



Frequently Asked Questions

National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Art and Design - Gathering evidence for provisional results

This information, plus further guidance, can also be found in the '*Art and Design – Gathering evidence*' audio visual presentation on the SQA website -

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/74495.html>

I intend to wait until my students are back in class to continue with their portfolios. What should I be teaching them while they are still working at home?

The National Qualifications 2021 Group that oversees the key activity associated with the Awarding 2021 Programme has advised that while students are working at home, the focus should be on learning and teaching. As an awarding body, SQA has no input into learning and teaching. However, we appreciate that in Art and Design learning and teaching takes place through the delivery of the portfolio assessment tasks. So, you are probably teaching candidates with the aim of producing portfolio pieces. This could still be achievable while they are working at home depending on the approach you have taken and the resources available to your candidates. If this is not possible, you could use centre devised tasks to develop your candidates' expressive art and/or design skills.

Even if this is not directly part of their portfolio, the work generated could contribute to key evidence. These tasks could involve work related to their portfolios. For example, a candidate working on a still life theme could be practising studies of objects, perhaps as a challenge to make studies of different types of objects, for example with ellipses, symmetry, reflections, lettering, texture. Or perhaps they could make compositions of groups of objects. Candidates working on portraiture could be making self-portraiture studies, or studies of members of their family. If a candidate is working on a landscape or built environment theme, they could be making studies of views from windows at home, or studies of interiors.

The same principles can be applied to design. For example, graphic design candidates could be exploring lettering or layout. In repeat pattern design, candidates could be exploring different types of repeat. 3D design candidates could be demonstrating perspective drawing, or fashion drawing skills.

Any work used as key evidence should demonstrate attainment in the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course. So, depending on the nature of the tasks you give your candidates to complete at home, you can still give them opportunities to demonstrate their ability and enable you to make judgements.

My students are working at home on their expressive portfolios. How can I ensure equity when most don't have access to the type of materials and resources we have in class?

Portfolio themes could be based on available subject matter. This could be objects they have available at home, or it could involve their immediate environment, or perhaps self-portraiture. Everyday subjects can still allow them to demonstrate their skill and creativity. Candidates do not need to use a variety of materials. There is no penalty for using limited materials, nor is there any advantage in using a wide range of materials. It is important though that candidates should select materials they feel confident with and have an aptitude in using. Materials they have available at home could be quite basic and might include tonal pencil or ballpoint pen and copier paper.

Candidates who enjoy mixed media techniques could also incorporate scrap materials to their artwork, for example packaging, wallpaper, old envelopes and such like. Working with limited materials does not affect their opportunity to access the full range of marks for the expressive portfolio. If working space is an issue, work can be produced in smaller formats than would usually be done in class. You should still be able to make valid judgements on any work produced with limited resources.

My students started their final expressive pieces in class. The scale and materials mean that it's impractical for them to work on these at home. If we are short of time, does everything have to be finished?

You will need to be able to make a judgement on their work. However, you may be able to for this with partially finished work if:

- ◆ you can understand the creative intention
- ◆ there is enough of the piece worked up to a finish for you to determine the skill level.

For example, they could have completed a section of the piece. The same principle applies to investigation work and developments.

Our students don't have access to the IT and software they need for their graphics or repeat pattern portfolios while they are working at home. How can they get their design portfolios finished?

Although this can be challenging to deal with, you have some options available.

2D design could be carried out using traditional rather than digital techniques. For example, could they show experimentation with layout using pencil and paper, or felt pens? Could they trace fonts and imagery rather than using the computer? Could they use more traditional methods, like quartering, to create repeat patterns?

Design briefs could be adapted to suit limited materials and techniques. For instance, you set a brief that requires working in monochrome should a candidate not have access to colour materials. Limitations can often encourage creativity.

Perhaps you would prefer that your candidates did not work on their design portfolio at home. Although a design portfolio provides evidence with a good predictive value, it is also possible to use other types of key evidence.

You could consider devising a series of smaller design tasks that will give your candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of design process, skills, and evaluation.

For example, this could be a series of bite-sized 'design challenges' enabling your candidate to demonstrate their design skills, understanding of process and ability to evaluate their work.

You could create these tasks with equity in mind so that they are accessible to all candidates in terms of available resources.

Our students do a lot of sampling and they produce highly finished outcomes for their 3D design portfolios. How can they complete design work at home without access to all the equipment we normally use in class?

3D design can be challenging for teachers to deal with when candidates are working at home. However, there are some ways you can continue to give candidate opportunities to generate evidence.

You could adapt design briefs so that candidates can complete work at home using available materials. This could provide an element of familiarity and make use of their existing skills. For example, if you normally do jewellery, could they design paper jewellery or jewellery made using recycled items?

For product design, could they make mock-ups using paper or cardboard from items of packaging. Do they have the skills to use visualisation drawings to show their ideas?

For fashion or millinery, they are unlikely to have access to mannequins – can they show their idea using fashion drawings and sample swatches instead? If they normally do a lot of sampling using sewing machines and other equipment, could they work with paper instead?

Simple materials can be used to demonstrate creative design thinking, and highly finished outcomes are not required for the portfolio. Design solutions could be shown using a mock-up in basic materials or a visualisation drawing showing different viewpoints. The main thing is that they communicate their solution and that you can understand it. It's more about their designing skills than it is about their craft skills, so you should still be able to make a judgement on the quality of design work. Perhaps continuing with portfolio work at home is not an option. It could be they have completed a lot already, or you want to wait until they return to class.

Alternatively, you could devise a series of smaller 3D design tasks using available materials, that will give your candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of design process, skills, and evaluation. This can be done in an equitable way so that all candidates can access the tasks, perhaps involving the use of paper, recycled items, tape, scissors and other available materials.

The quality of work produced at home for the portfolios is not as good as the work they do under my supervision in class. How can I make a judgement on this?

Work completed at home may well look different to work produced in class, having been produced with more limited resources. If the work demonstrates the skills, knowledge and understanding for the expressive or design portfolio, you could use it as key evidence to make a valid and reliable judgement using the marking instructions and SQA examples of candidates work.

A lot of my students failed their question paper prelim. Will this impact on their result?

You must take question paper evidence into account when deciding on a candidate's provisional result. For some candidates, this will be a challenging component and may be their weakest area, whereas for others it could be a strength.

Evidence generated later in the course tends to have a higher predictive value. Giving your candidates another assessment opportunity later in the course, when they have had a chance to consolidate their knowledge and understanding, should provide a more reliable indicator of performance in this component.

A lot of candidates make improvements in their performance between a practice exam they sat early in the course and the final question paper, whereas some do not – so each performance will need to be judged on an individual basis.

If a candidate's performance in a later assessment exceeds an earlier one, you can disregard the lower performance. There is no need for question paper evidence to be generated in an exam hall – it could be completed during a class test.

My students are back in class, but how can we get portfolios completed when we must apply social distancing and cannot share equipment and resources?

If you cannot use your usual methods of delivery and range of materials and techniques, you can adapt your approach so that candidates still have an opportunity to demonstrate their skills. For example, if they would normally draw objects from life but they cannot handle shared resources, working from photographs could offer a solution.

While equipment cannot be shared, you could adapt design briefs so that they do not require use of specialist equipment. Or you could introduce some methods that don't require sharing of equipment.

It is possible for candidates to work with a more limited choice of resources and in different ways and still demonstrate their skills to access the full range of marks. The work produced is unlikely to be as highly polished as that produced under normal circumstances, but it can still be used as evidence if you feel that it gives a reliable indication of the candidate's skills, knowledge and understanding.

Many of the suggestions for managing portfolio delivery for candidates working at home can also be applied in the classroom.

Some of my students haven't managed to finish their portfolios and there are gaps in them. Can I infer attainment based on what they have produced?

You cannot infer attainment. Judgements must be based only on evidence, not what the candidate might have achieved. Gaps in portfolios impact on the marks that can be awarded. However, if you have supplementary evidence available, this could be considered alongside the portfolio when making judgements on a candidate's provisional result. For example, supplementary evidence could include centre devised tasks completed at home that show evidence of skills and/or process. This allows teachers and lecturers some flexibility when compiling key evidence that demonstrates their candidate's attainment. While not part of the portfolio, this work can still contribute positively to a candidate's provisional result, if it demonstrates additional attainment in the skills, knowledge and understanding required.

I have some candidates who have not completed a design portfolio and some who missed their question paper prelim. Do I need evidence for every component?

To achieve course award, your candidates should have generated evidence for all the course components. Missing evidence for a component will impact negatively on the provisional result as it will make up a significant percentage of the available mark.

You could refer to previous answers to FAQs to see if there is a way you might give these candidates an opportunity to generate the missing evidence before their provisional result needs to be submitted.