

# **National Qualifications 2006**

## **Senior Moderator Report**

**Subject: Art and Design**

**Assessment Panel: Art and Design**

## STANDARD GRADE

### ELEMENT / COURSEWORK MODERATED

#### DESIGN ACTIVITY

#### FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

##### General comments:

All centres verified this year were concordant and comfortable with the national standard. The distribution of the exemplification CD ROMs (Higher and Intermediate 1 and 2) issued earlier in the school year helped centres to understand standards. The vast majority of presentations were very accurate with only one on the borderline of non-concordance.

Centres were extremely accurate in marking Foundation candidates and were very aware of the qualities necessary to gain a General award. As can be expected the main areas of difficulty were the borderline 2/3 and 1/2 candidates. However, in this year's sample there were fewer discrepancies in the latter awards.

In the vast majority of cases the differences were at an acceptable level. All Verifiers reported that the visits were well received and believed that their visit was supportive to the staff and departments concerned.

There were no centres where the Verifier's assessment and the assessment of the department had a difference of more than 1 mark which must be considered as being very accurate.

As with previous years the experience of delivering National Courses has had a positive affect on the Standard Grade Design Activity Units. Many centres were more focused in the production of evidence and most Design Activity Units were evidenced with 3 sheets.

In general, the design process is being delivered consistently; again this is due to the clarification of the national standard for all levels. However, unlike NQ Courses, many of the design briefs for Standard Grade were designed for use by the whole class. This led to too much of the investigation evidence being repetitive, particularly at General and Foundation levels. On occasion this also affected some Credit level submissions.

Unlike National Qualifications where the design brief has gradually changed for the better, the evidence suggested design briefs at Standard Grade have not. Many were too open and did not give enough information to inform the candidates of the problem to be solved. In the poorer submissions this led to the work being less focused and often led to time management problems. Better time management would have allowed more time to be spent on more in depth development and more importantly on the quality of the solution. Evidence suggested that the time being spent on this was not equivalent to the time spent on the investigation stage.

##### Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

It was good to see that the design process was being formalised more in line with National Qualifications.

However, it was suggested that some centres may need to review their design briefs to allow the candidate to focus more on problem solving. This would tighten up this element and allow for a more in-depth

development process to take place. This would enable the candidates to be more aware of the specific design issues to be considered.

This in-depth development would also give the candidates more information and confidence when preparing their solution.

Verifiers believed that the solution was often the most disappointing element of the Course and that this was often due to time being limited by previous activities rather than the lack of the candidate's abilities.

Evaluations were on the whole very well done and met the criteria of the overall Unit assessment. There was evidence of a good number of candidates excelling in this area.

While it is understandable that Standard Grade design briefs are more controlled by the teacher, a well constructed brief outlining the actual problem to be solved, indicating restrictions and outlining options and lines of enquiry could lead to significant improvements.

## NATIONAL UNITS

### TITLES/LEVELS OF NATIONAL UNITS MODERATED

#### ART AND DESIGN

DESIGN ACTIVITY - INTERMEDIATE 1, INTERMEDIATE 2 AND HIGHER

EXPRESSIVE ACTIVITY- INTERMEDIATE 1, INTERMEDIATE 2 AND HIGHER

### FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

#### General comments:

The verification activity over the past year has concentrated mainly on the moderation of incomplete evidence; offering centres the opportunity for developmental support and advice if required. This was undertaken in January and February which allowed plenty of time for centres to act on advice and direction. As with last year's verification exercise this process was welcomed by the centres concerned.

During Development Visits, the departments were working well and the Verifiers were well received by departments. Discussions focused on Marking Procedures and the Appeals process. In all cases, work from the department was studied and discussed with staff. These discussions were fruitful and welcomed by departments. All departments had their attention drawn to the current support materials and it was suggested that they take advantage of the recent invitation to visit Central Marking procedures in Dalkeith.

It was also emphasised that marking and assessing candidates work should be undertaken as a department using support materials as a guide to the national standard. Viewing and discussing recently assessed work was very important in trying to achieve consistency of standard within a centre.

This advice was also proffered to departments in all Verification visits. The vast majority of departments were well aware of the support materials on offer.

Evidence from the Verification visits suggested that the vast majority of centres were coping well with both the Design and Expressive Activity components of the Course.

All centres were well aware of the national standard and were well prepared for the Verification visit with the vast majority of candidates now being entered for the correct level. Evidence from the visits is showing that previous misunderstandings and difficulties have virtually been eradicated. This has largely been due to the excellent support materials and events that have been organized over the last two to three years. The verification of incomplete evidence has also been very much appreciated, as this has allowed Verifiers to support centres by visiting them early in the year and leaving ample time for submissions to be reviewed and action taken based on advice from the verification procedure.

Courses are now much clearer and have been modified and developed to suit the number of candidates now undertaking the wide variety of Art and Design Courses. Departments are much clearer with regard to the national standard and are now more accurate in their presentation policy. Departments intimated however there was a significant pressure from parents to enter candidates at a level beyond their abilities.

#### Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

More centres employed the best practice of using of the issued exemplar materials and Understanding Standards document as a basis for group assessment procedures. This, therefore ensured a clear understanding of the national standard throughout the centre. Where this was not the case suggestions were made by Verifiers of the benefits of this procedure

## **Design Activity**

In most cases the design briefs are now on the whole flexible enough to encourage the imagination and creativity of the candidate. This is an area of clear improvement over the past two years with many centres being supported by the recent exemplar material issued to support this area of difficulty.

It is now obvious that the investigation sheet, which had always been one of the most problematic areas of the design process, was now better understood with the vast majority of centres providing relevant evidence of the design problem being solved.

Candidates were also providing clear evidence of the development of two different ideas and the quality of some of solutions was of an extremely high standard.

There was still some evidence that a small percentage of centres had some difficulty in providing investigation evidence that was individual to each candidate. In some instances, banks of evidence were being used making some of the investigation evidence repetitive and less relevant to each submission. There was also some evidence that a small percentage of centres were 'wallpapering' the investigation sheets with vaguely relevant information rather than being selective to the particular problem to be solved. Often this was due to the design process being instigated by a 'mood board' and not being revisited later to clarify the development of the design problem.

There was still some evidence of time management issues particularly in the delivery of the design component. The worst evidence of this was seen in departments where candidates were given too much freedom of choice. In these cases often the department had a lack of resources and materials to do justice to the design project selected by the candidate. While allowing candidates a free reign in these circumstances was commendable, if relevant resources are not in place this can lead to lack of control and focus resulting in delay and frustration.

It is important to offer courses and options that can be properly resourced and supported both materially and by teacher expertise.

It was evident that departments are clearer about the necessity to clarify two distinct approaches in their design process and were more confident in the selection of evidence.

It is important to emphasize that these problems now seem to be in the minority with the vast majority of centres offering courses that are both stimulating and well resourced.

## **Expressive Unit**

The Expressive Unit has always been relatively trouble free and the evidence of verification shows that the quality and variety continues to improve. Candidates are well supported in this area with a wide variety of approaches being developed throughout the country. The best presentations allowed candidates to choose their own stimulus and encourage experimentation with a wide variety of materials and approaches. Centres were very much aware that drawing from first-hand sources very much improved the quality of outcome and this was very much the norm.

In a small number of cases there was some confusion between some investigation and development evidence.

Evidence from verification showed that departments are now more comfortable with the development process, showing more evidence of the candidates thought processes. There was also evidence that candidates were experimenting with a wider variety of media and were considering compositional possibilities. Candidates were also encouraged to consider the benefits of experimenting with the different visual elements.

In some cases however, there was still the tendency to use the development sheet as an opportunity to show another two finished outcomes missing the opportunity to show more relevant developments of ideas.