography and textiles. As in previous years there has been a 10% increase in the number of entries for International GCSE. A key feature of the specification is it allows teachers the freedom to approach the assessment objectives in the way, which best suits, them and their students.

Edexcel website support

A document introduced last series which centres may find useful and which can be found on the Edexcel website is the 'Centre Guidance Document'. Centres new to the qualification will find this document particularly useful. This covers;

- Key events and deadlines
- Entry information
- Endorsed titles

- Assessment summary
- Summary of scheme of assessment
- External examination and preparatory studies
- The practical examination
- Private candidates
- After the examination
- Instructions for the dispatch of work
- Special consideration
- Malpractice
- Grade awarding
- Enquiries about results

With regard to administration, not all centres submitted authentication forms with candidate's submissions.

In the 2013 series a number of centres submitted research and final outcomes on sheets larger than A2. A small number of centres submitted more than three sheets of preparatory sheets in contrast some centres only submitted two sheets of preparatory work. One centre submitted wood frame canvases. A number of centres did not always adhere to correct labelling of work.

Clear instructions are given in the specification and 'Centre Guidance Document' regarding the requirements of the examination.

If you have a question about the International GCSE Art and Design specification 'Ask the Expert' is a resource you may decide to use. Information about this resource can be found on the Edexcel website under information for teachers

Exemplar materials for International GCSE can be viewed and download from the Edexcel International Art teacher's community forum website:

http://community.edexcel.com/art_and_design/m/artigcse/default.aspx

Currently the exemplar materials are for the fine art and graphic design endorsements only. In the new academic year these exemplars will be updated to include examples of photography and further examples of graphic design. This is a resource for existing centres, those new to the qualification or those who are considering delivering it in their centres. The exemplar materials show examples of candidates work ranging from exceptional to weak with comments by the Chief Examiner and with written comments by the students taken from their annotated research sheets.

A programme of professional development and training, covering various aspects of the specification and examination can also be found on the website for 2013-2014. Centres may also wish to contact their Regional Development Managers for further information and support. Training events run during the last academic were on 'Improving your Delivery' and 'Effective research methods in art and design'. These events took place in India, Bangladesh, China and Macau.

Endorsements

Within the four endorsements offered the majority of centres have a very clear understanding of the requirements laid down in the specification content. Examiners commented on the excellence, quality and depth of study in a number of fine art, graphic design and photography submissions seen this series. These centres should be justly proud of the work they do with their students and support given to them. Unfortunately examiners found and commented on the limited scope, exploration and execution of some textiles submissions made this year as with last year. There are still a very small number of centres that enter candidates for the various endorsements who have limited understanding of the requirements of the specification in the context of the endorsements. It is vital that centres have a clear knowledge of the endorsement content being taught to candidates when planning and structuring courses for future submissions.

The Assessment Objectives.

The assessment objectives should be seen, as inter-related activities not stand alone components. Unfortunately there are some centres as noted by examiners that still approach the assessment objectives in chronological order. When structuring courses and in the preparatory six week period for the examination, this should be borne in mind. However centres structure their courses they should ensure the chosen themes or genres are sufficiently flexible to allow candidates to make a personal and informed response. Examiners commented on the development of the examination theme through secure structures and how they encouraged candidates in the fine art endorsement to cross from painting to sculpture if the conceptual idea was best suited to a three dimensional outcome. They also noted that in some graphic design submissions where traditional hand skills successfully crossed to pure digital skills.

Many centres are now using past examination themes when planning and structuring courses. This in turn allows candidates to pursue their own individual creative journey of discovery. Within this planning a number of centres need to place greater emphasis on working from firsthand experience.

It was disappointing to see a number of highly skilled candidates, with signs of creative potential, at the middle range of marks, because they had failed to submit evidence for a particular assessment objective. AO2 is sometimes an assessment objective that some candidates fail to show any evidence for in doing so centres severely disadvantage these candidates.

AO1. Record observations, experiences and ideas which are appropriate to intentions.

AO2. Analyse and evaluate images, objects and artefacts, making informed connections with the work of others.

AO3. Develop and explore ideas, using a variety of media and processes that are appropriate to intentions.

AO4. Review and refine ideas, modifying work as it progresses, before presenting a coherent personal response.

Assessment overview

- Examination piece (maximum size A2) with six weeks preparatory time and 10 hours examination time
- Up to three sheets of preparatory studies (maximum size A2 sheet) carried out during the six- week preparatory period
- 100 marks are available for this assessment

Reviewing, refining and modifying research for the practical examination.

With the help of the centre it is important that candidates review, refine and modify their submission for presentation. Choosing the work which best illustrates their ability at covering all four assessment objectives.

Below are strengths and weaknesses highlighted by examiners, which illustrate this area of the examination in the May 2013 submissions. It is hoped these points will help centres improve the overall standard of their candidates ability to review, refine and modify ideas as they progresses.

Strengths

- Appropriate and ongoing annotation.
- Recording using an exciting range of media
- Work, which reflects an understanding of the purpose of visual research.
- Appropriate contextual links in the visual form or including short written analysis.
- Sequential development of ideas using appropriate materials.
- Taking photographs of work in progress.
- Evidence of an understanding of the formal elements.
- Experimenting with media
- Primary source images
- Good advice and guidance given by centres regarding presentation of research.

Weaknesses

- Re-iterating ideas on the research sheets.
- Some centres presented research where there was too much emphasis on writing.
- Unedited 'downloads' from the Internet.
- There was an over-reliance on secondary images.
- Research was superficial, incomplete or disorganised.

- Copying with no purpose.
- No sequential journey.
- Little visual analysis.
- Research where the intentions were not clear.
- One or more of the AO's not covered particularly AO2
- Little understanding of the requirements of the specification.
- Not using all space available on research sheets
- Small scale of images on research sheets (photography)

By improving the quality of research it is hoped that candidate's final personal response will be ambitious, creative and imaginative.

Practical examination and preparatory studies

Those candidates who performed of their best were generally from centres that had provided a well structured beginning to the examination. Good time management during the six week research period can also help candidates in their planning. It was clear however that some centres had given very little support to candidates in helping them 'un-pick' the exam paper.

Centres are reminded that the candidate response to the examination should be supported by a taught six week period prior to the ten hour examination. Centre's should download and print the paper as soon as it is posted on the Edexcel website (1st February) to enable them to prepare teaching and learning resources to support their candidates in the six week period.

The six week preparatory period

The six week preparatory period prior to the exam is a taught period where art teachers can help and advise students about their work. It is helpful if as work progresses students can then choose their best idea collecting more reference material to help in their examination. Examiners noted that interpretation of the theme 'Open' was sometimes direct and highly effective. This was due to early intervention by the centre to provide candidates with a secure base from which to work. Where centres used the preparatory sheets as part of the journey and related them to the personal outcomes they achieved high levels of success.

Where centres achieved very high marks, this was the result of a highly focused and dedicated approach to supporting candidates.

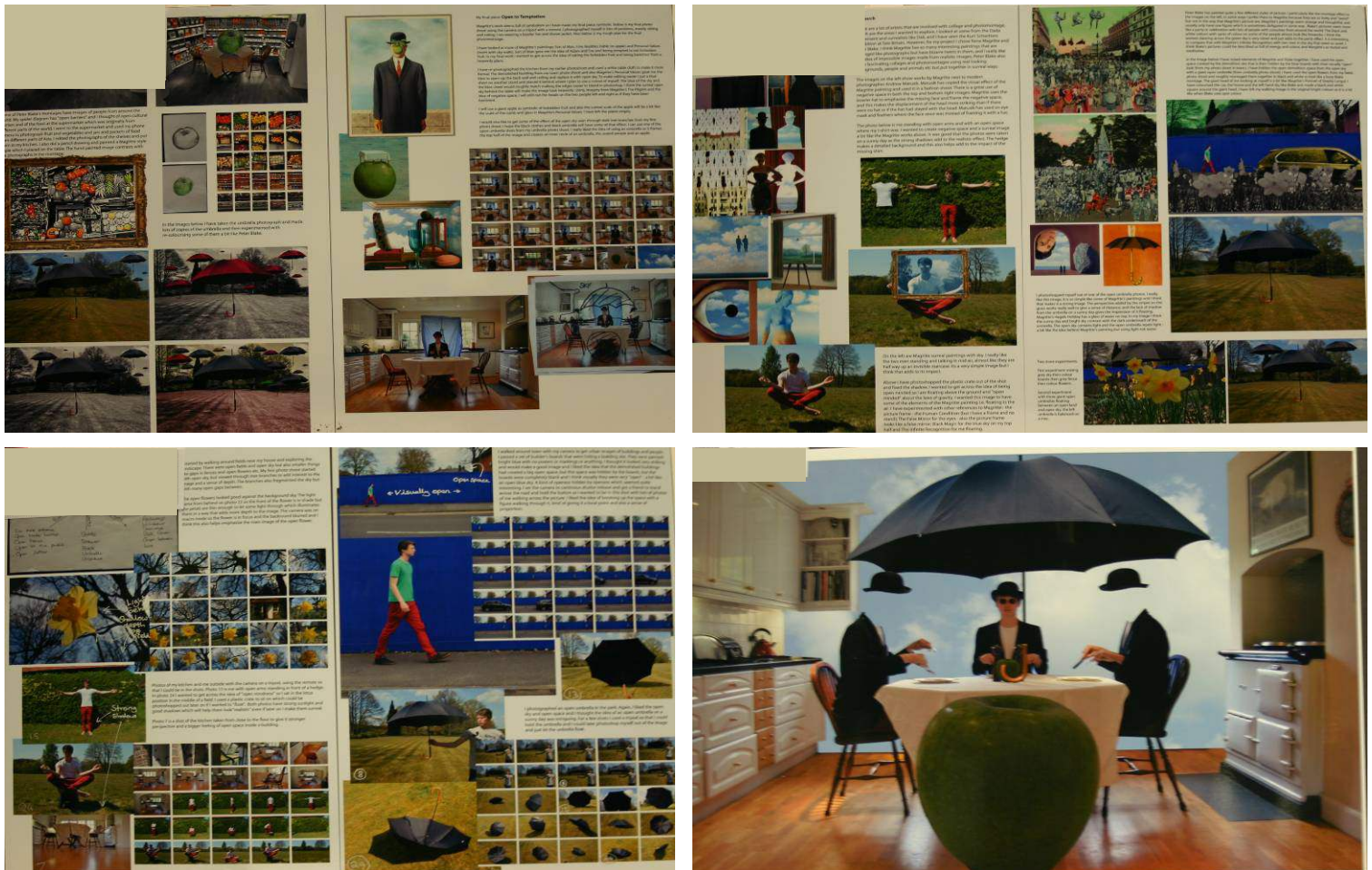
In some centres there was a distinct lack of evidence for AO2 or the research was superficial; this then had an impact on the resulting achievements of the candidates. Examiners commented that some centres failed to show evidence for AO2 resulting in these candidates losing marks. In contrast the majority of centres had a clear understanding of the assessment objectives producing very personal and individual work.

It was pleasing to note that many centres gave candidates the opportunity to use a wide range of materials using a variety of processes.

Within the research presented for assessment it was noted by examiners there was an excess of secondary images used by a number of candidates. Too much copying and repetitive work can waste vital space on the research sheets. It is important that centres balance the level of primary and secondary sources used by candidates. Examiners also noted that where candidates reiterated images on their research sheets it prevented these candidates from developing their full potential.

First hand photography was effectively used by a number of candidates. Imaginative role play situations were created and recorded to support final outcomes. A number of candidates also used photography when planning and setting up still life groups and in recording the process of three dimensional works.

An example of a Photography Endorsement.



Ten hour examination

Good use of materials and high standards of skill were evident in a large number of submissions. Examiners noted many candidates successfully used mixed media, pencil, acrylic paint, photography and digital

manipulation in their submissions. In centres where candidates received very low marks it was clear that teaching in these centres had not addressed the AO's and the basic concept of the specification. Thus candidates had little or no understanding of what was required.

The lack of having access to a wide range of materials in no way disadvantaged some candidates' submissions.

A number of candidates repeated their personal responses from their supporting studies in their final outcome. Centres need to discourage candidates from simply repeating images from their research in the final outcome. In many cases the second repeat was less vibrant than the original first study produced on the research sheet. Developing ideas remains difficult for a number of candidates. For some candidates the final outcome bore no relationship to the initial research.

There was varied use of annotation it was effectively used by many candidates where it was used to inform and develop thinking rather than being mainly descriptive. Higher mark range candidates established an effective visual vocabulary. A number of weaker candidates wasted space on the preparatory studies sheets with 'space filling' teacher intervention could have avoided this practise.

A number of centres did not cover AO2 and therefore lost significant marks. Examiners noted that a number of candidates had a sporadic lack of evidence to support AO2.

Final responses to AO4 helped support and strengthen the other AO's. This occurred particularly in the photography endorsement. Candidates who must make full use of the time available to them need careful selection of work. They must avoid including work which does not inform the final outcome or which is irrelevant to the theme. There were a significant number of centres this year that had excellent outcomes in AO4.

Examiners noted the theme for this year's examination of 'Open' has been very well received by centres and candidates. The sub headings of the main theme; Open spaces, Openings, Open to the elements, Open mind, and Open Out were the most popular sub headings.

Examiners commented on the variety of work seen this year including the use of paper cut outs and pop- ups. They also commented on the sophisticated use of materials by some centres with some candidates displaying skills and investigative techniques beyond expectation. They also noted it was pleasing to see centres that had used their own cultural reference points and geographical locations to inform their developing work.

A concern by some examiners was there were a small number of centres whose candidates failed to submit enough work to even merit a mark in the weak mark range.

Examiners commented that many candidates produced individual, personal and creative responses to the theme. Candidates produced final outcomes, which were sustained and focussed. Successful contextual

references included, Peter Doig, Norman Rockwell, Thomas Struth, Rob Ryan, Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, Cy Twombly, Julian Opie, Patrick Caulfield, Frank, David Hockney, Stella, Man Ray and the Fauves.

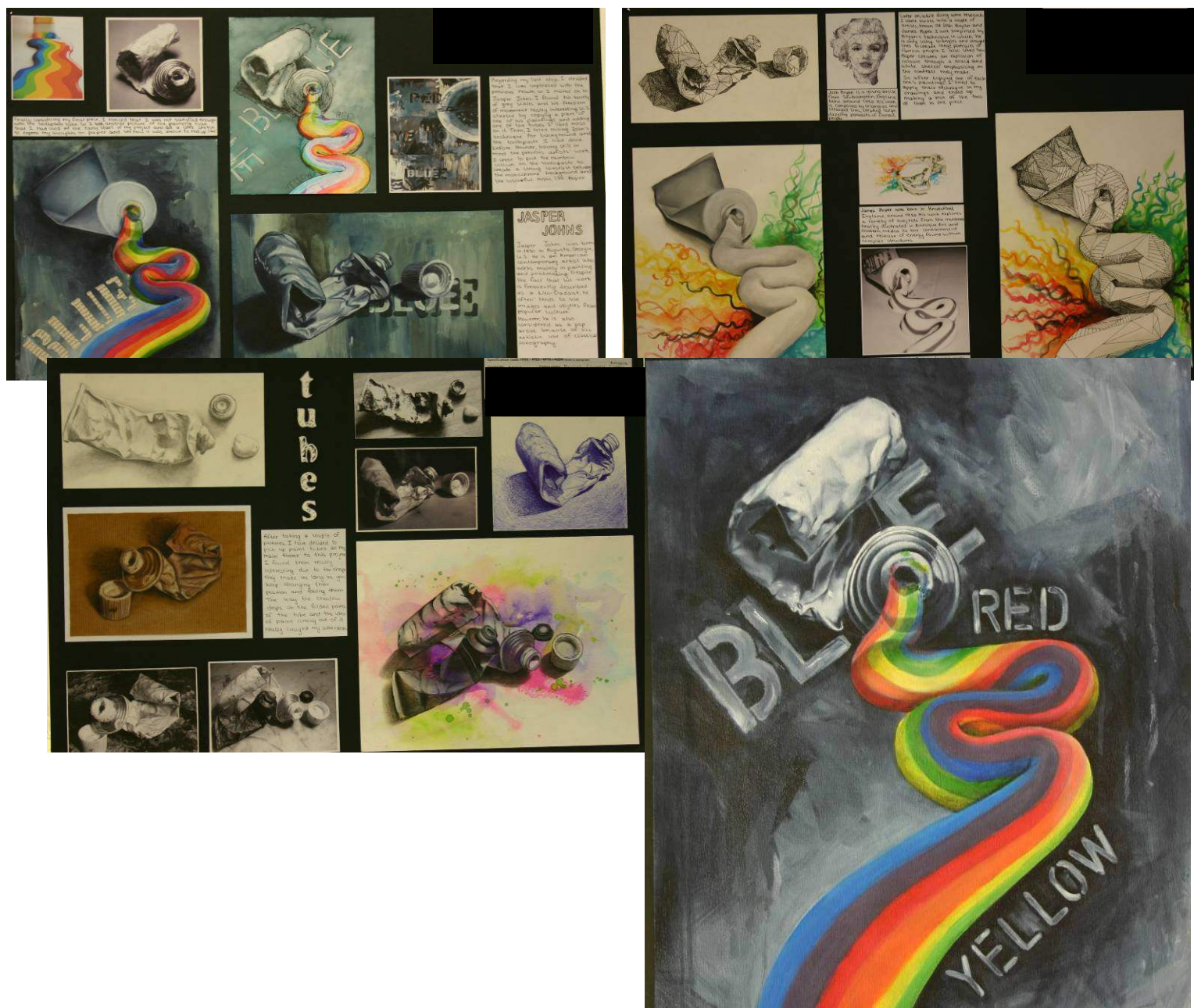
The theme is a starting point and candidates may work from any of the starting points suggested by the theme or they may develop a relevant starting point of their own on the theme of delicate.

In general it was a pleasure and privilege to see the quality of work produced by candidates for their examination. It was clear that the quality of teaching and learning in some centres was outstanding. These centres are to be commended for their enthusiasm, imagination and endeavour to provide candidates with the platform to give their best in the examination.

Submitting preparatory studies and ten hour examination for external assessment

The format for submitting work for the examination is made clear in the specification and examination paper. Further guidance can also be seen in the 'Centre guidance document' highlighted earlier in this report. Unfortunately this year we have seen the return of centres overlapping work on research sheets or including work on both sides of research sheets. We have also had some centres sending in A1 size canvases. If the final piece, is fragile bulky or larger than A2 in size, the centre must make arrangements to photograph the work.

An example of a Fine Art Endorsement.



Summary

Good teaching, well structured courses and appropriate resourcing ensure that candidates perform to their full potential in the examination. There was much evidence of this in the Summer 2013 series. Disappointingly however there were some centres submitting work that had little understanding of the requirements of the specification. To move forward these centres must become much more familiar with the International GCSE Art & Design specification. They may also wish to take advantage of the various Professional Development and Training opportunities being offered in 2013-14. Information for these events can be found on the Edexcel website.

Centres wishing to move their candidates forward and improve their performance must address the following issues.

- Centres must develop a course structure underpinned by the assessment objectives in preparation for the examination.
- A clear understanding of the specification content for the endorsements.
- Good teaching and learning stem from an emphasis on recording visually from firsthand experience.
- With the help of the centre it is important that candidates review and refine their submission for presentation choosing the work which best illustrates their ability at covering all assessment objectives.
- Establish effective research methods for candidates.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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