

NCFE Level 3 Applied General Certificate in Art and Design (601/8898/4)

Assessment Window: January 2020 – February 2020

Paper Number: P000830

This report contains information in relation to the external assessment from the Chief Examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of learner work within this assessment window.

The aim is to highlight where learners generally perform well as well as any areas where further development may be required.

Key points:

- grading information
- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- evidence creation
- interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria
- planning in the external assessment.

It is important to note that learners should not sit the external assessment until they have taken part in the relevant teaching of the full qualification content.

Grade Boundary Information

Each learner's external assessment paper is marked by an Examiner and awarded a raw mark. During the awarding process, a combination of statistical analysis and professional judgement is used to establish the raw marks that represent the minimum required standard to achieve each grade. These raw marks are outlined in the table below.

Max Mark	Distinction	Merit	Pass	NYA
75	59	48	27	0

Grade boundaries represent the minimum raw mark required to achieve a certain grade. For example, if the grade boundary for the Pass grade is 25, a minimum raw mark of 25 is required to achieve a Pass.

Maximum UMS Score*	Distinction	Merit	Pass	NYA
500	325	275	225	0

** In order to ensure that levels of achievement remain comparable for the same assessment across different assessment windows, all raw marks are converted to a points score based on a uniform mark scale (UMS). For more information about UMS and how it is used to determine overall qualification grades, please refer to the qualification specification.*

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment. Learners may require additional pre-release material in order to complete the tasks within the paper. These must be provided to learners in line with our Regulations.

Learners must be given the resources to carry out the Tasks and these are highlighted within the Qualification Specific Instructions Document (QSID).

Standard of learner work

This was the second sitting of this externally assessed unit. There were a very limited number of entries within this second assessment window, and many of these learners were re-sitting the assessment having previously submitted work in the first series.

This report is written to highlight findings from submissions this year. Although the size of the cohort taking this unit was extremely small, valuable insight into the unit can be gathered and used to support future delivery.

The underlying principle of this unit is to assess the learners' ability to respond to a thematic starting point and undertake a creative investigation into that theme which culminates in the production of a creative body of Art or Design work in a format of the learners' choice.

This year the theme was 'Fragmented' and it was clear from the responses that some learners struggled with this thematic starting point. Responses to the theme demonstrated a lack of critical engagement with the theme. Although the resulting work demonstrated diversity of outcome, the learner's creative journey from the thematic starting point was not always evident in the work. The exam is split into three individual tasks, which are designed to evidence the learner creative journey through the unit paper and theme.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment

Malpractice

There were no instances of malpractice raised in this assessment window. The Chief Examiner would like to take this opportunity to advise learners that instances of malpractice will affect the outcome on the assessment. It is imperative that centres and learners adhere to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment to ensure the integrity of the qualification and that malpractice does not take place.

Maladministration

No instances of maladministration were reported in this assessment window. The Chief Examiner would like to highlight the importance of adhering to the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment document in this respect.

Referencing of External Assessment Tasks

Although it was clear from the nature of the submitted work which evidence related to each of the individual tasks, it was noted that, at times, the examining process may have been helped by the numbering of tasks. In addition, where the evidence was presented on loose-leaf pages, numbering the pages sequentially would support the assessment process.

Evidence creation

Evidence for each part of this assessment must be created independently. With regards to the practical assessment it is important that learners submit evidence of all exploratory and experimental work created when developing their personal response to the theme.

Responses of the tasks within the sections of the external assessment paper

Task 1

For task 1, learners are required to research the three practitioner work provided in the paper and to analyse how the work communicates of the theme 'Fragmented'.

To complete this task learners must consider how each of the practitioners in the paper have used formal elements to communicate or respond to the theme. This analysis of practitioners work should be combined with further research into the theme of the paper. Evidence for this task should be presented as a written or word-processed document, which can include visual elements to help illustrate the written content. Learners should also provide a bibliography of sources used to conduct the research. There is not a specific requirement for the bibliography to use any specific referencing format i.e. Harvard referencing, but the information in the bibliography should be detailed enough to allow the sources to be easily retrieved.

All learners in this series submitted written evidence for this task. However, generally the evidence presented demonstrated limited understanding of either the theme or the practitioners referenced in the paper. There was evidence that learners had undertaken basic research from a limited selection of sources. This was clearly evidenced through the learners' bibliographies which were considered to be below what is expected for this level of qualification. This limited referencing and lack of specific detail meant that learners were considered to have made limited use of sources. It is important that during the teaching and learning, in preparation for this unit, learners develop their research skills.

Across all learners, the evidence presented for Task 1 did not show the level of analysis required for this assessment. Some learners appeared to rely entirely on a series of quotes by or about the practitioners listed in the paper, but made no attempt to analyse either the visual or contextual nature of the work in relation to the theme of the paper.

Following the release of the paper learners have 5 hours to conduct their investigation and produce the written response for this task. Therefore it is expected that learners will have conducted an extensive investigation that supports a thorough and informed understanding of themes, ideas and messages. The written report does not need to be excessively lengthy but should strive to include insightful and comprehensive analysis of the formal elements used to visually communicate and avoid wasting time simply describing the work.

Task 2

For Task 2 learners are required to produce a written Statement of Intent (SOI) explaining their planned response to the theme. The Statement of Intent is a vital part of the unit as it should provide clarity with regards to a learners' creative intention for the subsequent practical work. The paper clearly identifies to learners that the Statement of Intent should include:

- how they intend to communicate the theme of 'Fragmented'
- materials, techniques and processes that they plan to use
- resources
- expected timescales.

Unfortunately, a number of learners in this series did not provide any evidence of producing a Statement of Intent and this automatically resulted in them receiving 0 marks for this task. For those learners who did submit a Statement of Intent, the documents did not contain the required details highlighted in the paper. Learners should provide a statement of intent that broadly outlines the line of enquiry that they intend to explore and give a general idea of what they may plan to produce. The statement of intent should make reference to how the work planned relates to the theme. The statement of Intent should also make specific reference to the resources they plan to use and show a consideration to the timescales involved in the project.

Task 3

Task 3 provides learners with the opportunity to practically explore the theme through application of specialist materials, techniques and processes and produce a personal response to the theme. Learners should use the information gathered in Task 1 to inform a practical and creative exploration of the theme.

Learners have a total of 13 hours to complete tasks 2 and 3 and the evidence submitted should provide evidence of a sustained creative exploration in response to the thematic starting point. Ideas should be developed and refined through relevant exploration and experimentation, which should be fully documented within the portfolio.

The work submitted in this series generally consisted of quite minimal portfolios that demonstrated a limited exploration of materials, techniques and processes and an inconsistent development of ideas. Learners need to use this opportunity to apply the skills they have developed throughout their course to produce a portfolio of creative work that responds to the theme.

Task 3 also requires learners to maintain an ongoing studio/workshop diary, in which they should critically reflect on:

- materials, techniques and processes as they use them
- how their practical work is progressing.

These 'diaries' can be submitted as a separate written document to accompany the practical portfolio, or could be included within the practical work demonstrating appropriate critical reflection. In this series the quality of these diaries were very limited with little or no evidence of ongoing review or critical reflection.

Learners are unable to achieve high marks for this activity if their response does not go beyond a purely descriptive account of the work undertaken.

Chief Examiner: Jill Marshall Simms

Date: March 2020
