

**2005 Art and Design**

**Standard Grade – Critical Activity**

**Finalised Marking Instructions**

**These Marking Instructions have been prepared by Examination Teams for use by SQA Appointed Markers when marking External Course Assessments.**

**2005 Art and Design  
Standard Grade  
Critical Activity**

**1 Marking – Application of Assessment Criteria  
Grade Related Criteria**

**1.1 General Points**

The application of Grade Related Criteria is the basis for the assessment of all Standard Grade Art and Design work.

At all levels in Critical Activity the subject of the written submissions should provide candidates with opportunities to express their own opinions through a personal response with regard to the work of artists and designers. At different levels, candidates should be able to: compare and contrast, make judgements with some justification and show an understanding of the topics studied. Handling information by researching, gathering, collating and selecting is an important aspect of critical activity but it should in turn have an effect on the personal response.

There is no definitive model or structure for writing critical activity but the most successful and suitable way to enable candidates to meet all the criteria as defined in GRC is by composing the submission with two distinctive forms of writing – **handling information** and the **personal response**.

**Handling information** deals with the research and investigation of biographical and factual detail about artists and designers, historical context, methods and styles. While handling, collating and interpreting researched or given information is part of critical activity, it should amount to much more than just a pedestrian repetition or copying of received facts. Statements of facts, dates of birth, and biographical details should be considered insufficient in themselves to gain awards at credit or general levels. The role of handling information is important in demonstrating interpretative skills but it works best when it supports, informs and reinforces the personal response.

The **personal response** should form the greater part of the submission as it is the best indicator of the candidates' thinking and should include critical vocabulary, personal opinions and substantiated judgements. At all levels it is essential that a personal response is evident and given emphasis, as it is this element that most clearly defines the quality of the candidates' knowledge and understanding of the subject under investigation.

**1.2 Credit Level – Grades 1 and 2**

Credit submissions should be clearly centred on a theme, topic, a particular movement or style, or a comparison between artists and/or designers. The topic selected should have sufficient breadth and scope to enable candidates to research it in some depth and show an understanding of the qualities and relationships between, for example, different artists' and/or designers' works. An ability to communicate sophisticated thoughts and feelings should be apparent and the personal response should consist of informed and substantiated judgements.

### **Credit 1**

Personal interest is obvious and it should be clear that candidates have investigated the subject with some enthusiasm and personal motivation. A tightly structured submission, with opinions and points correctly justified using appropriate art and design terms, is expected. The use of vocabulary should demonstrate that there is true insight and understanding of the subject matter and that subtle relationship can be recognised and understood. The quality of thinking and appreciation of expressive and design issues is strong and sophisticated. Candidates at this grade will be able to communicate their thoughts and ideas very clearly providing in-depth analysis of their topic.

### **Credit 2**

Submissions are well structured and there is evidence of personal interest from the amount of research undertaken. Accurate art and design terminology is expected and opinions are clear and convincing. Information and facts are reasonably well interpreted and enlighten the personal response. There is an attempt at making considered and informed contrasts and comparisons when analysing artists' work or designers' works, methods, styles or movements etc. Candidates at this grade can communicate their thoughts and ideas competently with a degree of knowledge and understanding.

## **1.3 General Level – Grades 3 and 4**

In general submissions, an attempt at structuring the submission around a theme or topic should be evident though it may not be entirely successful. Candidates should be able to make correct use of straightforward art and design terminology when attempting to express opinions and judgements. Generalised statements are made and some of the reasons behind the judgements verge on the superficial.

### **General 3**

An attempt at structuring the submission around a theme or topic should be evident though it will not altogether succeed. Some personal interpretation of facts and information will be demonstrated but may fail to have an effect on the personal response. At times the examination of works may be mundane in style and weighted towards mere description. For example, describing the content of a painting in detail rather than engaging with critical vocabulary like the visual elements or media techniques. Statements and opinions should be evident but may lack thorough analysis. The use of art and design terms should be used correctly showing some degree of understanding by candidates. An indication of personal preferences and interest should be apparent in the submission. Candidates at this level can communicate their thoughts and ideas satisfactorily but lack insight.

### **General 4**

Submissions are largely unfocused but candidates have made some effort to understand and interpret limited information in a straightforward manner. The examination of artists' or designers' work may be descriptive and generalised statements and copying passages from books, for example, can replace any genuine attempt at a personal response. Personal opinions and comments, however, must be part of the submission. Any justification or reasons made may be faulty or even completely wrong when using art and design terms. Candidates at this level have some difficulty communicating their thoughts and ideas effectively.

#### **1.4 Foundation Level – Grades 5 and 6**

In many foundation submissions, it will be clear that candidates have been able to understand only a limited amount of information. Generally, submissions will be very short in length and lack any real direction or focus. The use of art and design vocabulary will be flawed but attempts will be made to incorporate it.

##### **Foundation 5**

Some of these submissions can be lengthy because they are composed of facts and biographical information without any real attempt at interpretation. Art and design teams will be limited to the correct use of basic critical vocabulary such as line, texture, tone etc with no more than a basic understanding of some of the visual elements and simple design issues. Straightforward comments like “I like/don’t like the colour” with no justification being offered will be apparent at this grade. Where justification is made it will be unrelated to art and design terminology. Candidates at this level clearly have difficulty in communicating little more than some bald facts and statements.

##### **Foundation 6**

Submissions at this grade are usually very short in length amounting to no more than a few paragraphs or lines containing unelaborated facts or information, which may have been directly copied. Little or no personal interpretation of this information is attempted. Opinions and judgements, if present, will also be unrelated to art and design issues and the use of critical vocabulary will be limited and wrongly used. Candidates clearly have difficulty understanding the theme or topic and fail to engage with it in any meaningful way.

## 2. Critical Activity – Extended GRC

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Foundation Level</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Grades 5 and 6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>General Level</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Grades 3 and 4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Credit Level</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Grades 1 and 2</p>
<p><i>With assistance, the candidate can produce some written critical work showing ability to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain information on topics with limited scope and breadth</li> <li>• Collate the gathered information in a simple manner showing some relevance to the opinions which follow</li> <li>• Present unelaborated facts and opinions</li> <li>• Use the collated facts as a basis to express simple personal opinions and attempt to justify them using a limited critical vocabulary</li> </ul>	<p><i>The candidate can produce written critical work showing ability to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and investigate information on topics with some scope and breadth</li> <li>• Select and collate information demonstrating some understanding and an attempt at interpretation as a basis for the opinions which follow</li> <li>• Present evidence of some relevant facts, opinions and personal interpretation of information</li> <li>• Use critical vocabulary to make judgements by using straightforward contrasts and comparisons</li> </ul>	<p><i>The candidate can produce a range of critical work showing ability to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and investigate information on topics with substantial scope and breadth</li> <li>• Select, collate and interpret information demonstrating an understanding of qualities and relationships as a basis for the judgements and substantiations which follow</li> <li>• Present facts and opinions clearly and convincingly; marshal ideas and evidence demonstrating depth and sophistication of personal thoughts and feelings</li> <li>• Use critical vocabulary to make personal, informed and substantiated judgements</li> </ul>

### 3. Critical Activity – Content Guidelines

It is very important that there is a quite clear distinction between the content of EXPRESSIVE Critical submissions and DESIGN Critical submissions.

In addition to historical/biographical information EXPRESSIVE submissions should include personal comment on some or all of the following:

- visual elements
- techniques, methods, approaches etc
- emotions, atmosphere, feelings etc
- subject matter
- media
- composition
- style
- message etc

In addition to historical/biographical information DESIGN submissions should be more analytical and include analysis of design issues such as:

- function
- process
- target group
- ergonomics
- cost
- technologies
- style
- client/brief
- construction/lay-out
- health and safety etc
- materials

Neither of these lists is exhaustive but from them it should be clear that the nature of the two submissions should be clearly different.

## **Notes on Problematic Submissions**

Certain areas have caused problems when adopted as topics for design critical submissions. These include graphics, book illustrations, posters, CD and computer game covers, stamps, environmental art, stained glass, wallpaper and textile design. Difficulties arise when these topics are examined simply on their pictorial content or the appearance of the design item and are then simply evaluated using expressive terms.

### **Wallpaper and textile design**

This area often deals with the works of Morris and Mackintosh. The content of the design should be considered by candidates including reference to style and influences. The technologies and materials are important as these have implications for costs and suitability of purpose. Target group and environment could be referred to as well as relevant visual elements like colour and pattern, but this should go beyond mere description. A submission concentrating on the visual aspects without reference to design context would not be acceptable as a design submission.

### **Public Art**

Straightforward description of the designs and discussions of expressive content would not constitute a successful design submission. Matters such as the purpose of the installation, the environmental impact in terms of social benefits; local concerns regarding architectural development and planning; materials, technologies employed; siting of the work and durability are all suitable design issues which should be taken into account.

### **Poster Design**

The content, quality and medium used to produce a poster are only part of what should be considered by the candidate. Other issues might include lay-out; purpose of the poster; the relationship between the image and the lettering; style; type of market and client, suitability of the image; the message and whether it is successful or otherwise as well as the means of reproduction and cost implications. These design issues would apply to other forms of graphic design. It is not sufficient to produce descriptive narrative about the visual images in this type of critical design submission.

### **3. Marking – Detailed Points**

#### **3.1 Standards of Writing**

Markers should make every attempt to ignore the standard of writing employed and to look very carefully for anything that indicates an understanding of the topic being studied.

#### **3.2 House Style**

Occasionally the particular “house style” or format for presenting the submission can be over determined by the centre and having a restricting effect on candidates’ ability to produce an authentic personal response. Furthermore, if all candidates are provided with a limited number of resources to write about and they all refer to identical paintings or design items, following a controlled format, there is no real sense of personal choice. This may inhibit candidates from gaining a grade beyond general level. Markers are cautioned to examine and assess these examples very carefully to avoid disadvantaging candidates.

#### **3.3 Questionnaires**

Submission of teacher generated materials such as questionnaires has been discouraged. However, if these appear in submissions the work should be assessed as normal and candidates should not be penalised. In such cases, you should examine the work with extra care since the questionnaire can disadvantage the candidate if badly designed.

#### **3.4 Presentation**

The actual form of presentation of material should make no difference to your assessment. Illustrative material included with submissions should only be considered regarding the awarding of grades when it contributes to the points made by the candidate. As decoration or enhancement, it should not be accorded any value.

#### **3.5 Word Limit**

Since 2002, there has been a suggested 1500 maximum word limit for each submission. While the majority of centres have supported this notion, some continue to forward submissions well over this guideline. Candidates from these centres should not be penalised. However, where a centre has ignored this recommendation and sent in excessively long submissions a note of the centre should accompany the Marker’s Report.

#### **3.6 Use of Bibliography**

In and after 1998 candidates have been asked to document all sources of information in a bibliography at the end of each submission. It should include all books, CD ROM discs, websites, teacher generated notes and any other material referred to during study. No penalties should be applied to candidates who do not comply with this arrangement. However, a note of the names of the centres who do not comply with this arrangement should accompany the Marker’s Report.

#### **3.7 No Named Designers**

In design submissions it may be that in some cases individual designers are not discussed and cannot be identified. Certain themes and topics make it difficult for candidates to refer to individuals as such. This is perfectly acceptable and should be expected by markers.

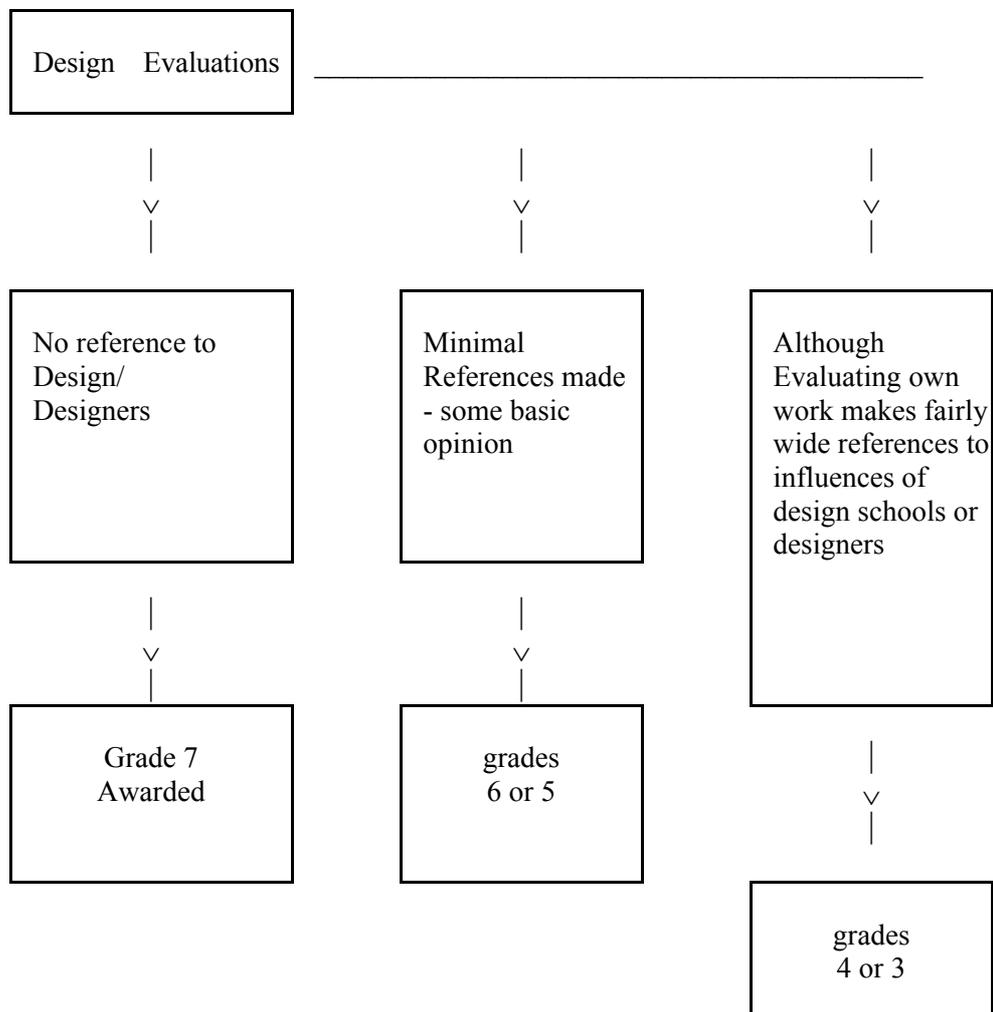
### **3.8 Initial Grading of Submissions**

A recommended method of marking is to initially grade each submission as Foundation, General or Credit. At this stage, ignore the differences within these basic levels such as General 3 or General 4. When an approximate grading has been achieved, repeat the process, referring to the detail of the GRC and then allocate the appropriate grade.

## Further Information on Problematic Submissions

### a Design Evaluations

Submissions which contain 'evaluations' should be examined carefully and if some of the content is broadly design critical work, then take this into account when arriving at your decision on a grade. The inclusion of some 'evaluative' comment is quite acceptable if it is used with reference to the work of designers or design topics. However, some submissions will appear to be no more than evaluations of candidate work for the practical element of the course. These submissions should be read with great care to ensure that an unfair penalty is not imposed. If a submission deals **exclusively** with evaluation of candidate's own work then it must be deemed unacceptable. In this case the candidate will receive an overall award of grade 7 for the Critical Activity element.



[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]