

NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Studies: Craft (P000415)

Assessment window: 7 September – 29 November 2017

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:

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

It's important to note that learners shouldn't sit the external assessment until they've taken part in the relevant teaching of the unit to ensure they are well prepared for the external assessment.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment (both supervised and invigilated) must be independent from the teaching of the unit. Work completed during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Any stimulus materials used by the centre during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Learners must complete all of the tasks independently.

The completion of the supervised tasks must be supervised by the Teacher and can be sat in the normal classroom environment. The tasks within the supervised period do not need to be invigilated, however, must be conducted in line with the conditions set out within our Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment V Certs. The supervised tasks must be treated independently from the teaching of the unit and learners must complete all tasks independently. This means the supervised tasks must not be Teacher led.

The completion of the invigilated tasks must be invigilated and sat in accordance with the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs.

It's important that the external assessment is sat in accordance with the specified conditions within this document.

Standard of learner work

There was a significant improvement to the standard of work for this marking window, this was mainly due to differentiated evidence and reflective of the subject disciplines.

As in previous windows there was also evidence of some low-level entries.

There was significant evidence of all tasks not being completed in their entirety, which resulted in the assessment criteria not meeting the requirements of the assessment criteria, and a Not Yet Achieved (NYA) for the overall unit being awarded. Learners must be advised that there are multiple parts to a task (e.g. a and b) then all parts of a task must be attempted.

There was significant improvement of digital evidence submitted and this was particularly effective for Tasks 4 and 5 where learners are required to visually represent their ideas development.

Some evidence included much written annotation from learners and at times this was very difficult for Examiners to read and understand. Learners should review, and proof read their written work to ensure that this is clear and relevant to the associated task to ensure accurate assessment criteria can be awarded.

There were some excellent examples of creative work submitted during this marking window and learners responded to the theme very well. Higher achieving learners demonstrated thorough and diverse research skills and practical skill development within their craft discipline.

There was notably less final design work that was individual; many learners produced quite similar outcomes, and this is not best practice. The unit and external assessment paper encourages individual interpretation of a design brief and this was not consistently evident in the submissions.

There was a significant improvement of evidence of practical experimentation, and this was highly effective. This was equally highly supported by well justified annotations or design / technical notes. In addition, there was a considerable improvement in the standard of the costed project plans, many of these were very detailed and fully reflective of the proposed craft item.

Some submissions were not considered to be at the creative or technical standard which is consistent with the level of the qualification. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the teaching and learning of the unit is delivered in its entirety, prior to learners undertaking the external assessment. This allows learners to interpret and respond to a brief independently and provide opportunity to achieve across all seven assessment criteria.

In addition, it is the centre's responsibility to ensure learners are recruited with integrity at the correct level. It was evident in this window that some learners were more suitable for the Level 1 qualification where they are not required to Pass an external assessed unit.

Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment- V Certs

Malpractice

Examples of malpractice but it's not extensive, may include evidence of learners being provided with templates in order to respond to the Tasks within the External Assessment, identical responses to the brief and associated Tasks and feedback within evidence.

Maladministration

Examples of maladministration will include evidence whereby the centre haven't administered the external assessment in line with the Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment V Certs.

Centres are reminded of the conditions within our Regulation associated with the supervised sessions, this should not be teacher led and learners must independently approach the brief and associated Tasks.

All incidents of reported malpractice and maladministration will be investigated to ensure the integrity of the assessment.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

Referencing of the tasks has continued to improve and most learners labelled their work effectively by task and/ or assessment criteria. There were some minimal submissions that consisted of multiple evidence formats and no clear referencing, in addition there were some minimal submissions where evidence had become detached. Teachers and the invigilator must ensure learners are aware how to label evidence correctly, per task as if tasks are not clearly labelled a Not Yet Achieved may be awarded.

Learners are clearly informed to label each task separately within the Regulations for the Conduct of the External Assessment - V Certs document. This must also include reference to multiple parts of any task.

Failure to follow this requirement may have significant implications for the awarding of learner grades. If Examiners are not easily able to identify which evidence relates to which task then a Not Yet Achieved grade may be awarded.

Learners should be instructed to attempt all tasks in the paper, and these should be clearly referenced. Any tasks not attempted or not referenced cannot be rewarded and a grade of Not Yet Achieved will be awarded. This will result in an overall grade of Not Yet Achieved for the external assessment unit.

Evidence creation

In this unit, centres are required to deliver 30 hours of teaching and learning guided by the unit content. This must be done prior to learners undertaking the external assessment.

Centres are free to choose a single craft discipline or multiple disciplines within classroom delivery; however, the craft discipline chosen for the external assessment should demonstrate a good standard of learner knowledge. In addition, any evidence that is produced within the 30 hours teaching and learning of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment.

Most learners provided a good interpretation of the design brief, there was a much-improved response to how learners have explored the limitations and challenges the brief provided them with. However, there was some misinterpretation of how to deconstruct a design brief independently based on the constraints provided, in addition there was still substantial evidence of submissions having the same or very similar product ideas.

Most learners submitted a valid and broad range of research sources that were relevant to their chosen craft discipline, there was a very positive increase in practical exploration and this was highly effective. Many learner's other sources were wide ranging and at times insightful.

Research findings had been mostly collated and presented well, there was a valid improvement of how the research informed idea development and this was very positive to observe. However, there was also evidence of very limited collation and presentation methods below the level of the qualification.

In most cases learners used visual techniques (design sheets, samples, maquettes, screenshots, photographs, sketch pads, and PowerPoint Presentations) to present their ideas and final designs. Not all visual evidence had been annotated to show development and progression of initial ideas and this is an important element in order to achieve higher assessment criteria. There was also as in previous windows a substantial amount of submissions that demonstrated very low-level of drawing and design skills, centres are encouraged to allow learners to submit evidence in a format that best represents their craft discipline and personal strengths to communicate their idea/s effectively. In cases where learners submitted digital evidence alongside weaker drawings the awarding of assessment criteria was much more positive.

Most learners submitted detailed costed project plans. There were some excellent examples of thorough and highly detailed plans submitted that easily allowed higher end assessment criteria to be awarded. Lower level plans were mostly poorly presented, difficult to read and understand and lacked consistency with their selected craft item.

As learners are not required to create an actual craft product in this assessment, teaching and learning of the unit content should be extensive with regard to interpreting a design brief, comparing and evaluating relevant craft techniques, research using a range of sources (primary and secondary), collating information and presenting findings, developing ideas, selecting final ideas, presenting / communicating ideas and producing a costed project plan. The delivery of all learning outcomes is mandatory prior to learners taking the external assessment paper.

Interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria

Task 1– AC 1.1

In this Task learners are required to interpret the requirements of a craft brief. Most learners demonstrated this very effectively using mind maps, mood boards, rough design sketches and written notes. There was some evidence that simply repeated the external assessment brief rather than communicating an individual interpretation and response and this provided limited analysis to achieve higher assessment criteria.

There was generally an effective interpretation of the theme Fun, Delight, Surprise. Learners seemed to respond quite methodically regarding the potential based on the brief constraints (e.g. family centre) and what they could design in response.

However, some learners focused their ideas on existing and less creative products, rather than some more creative interpretations of the theme and what it meant to them individually. In some submissions, this limited the development of original design ideas as the existing products became more of a focus of what could be duplicated, rather than how the theme could be communicated within new design ideas.

Most learners demonstrated effective exploration of the creative opportunities and challenges they may be faced with. This was mostly evidence via bulleted lists and written notes. Learners achieving lower grades, did this at a limited level and evidence was incomplete or did not demonstrate a valid understanding of how to interpret these constraints from a design brief. More successful learners made good reference and full consideration to resources, personal skills, potential problems and the realisation of their ideas that could best meet the brief requirements.

Task 2– AC 1.3 and 1.4

In this task learners are required to research information using a range of different sources, then collate and present research findings to inform their own craft ideas.

Most learners used a minimum of three relevant research sources and many learners used practical experimentation as part of their primary research and this was highly successful. Many learners also used a broader range of sources inclusive of visits, product analysis, magazines, books and websites and this was very positive to observe. There were some learners who submitted evidence of less than the requested three sources.

There was also evidence of learners not referencing their sources and this proved very difficult to examine. Online sources also seemed to be quite dependent and this limited learner's responses at times.

Teachers should ensure learners have access to a range of sources (e.g. online, books, magazines, newspapers and existing products) prior to the external assessment. Teachers must also ensure learners know how to clearly reference sources appropriately and ensure sources are reliable.

The collation of research findings was mostly good. There was also excellent examples of presentation skills.

Many learners although collated their findings effectively did not fully demonstrate how these would be used to inform their own idea development and this is a mandatory requirement of assessment criteria 1.4 and at times limited the awarding of higher assessment criteria.

Higher achieving learners did this very well and fully related their research finding to the requirements of the brief and how they would use these in their idea development in Task 4.

Task 3– AC 1.2

In this task learners are required to compare and evaluate different craft techniques; the craft techniques should be relevant to their chosen discipline.

Most learners did this effectively via practical experimentation and recorded this via annotated photographs and samples. Some learners also submitted detailed evaluation reports and tables.

There was much improved evidence of comparing at least two craft techniques and how these related to their own work. However there remained to be some limited comparison in many submissions, in these cases the evidence focused on strengths and weaknesses of the craft techniques rather than comparing two techniques.

Task 4 –AC 1.5

This task requires learners to demonstrate the development of a range of ideas for their craft item, most learners submitted the requested three ideas for the task. There was a significant increase in written evidence rather than visual evidence and this was at times difficult to Examine. Learners should be encouraged to represent and communicate their ideas in a visual format, this could be a digital format if this assists learners to do this effectively.

Most learners did submit evidence via annotated sketches or other annotated visual representation such as samples and maquettes. This type of evidence was highly successful, in particular were annotations also demonstrated technical considerations and choices based on research findings and requirements of the brief.

Evidence for this task was variable, there was some excellent and highly presented evidence that demonstrated a clear development process in response to valid research, compared with visual representation that was very weak and not consistent to the standard of this qualification.

There was also significant evidence of some learners producing similar ideas for a product, learners must interpret the external assessment independently.

Task 5– AC 1.6

In this task learners are required to select and present at least one final idea giving reasons for their choice. Reasons should be valid and consistent with the development in Task 4.

Evidence was variable, there was some excellent visual representation that has been well justified and highly presented compared to very weak evidence not consistent to the standard of this qualification.

Most learners that did not do well in Task 5 was due to the level of the work was generally unsuccessful in Task 4 also. In some limited cases learners did not select an idea from their development in Task 4 and simply presented a different and at times irrelevant idea and this did not allow for assessment criteria to be awarded.

Higher achieving learners effectively used previous tasks to clearly inform the selection of a final design idea and presented this very well. In addition, reasons given were wholly valid and justified. In these cases, learners had taken much time to refine an idea based on thorough research and the requirements of the brief.

Task 6 and Task 3 AC 1.7

This task requires learners to produce a costed project plan inclusive of all resources and stages of production required to make their intended craft item.

Most learners submitted realistic costings that had been well researched and collated, these also had been referenced in Task 3 effectively.

Most learners also clearly stated the stages of production and these were wholly relevant to their craft area.

Learners achieving a lower grade, presented very low-level plans that had limited costs identified and very limited stages of production, most were able to easily identify resources accurately.

Presentation of the costed project plans was mostly satisfactory, and some stronger learners included an excellent amount of detail such as contingency plans.

Not all learners effectively stated the order of activities or the resources they will require within the project plan. These are both mandatory elements of this task and should clearly reflect the production stages associated to the chosen craft discipline and selected idea in Task 5.

Planning in the external assessment

Centre's are reminded to give due attention to the assessment windows of the external assessment. It's not advisable for learners to sit the external assessment early in their programme. It's far more appropriate to enter learners once they have taken part in the relevant teaching to ensure they are well prepared. Centres would be in a better position to prepare their learners for the external assessment following the support of an external quality assurance visit for the internally assessed units.

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