GCSE
ART AND DESIGN

8200/C and 8200/X
Report on the Examination

(8201, 8202, 8203, 8204, 8205, 8206)
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General

In this first year of awarding for the 8200 specification, schools had generally adapted well to the new subject content and evidence required for assessment. The majority of schools had offered students a two-year course during Years 10 and 11, whilst in some schools courses started in Year 9 and continued for three years. In a number of cases, a two-year course concluded at the end of Year 10, resulting in work that often lacked maturity or the level of understanding and skill seen in the submissions of Year 11 students. Fewer examples of one-year courses were reported.

The specification requires students to complete both Component 1 and Component 2. In a small number of instances, students had completed Component 1 only. Other submissions showed that students had completed the preparatory period of Component 2 but had not undertaken a minimum of two hours of formal supervised time. As a result, students did not fulfil the specification requirements for a level award.

Centre mark submission via e-Subs highlighted fewer errors this year. Changes needed due to incorrect addition or the transposition of marks between components rarely resulted in samples for moderation being changed during the school visit, but they did on occasions delay the process quite significantly. Candidate record forms were generally completed correctly and Centre declaration sheets were available for the moderator to sign.

In Component 1, many schools had taken on board the requirement for a 'sustained project' and a 'selection of further work'. There was evidence of 'foundation' courses conducted in the early weeks designed to acquire or sharpen skills, processes and techniques, followed by opportunities for students to embark on longer projects using generic starting points. Portfolios often concluded with an extended body of work allowing students to experience timed conditions in the form of a 'mock exam'. Some schools had continued with legacy-style courses, encouraging students to submit two or three projects of equal length, each fulfilling the requirement of a 'sustained' project. In a number of schools, however, all work produced during the portfolio course was submitted without any evidence of selection having taken place. This meant that on occasions the work was not consistent, the creative journey was disjointed and the holistic coverage of the four assessment objectives was not coherent.

In the best examples seen, portfolio courses provided students with guidance and instruction whilst encouraging independence at an early stage. Students were steered towards themes that suited their individual interests, capabilities and experiences and they were encouraged to work through all stages of a project with the assessment objectives in mind. Moving organically from one idea to another and from one medium or process to another, whilst evaluating their progress, allowed students to enjoy a creative journey of artistic enquiry and to realise their individual intentions. Themes and assignments were wide-ranging, from self-designed briefs, to client-based assignments or to open-ended projects in response to personal issues or starting points from past papers.

In was sometime seen that students lacked the opportunity to develop their own ideas, select their own sources, experiment freely or take risks in the creative handling of materials. The spirit of the specification is that students should learn through practical experience and the development of skills in order to gain subject knowledge, but it is imperative that they are then encouraged to develop their own strengths and interests through an increasingly independent, rather than imposed or restricted, line of enquiry.

Component 2 submissions varied considerably. There were very few instances reported this year of students not having full access to the starting points. Distribution of the externally set assignment papers for all titles on 2 January resulted in most schools starting the preparatory period when students returned from the Christmas holiday. Due to papers being accessible through e-AQA, some teachers used the interim time to identify named sources and prepare PowerPoint slides to inspire their students.

Handing in all preparatory work at the start of the ten hours of supervised time was managed well in most instances. Some schools had organised a system of collecting in work on the lesson before the timed sessions. This, alongside school-based practice of emails, text messages, letters and last-minute reminders helped students to meet the new regulations. The majority of schools had organised their supervised time over two consecutive days, but very few instances were seen of schools managing the time to fit individual students' requirements. Teachers had followed advice given at standardisation events to photograph work to be developed in the unaided supervised time at the beginning of the first 10-hour session, to ensure that a record of work completed under formal conditions was identified for the moderator. Supervised work was labelled using a range of techniques such as coloured stickers and dots, post-it notes and printed tags.

Some moderators reported that the new ruling had led to schools encouraging students to complete a 'final piece/outcome' in the supervised sessions rather than continuing their creative journey. As a result, teachers had awarded marks in AO4 for the final piece itself and had not considered the complete creative journey. During the 10-hour sessions some students had spent a disproportionate amount of time writing lengthy evaluations rather than continuing with alternative practical activities. This is not advised.

Many teachers had accessed the support document 'Guide to drawing for different purposes and needs'. Wide-ranging styles of purposeful, hand-rendered and digital drawing were incorporated into the majority of submissions in both Component 1 and Component 2. Where there was no evidence, however, some teachers had not taken 4 marks off AO3 as required. In other instances, teachers had reduced AO3 by 4 marks when the sample was in fact compliant and marks were reinstated by moderators.

Written annotation was seen in the majority of submissions. Teachers who had accessed the document 'Guide to written annotation' encouraged students to use annotation to support visual evidence. Fewer examples of extensive downloaded information, that added little or nothing to the work, were seen. In the best instances, teachers had encouraged students to use annotation as a personal, insightful and integral part of the developmental journey. Word frames and sentence starters were also seen as a valuable aid for lower-attaining students. There were relatively few reported cases of moderators needing to deduct 4 marks from AO3 due to non-compliance with the specification requirement for written annotation.

Submissions were presented in a range of ways, in sketchbooks and mounted sheets. Some sketchbooks became rich, personal creative diaries showing exciting combinations of thoughts, media trials, ideas, annotated designs, colour samples and collected images. "Not cleansed nor always perfect, but alive and individual and a coherent support to students' emerging ideas" wrote one senior moderator. Some students preferred to mount their work on display boards, whilst others used customised books or folders into which they selected and presented their portfolio evidence or preparatory work for Component 2.

Attendance at face-to-face teacher standardisation events is highly recommended to helpteachers to mark to the standardsand avoid marking too leniently, which was seen this year. There was still evidence of a lack of understanding about the 21 to 24 mark band. Work that fulfilled 'a highly developed ability' was sometimes misjudged by teachers as evidence of 'an exceptional ability'. 96 was wrongly believed by some to represent the legacy standard seen at 80. This led to the centre marks awarded to a large number of samples being reduced at moderation to match the samples seen in the Reminder notes.

The assessment objectives were addressed in many different ways, some more successful than others. In support of their investigations, AO1 saw students engage with sources such as historical and contemporary artists, craftspeople and designers, popular culture, film, music, architecture and the natural world. Pinterest has become the established platform for students to reference a variety of named and un-named sources. Critical understanding was not always apparent, though, unless students had successfully developed their own work as a result of their findings.

AO2 evidenced, at its best, experimentation with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes and the refinement of ideas. In weaker submissions, repetition of the same idea in a range of media was seen, with little indication of refinement. As a result, outcomes emerged without the necessary supporting evidence of decisions taken or choices made. The use of photography allowed students to document their work in a personal manner, using their own images to inform their research as well as documenting the progress of a piece of work through the stages of development.

Recorded ideas, observations and intentions sometimes generated the highest marks within a component, with students showing a high level of understanding in both written and visual terms. Where drawing was purposeful it was evidenced in a wide variety of styles relevant to the particular title. There were, however, instances where inflated centre marks were awarded in AO3 for the skilful copying of students' own photographs or secondary source images. 'Relevant to intentions' was not always fully understood.

The direct copying or pastiche of an image was also seen by some schools as sufficient evidence for the realisation of intentions within AO4. In the most successful submissions, 'personal and meaningful responses' flowed organically throughout the work rather than being seen as a summative bolt-on activity. The demonstration of 'visual language', as well as an understanding and application of the formal elements, should be embedded in the progress of students' work as they build up knowledge, understanding and skills throughout the course. In the best examples, this was seen in the connections students made with selected sources.

Out of school opportunities were reported to be rare events in some schools. When available to students, in-school artist-led workshops, gallery or museum visits to a variety of venues and art residential courses proved to be a positive and rewarding learning experience, leading to more personal, more adventurous, and more thoughtful responses.

8201 Art, craft and design: Component 1

The transition from Art and design to Art, craft and design title has been almost seamless. The majority of schools have fully addressed the requirements of this broad-based approach with the requirement for work associated with areas of study from at least two titles. Painting, drawing, printed and constructed textiles, graphic design, three-dimensional design, digital and photographic approaches were seen. Mixed media practice saw an increasing number of students creating assemblages using collected and recycled materials. There was an increase in three-dimensional practice with students developing constructions using a range of materials including clay, card, wire, paper, plastics and wood. The diversity of practice seen in Component 1 submissions led to an increasing number of highly personal, original, ambitious and in the best practice seen, outstanding Component 2 submissions. Opportunities to engage in open-ended portfolio projects encouraged students to work in an exploratory manner, where practice was more individual and innovative.

The majority of schools had commenced Component 1 from an 'art' perspective with some elements of 'design'. 'Craft' practices had been partially absorbed within the context of 'design' in many samples seen and in higher-attaining submissions, students had successfully combined all three areas within one project. Fewer examples of highly rendered one-off drawing examples were seen and there was greater evidence of drawing for purpose using pencil, graphite, stitch, wire and digital processes. Annotation added value and was effectively used to support and clarify the visual evidence in many submissions.

Component 2
Teachers reported to moderators that the Art, craft and design paper provided a platform for imaginative and personal responses. All starting points were responded to.

Starting point 1: Human figure
A very diverse range of responses were reported. Named sources such as Picasso and the collaged illustrations of Derek Gores were frequently referenced alongside self-selected artists, craftspeople and designers. Influenced by the illustrations of Esra Roise one successful submission, combining text with imagery, explored how social media and fashion magazines portray women. First hand studies of friends and relations, sports teams and students in dance classes supported students' ideas. Papier maché forms based around wire armatures, drawings in wire in both two and three dimensions were seen. Occasionally students had concentrated on portraiture rather using the whole figure.

Starting point 2: Telling stories
This starting point provoked illustrative, extremely personal issues-based imagery, some of which was driven by the highly popular and accessible animations of Tim Burton, Kirsty Mitchell's 'Wonderland', imagery from fantasy films, Steampunk and characters from Grimm's fairy tales. Some very sensitive personal responses to this starting point saw students explore themes of mental illness and depression, family histories of serious illness and important family events. Much of the work seen was developed through journal-style art (mixed media, collage, text and line work) to inform personal responses.

Starting point 3: In the news
This starting point proved popular with students of all abilities and provoked some personal, social and political responses, many of which were interesting in content but at times lacked technical ability. Issues that impacted directly on students' lives were explored. Headlines relating to the

current political climate, political prisoners, women's rights, eating disorders and world news were investigated. Banksy-influenced graffiti stencilling techniques showed some promise in developing ideas around 'real & fake news'. References to political issues led to lower-attaining students creating satirical illustrations and caricatures. Sources such as Hannah Höch, Stephanie Ledoux and Mark Powell were drawn upon. Large scale mixed-media panels, protest banners and digitally produced photomontages were created. Some high-attaining students responded very successfully to this starting point, using sketchbooks and mounted presentations to evidence coverage of the assessment criteria. Collage and montage featured in some submissions, but experimentation was often limited. Annotation explained context, the development of ideas and choices made.

Starting point 4: Materials
Lower-attaining students found this starting point accessible with an opportunity to engage with a wide range of materials in their preferred manner. Named sources were frequently referenced. Students explored texture and surface to create rugged canvases that were then colour photocopied, re-worked and re-presented. Textile artist Sue Stone inspired figurative work using mixed embroidery stitches and Gail Baxter's contemporary lace and stitch work inspired experimental constructed textile pieces. Debbie Lyddon's use of wax, bitumen and fabric proved to be a valuable creative source in one submission seen. Although seen infrequently, there was some good evidence of computer-informed material feeding ideas for exploration and experimentation. Texture and surface were widely investigated in relief responses, frequently using found and self-generated mixed media and collage.

Starting point 5: Light and dark
This starting point was accessed by students who wished to explore and experiment through traditional still life arrangements. A number of samples were seen where fruit, vegetables, shells, skulls and sweets were arranged in groups with different lighting effects. These were responded to in a wide variety of media, materials and techniques. Portraits with strong light sources were recorded in a range of drawing and painting media and styles.
The most frequently observed response to 'light and dark' came from students who investigated high-contrast photography inspired by a range of subject matter.

Starting point 6: In a different way
A wide variety of responses were seen. Teachers commented on how this popular starting point allowed for the exploration of a broad range of subject matter, personal interpretation, and open-ended possibilities. There were abundant opportunities to acquire primary and secondary source material. Many students referenced Surrealism, linking their work to Dali and Magritte. Another popular stimulus was 'distortion' which saw students using photography to record movement and the figure. Sources included the distorted portraits of Carl Beazley, Henrietta Harris, Francis Bacon and Linnea Strid. Students used photography to explore ideas and editing software to distort portraits, developing their ideas in paint and mixed media.

Starting point 7: Connections
Relatively few responses were seen. Some students made connections between family members, using maps, photographs and networks to link their families, origins, cultures and beliefs. Sources included the work of Ed Fairburn and Mark Powell. Collages, paintings, textile panels and wire sculptures formed many of the personal responses. Some students employed weaving to connect disparate threads of family trees.

8202 Fine art Component 1

Some excellent examples of good practice were seen in course structures that allowed students of all abilities to work to their strengths through interesting, open ended, broad and engaging portfolio courses that resulted in diverse, creative lines of enquiry. Some courses, however, evidenced such a rigid structure and strong 'house style' that it was difficult to see genuine personal responses despite students sometimes displaying high level technical skills. Observational skills based on faithful copying of reproduced sections of artists' work in paint, pencil and pencil crayon was frequently seen. Such endeavour, however, often missed attention to creative experimentation, exploration and refinement within AO2 and the meaningful intentions of AO4.

Moderators reported seeing examples of exciting experimentation from students of all abilities, with a range of fine art techniques and materials such as acrylics, gouache, watercolour, oil pastels, fabric, collage, mono printing, pencil drawing, pen and ink, coloured crayon and charcoal used successfully. In high-attaining submissions, painting was often developed further and enhanced with the addition of PVA, sand, sawdust and found materials. In some schools, more unusual media and processes were explored, such as needle felting, wax entrapment and bleached ink, as well as dry point etching and collagraph printmaking. Evidence of work in three dimensions was less commonly seen, apart from examples of assemblage from found materials.

Component 2

The most successful evidence was seen when the starting point was used to stimulate ideas, allowing students the freedom to explore their own creative pathways. Less successful work saw students follow a formulaic path where the creative journey was cut short and students struggled to meet the assessment criteria at the higher mark levels.

Starting point 1: Human figure
This popular starting point provided scope for a wide range of responses across the ability range, evidencing extensive explorations. In the best examples students worked directly from observation or took photographs of friends and family to inform the development of ideas. Degas, Jenny Saville and Egon Schiele were popular sources in samples reflecting body image and eating disorders. The distortion of photographs of figures using Photoshop referenced the work of Francis Bacon. Leonardo's anatomical drawings and the illustrations of Clint Brown inspired a well-executed response to the work of a surgeon. Students produced portraits in a range of media including torn paper collage developed from a series of photographic portraits referencing the works of Derek Gores, Sandhi Schimmel and Eileen Downes. Another student investigated "faces through time", producing a series of three canvases based on icons in the style of women artists Berthe Morisot, Tamara de Lempicka and Noemi Safir. A number of lower-attaining students copied photographs of famous and infamous characters.

Starting point 2: Interiors
Responses often began with recordings of the school environment and home interiors, looking through doors and architectural features. In addition to those named, sources included the paintings of Ian Murphy and the block colours of Patrick Caulfield.
References to John Monks' paintings of interiors were seen in some samples, with one leading to ambitious large-scale paintings. In the supervised time, however, the student resorted to downloaded images of grand staircases as the basis for their work. An innovative approach from a high-attaining student began with a study of anatomical drawings of internal organs referencing the work of da Vinci. A further study of caves and stalactites was merged with the initial ideas and developed into a three-dimensional structure composed of layers of acetate etched with skeletal

drawings, together with the photographs of the cave visible beyond. One highly imaginative outcome based on an aeroplane cockpit, linked to the work of Fernand Leger came from a low-attaining student, thus reflecting the value of this starting point across the ability range.

Starting point 3: In the news
This very popular and accessible starting point allowed students to develop concepts and use personal feelings in their work in response to recent news events. The Manchester terror attack, Grenfell fire, inequality in the work place, plastics in the environment, Brexit, issues relating to gender, Donald Trump and Kim Jong-Un were all considered. Sources included the work of Banksy and Shepard Fairey, Pop art and Warhol prints. One student's skilfully produced hard hitting response looked at animal rights with reference to the work of Jo Fredericks and Paul Jackson. Thoughtfully considered annotation explained the emotional reaction and the thought processes behind the work. Another student created a powerful Dada-style poster using the typography of newspaper headlines referencing Jeremy Deller's work, television and newspaper articles. Found objects also resulted in interesting collage and mixed media work, particularly in response to environmental issues. Students expressed powerful opinions about guns, knife crime, drugs, local gang problems, mobile phones and social media. One school used the starting point to encourage students to consider the consequences of their actions on themselves and society.

Starting point 4: Materials
This starting point allowed for varied and exciting experimentation with materials and processes, involving a wide range of media such as wire, fabrics, found objects, torn paper, corrugated cardboard, tissue paper and PVA glue. Textured surfaces, such as rusted metal and tree bark featured in much of the work. Goldsworthy-inspired work provided one student with interesting environmental focused responses. The work of Julie Shackson, Sandra Meech, Anslem Kiefer and Klari Reis inspired one student to create textured surfaces on the back of an old shovel and pieces of rusted metal using acrylic paint. Low-attaining students often explored and experimented with a wide range of materials in response to sources such as Rauschenberg, Robert Indiana, Alberto Burri and Frank Auerbach, but were unable to resolve their ideas successfully, often resorting to copied imagery.

Starting point 5: Light and Dark
There were a wide range of both two- and three-dimensional responses seen, including both figurative and abstract outcomes to this very popular starting point. Students explored issues such as teenage mental health, anxiety, depression, personality and identity. Light and dark aspects of the character, such as split personalities, were also explored by students who used the portraits of Rebecca Adams and Mark Rowden's lino cuts as inspiration. Lower- attaining students often resorted to interpretations such as Heaven and Hell or the Day of the Dead, resulting in predictable outcomes. Many students began with a study of chiaroscuro, referencing the work of Caravaggio and Rembrandt, before taking their own portrait photographs using studio lighting to replicate their use of light and dark. Students researched named artists. Some students used photography to try and capture the ambiguous effects of lighting and shadows that feature in Patrick Caulfield's later work.

Starting point 6: Personal Histories
Students produced highly personal responses to themes such as family history, friendships, traumatic events or personal illness through work that was often very expressive and moving; in some cases quite challenging to view. Frida Kahlo as well as Vincent van Gogh and photographer Bobby Neel Adams were researched. One sample, entitled 'My story', documented a student's experience of leukaemia. Inspired by the stitched photographs of Patrick Hickley, the student re-interpreted their own ideas by stitching into figure paintings. Another student developed a jigsaw of

their life, each piece showing a drawing of the student at different ages documenting significant people, places and events. The work of Mark Powell and Ed Fairburn provided links to the personal response. Several students produced very personal investigations relating to family members, with personal photographs and memorabilia recorded through photography and drawing, collage and mono-printing. Low-attaining responses were sometimes very personal, but students lacked the skills to resolve their ideas, resulting in weak copied portraits of the family.

Starting point 7: Connections
Few responses to this starting point were seen, but where they occurred some of the ideas explored were both personal and interesting. Connections to people and places were popular, with the work of Derek Lerner leading to some skilful painting based on maps. Modes of transport, cities and trains painted in an impressionistic manner were also seen. One student produced an imaginative piece based on social media, the new graffiti, with the work based on Banksy and his connection to mass audiences and passers-by. In one sample, the City of Liverpool was well researched through visual studies, sketches and annotation. The history, architecture and both positive and negative aspects of the city from the Toxteth riots to The Beatles and their lyrics, were recorded in two full sketchbooks. A small-scale triptych, inspired by the anthem words 'At the End of a Storm, There's a Golden Sky' was completed during the 10 hours of supervised time. Another student made a link between the developing world and the spread of malaria and, inspired by Annette Messager, created an installation using labels.

8203 Graphic communication Component 1

Graphic communication portfolios evidenced some well-resourced projects that encompassed key areas such as typography, visual communication, illustrative techniques, two- and three-dimensional approaches, digital and non-digital photography and research into graphic design in its widest sense. Producing personal responses whilst responding to work-related, given or self-directed briefs was, at times, seen to be of the highest order. It was reported that some courses were taught by non-specialists and did not meet the specification requirements. Emphasis had been placed on exercises and surveys rather than meeting the aesthetic requirements of the assessment objectives. Some students had used clip art, photographs sourced from the internet and existing products which had not been clearly acknowledged.

Successful portfolios often started with mini projects concentrating on the development of title-specific knowledge and understanding. This work often fulfilled the criteria of 'a selection of further work' within portfolio submissions. Sustained projects ranged from assignments that began with visits to local points of interest, museums or galleries; direct contact with a business or facility to set a design brief and assignments where students responded to starting points from past papers. Some courses taught through design technology departments, had brought a new perspective to graphic communication by introducing techniques such as laser cutting and CAD. In the majority of submissions seen, students had completed one or two sustained briefs.

Photoshop, alongside a range of appropriate 'apps' and Adobe illustrator were used extensively by students in the development of their ideas. The majority of students had presented their work in sketchbooks, presentation folios or flip books as well as design sheets. Very few reports were received of students presenting their work entirely digitally and in some schools it was reported that access to computers was difficult. Traditional skills in drawing, painting, collage, printmaking and paper cutting were dominant in submissions seen, with some schools exclusively using hand-rendered techniques. In the best examples, students had moved seamlessly from primary sources and research to experimental work and digital refinements, using technology as a tool to facilitate personal responses. This diverse approach has ensured that the title has remained accessible to students of all abilities.

Component 2

Externally set assignment starting points were welcomed as open and inclusive for students of all abilities to access. In some schools it was reported that all students had responded to the same starting point, a major concern for moderators when the full paper must be made available to all students. Posters, packaging, print graphics and book illustrations were seen in ESA responses, but web designs, interactive design, animation and film were rarely evidenced.

Starting point 1: Human figure
A large number of responses were seen where students fully developed the brief to design and dress a paper doll. In the most successful submissions, named sources alongside the work of graphic illustrators and fashion designers were accessed. Students worked in both traditional and digital drawing styles from photographs of friends and family. In the least successful submissions, students used pre-drawn figures and did not develop the conventions of this type of illustration. Fashion designers such as Dior, Alexander McQueen, Louis Vuitton and Chanel provided valuable source material alongside the key seasonal trends seen in magazines such as Vogue, Love and Elle. The New York artist / designer Kervin Brisseaux inspired a student to combine their own black and white photographs with clothes produced using vector graphics. In one successful response a

student researched 1960s paper dresses, Mary Quant fashion and the op-art patterns of Bridget Riley. Lino prints were used to produce a series of dress designs for the paper doll.

Starting point 2: Personal technology
A really popular starting point was students using current and historical devices and technologies to inspire responses. The named starting points were much in evidence. Students photographed devices and produced line drawings based on their own photographs. The advertising of Apple, Beats and Bose, alongside leading mobile phone companies, were thoroughly researched. Graffiti artists were sometimes used as a source of inspiration to make the posters appeal to a young audience. Some students, however, having only used second hand sources for inspiration, found it difficult to progress ideas forward. Possible health implications of using technology, as suggested in the starting point, was seldom addressed in favour of advertising the products.

Starting point 3: In the News
This starting point really sparked the imagination of students across the ability range. Thought showers and mind maps featuring a diverse range of international, national and local news stories were seen. The Royal wedding, Trump and Kim Jong-Un, 9-11, Putin, Brexit and the global plastic crisis alongside local issues such as the Manchester Bombings and a local house fire were referenced. Graphic designers such as David Carson, Pablo Lobato and political cartoonists such as Fluk and Law, Gerald Scarfe and David Rowe were researched. The style of Russian Film Posters with their garish colours and edited images were also used. Some students explored issues such as social media and eating disorders. The nature of the starting point led to the use of second hand sources, but in the best examples illustration styles and digital responses were creatively produced.

Starting point 4: Materials
Very few responses were seen, but when selected, students responded in creative ways. Visits to art shops and the photographic recording of art department materials alongside research into the named sources enabled students to develop their project. The bright colours and black outlines of Pop Artists Peter Blake and Patrick Caulfield were sourced. The resulting package designs tended to be simple boxes for paints and brushes.

Starting point 5: Light and Dark
Another popular starting point, although some lower-attaining students simply copied Disney cartoons. Where students researched the named sources and thought deeply about the story they wanted to illustrate, results were much more creative. Hand-rendered illustrations using paint, coloured pencils and collage were prevalent, but some students also used photography and Photoshop to record friends acting out elements of a chosen story. Some students omitted the 'Light and Dark' aspect. Others responded literally by including cut-outs in the style of Rob Ryan and light boxes before photographing the result. Neil Gaiman's 'Coraline' and Tim Burton's 'Alice in Wonderland' were popular references.

Starting point 6: Street food festival
This was the most widely selected starting point and encouraged students to explore cultural aspects of food festivals and local events. All named sources were researched alongside inspirations from Pinterest. Some students photographed different dishes with the raw ingredients, carefully considering what actually constitutes 'street' food. Posters, bunting and food packaging based on a variety of countries including China, India, and Vietnam, as well as home-grown food and drink festivals and farmers markets were seen. Drawing and photography were well used to explore the colour and texture of fruit and vegetables as well as design elements and colours found in a range of cultures. Personal responses were produced by both hand and digital methods.

Starting point 7: Connections
Some students enjoyed the opportunity to write their own brief.
(a) Connections between word and image was responded to with students referencing the work of illustrator Oscar Wilson who created images from lettering and the digital illustrations of Richard Perez alongside the work of Hannah Höch and Martin O'Neill. Posters and illustrations based on singular words and lines from songs and poetry formed the personal responses seen. No responses were reported by moderators to (b) or (c).

8204 Textile design Component 1

Courses delivered through both art and design and technology departments encouraged students of all abilities to access the title. Some schools delivered preliminary technique-based courses before students embarked upon a sustained project. In others, two or three disparate projects did not always fulfil the specification requirements. Portfolio areas of study encompassed art textiles, fashion design, printed and dyed textiles, stitched and embellished textiles, soft furnishings and digital textiles. Ways of working included screen printing, appliqué, poly-printing, and freely applied hand and machine stitching. In some submissions seen, students integrated surface decoration with painting. Combining textile media with technology was evident through the use of digital prints on fabrics. Past paper starting points and varied themes enabled students to gain an understanding of visual language. Cultural links, historic design and contemporary textile practitioners enabled students to develop creative personal lines of enquiry. Artists, designers, news articles, books and artefacts were among the evidence used to stimulate personal responses to chosen themes.

In the best examples seen, sketchbooks were used as working documents. Full of trials and ideas, they supported students' creative journeys. Machine and hand-stitched fabric swatches, drawings on paper and drawing with thread, collaged materials, batik and printed fabric samples were included. Many students developed initial ideas through the use of digital manipulation to provide colour enhancement, cropped images and image repetition. Drawing for purpose was a strong feature in successful submissions. Annotations were used extensively at times through mind maps, plans and evaluations clearly showing the thought process and creative practices undertaken.

Less successful portfolios demonstrated a limited range of materials, techniques and working processes and a lack of understanding of the holistic nature of the assessment objectives. On occasion, due to a lack of refinement and decision-making, the creative journey lacked the fluency more successful portfolios possessed by moving to final responses too quickly. This led to work that frequently showed minimal technical ability.

Component 2

All starting points were accessed. In successful submissions, students built on and transferred skills and understanding gained from portfolio experiences to respond with confidence in the ESA. Some students had prepared plans detailing what to accomplish and the techniques to use in allocated time. Less successful responses came from students lacking the core skills to work independently.

Starting point 1: Human figure
This extremely popular starting point encompassed ideas such as human form, female empowerment, cultures, race, portraiture and the stages of life. Constructed, printed and embroidered textiles were seen. Named artists inspired work that led to a wide variety of outcomes which included figurative pieces and abstract portrayals of the human form. Dan Beckemeyer's felted anatomy and Lisa Kolkin's stitched photographs were referenced. Matisse's colour inspired felted figures, van Gogh's figure paintings suggested figurative embroidery and Andy Warhol-style faces were printed on fabrics. High-attaining students coped successfully with this starting point.

Starting point 2: Bags
Students of all abilities selected this starting point with some responses more successfully developed than others. Tote constructions, sports, duffel, lap top, and Chinese pouch bags were created. Reference was made to a variety of designers, cultures and contemporary practitioners. Interesting materials were used including raffia made from woven palm fronds. Screen printed Pop

art style images adorned a number of submissions. Indonesian batik and the Nigerian artist Yinke Shonibare inspired colourful constructions in some responses seen.

Starting point 3: In the news
This very popular starting point encouraged students to focus on a wide variety of personal and global issues. Kirsty Whitlock's mixed media textiles using reclaimed materials generated responses to the throwaway culture, consumer waste and pollution. Symbolism seen in the Bayeux tapestry, Elizabethan paintings and the miniatures of Nicholas Hilliard were used as sources. Different processes were explored including heat pressing, lamination, laser cutting and fabric fusing. Work was produced on plastic and found materials echoing the nature of consumerism and pollution. Ian Berry's work inspired students to use denim materials in very personal responses.

Starting point 4: Materials
The construction of experimental and intricate garments, explorations of different textile techniques and the use of unusual materials were seen. Fabric manipulation was evidenced with pleated, slashed, torn, printed and stuffed work. Wood, lace, felt, leather, fur, silk and knitting were used to create experimental garments. In response to yarn storming, woven materials adorned railings and plinths. Plastic, silicone, Perspex, metal, hoops and bones inspired architectural fashion and corsets. Iris van Herpen's work inspired students to produce outstanding pieces that were complex in structure.

Starting point 5: Light and dark
The use of black and white materials, as well as positive and negative explorations of colour were frequently seen responses. Black and white, opposites, split personality portraits and abstracted patterns from nature were developed. Escher designs, Vasarely's geometric abstractions and Op Art work inspired reverse appliqué techniques, printed patterns converted into cut work, embroidery and stitched prints. Silhouettes of city skylines on lampshades and op art paper dresses were presented as responses. Elizabethan blackwork inspired a black tutu. Bodices featuring felting, constructed fabric techniques and embroidery all resulted from extensive trials and developments.

Starting point 6: Constructed textiles
Students referenced a range of textile techniques and materials used by contemporary textile practitioners. Washed and carded fleece, zips, lacings, eyelets, hooks and eyes were used to build corsets, bags, pencil cases and jackets. Textile landscapes and seascapes, floral compositions, seed pods and underwater forms were created using different fabric techniques. Kate Jenkins' 'stitchmonger' collection and Sarah Walton's free-machine embroidery led to work based on terraced houses. This broad starting point enabled students of all abilities to progress their personal creative journeys.

Starting point 7: Connections
Connections were made to a wide range of ideas for possible development. Stitched images of parts of the human body, bones and veins were inspired by the embroidery of Juana Gomez. Religion and its role in life saw a student engage with the work of Amir Ershadi, Arabic script and Islamic patterns. Nikki Rosato's work was a source of inspiration in connecting people to maps. Childhood connections were made to literature such as 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Peter Pan'. Transport, cultural connections and the natural and manufactured environment were also considered by students of all abilities. (a) Buttons, safety pins and ribbons as different joining methods reflected a response to the work of Versace. (b) Angie Lewin's in-depth investigation into colour, shape and layering helped to direct a response based on natural forms. (c) Influenced by the work of Grayson Perry a student created a commission to design and make matching underwear.

8205 Three-dimensional design Component 1

Specification changes in 2018 saw some schools closing Design technology courses and the movement of students on to three-dimensional art and design courses. As a result, course profiles in some schools looked very different and submissions that in the past had an emphasis on aesthetics now relied instead on ergonomics. Design and build and the application of materials was often strong, but little by way of primary-sourced information was evident to satisfy the requirements of an art and design course. Technology-style portfolio formats were sometimes reported to have restricted creative development. That said, there was a lot of positive information regarding appropriate software packages used in design work which allowed students to refine their work appropriately. Traditional drawing was seen in many samples with orthographic and isometric drawing often used for the purpose of design. Photography was used extensively to record observations and to chart progress.

Almost all schools seen had submitted two clear projects with a small number submitting three. Only one moderator reported seeing examples of an extended, sustained project with additional subsidiary work that reflected the extent of the portfolio course.

A wide range of materials were accessed by students including clay, textile, plaster, wire, paper, glass, metal sheet, plastics including acrylic sheeting, foam block, upcycled, recycled and found materials, wood and resin. Techniques used included casting, welding, forge work, laser cutting, paper folding and modelling, throwing, hand building, slab work, wood turning, lathe work, carving, stitching, felt work, sculpting and printmaking. Knowledge, understanding and skills acquired during the portfolio course were used by many students with greater confidence and independence in their responses during Component 2.

Component 2

Students of all abilities were able to access the starting points and there were no reports of students having had their choices restricted. Each theme could be responded to in a manner that would suit individual working styles and as a result all starting points were attempted.

Starting point 1: Human figure
Many schools used the named sources with the addition of their own self-sourced references, including the wide ranging works of Picasso, César, Gormley, Frink and Marini as well as the ceramic, polychrome and bronze sculptures of Sean Henry. Work was varied in technique and style, depending on student ability. Wire armatures covered in papier maché, welded figures created from scrap metal, wire woven structures and clay figures were all seen. Some students used photographs as a way to record friends and family in different poses. Strong observational drawing exploring form, shape and pose was also seen in support of some submissions.

Starting point 2: Lamps and lighting
This starting point was very popular with students working within technology courses and art courses alike. Contextual references from design technology students relied heavily on examples of retail products from the internet with some evidence of links to named sources. A great range of materials used in exploratory trials were tested for suitability for purpose including paper and acrylic laminated sheets. Maquettes, mock ups and models were produced and photographed to demonstrate the refinement of ideas and use of materials. Preparatory drawing for design purposes prior to experimentation, as a way of considering alternative solutions, was often unfortunately omitted from the creative journey.

Starting point 3: In the news
Students who selected the starting point used current news sources to gather ideas. Topics explored included Brexit, Trump and Kim Jong-Un and the scourge of plastics in the environment. Sculptures of figures in the news proliferated. Constructions of turtles, crabs and other sea creatures made from found plastic were produced. Very little drawing for purpose was evidenced from lower-attaining students who attempted this starting point. The rise of gangs and gun culture were researched in depth by one student whose preparatory work involved a guided visit to the ballistics unit of the local police station; this led to a particularly interesting sculptural response.

Starting point 4: Materials
The openness of this popular theme appealed to students of all abilities and enabled experimentation with surface texture and materials. Students extended their knowledge and understanding of materials and methods used in Component 1 and a full range of surface textures and methods of construction were seen. Digital drawing, photographic experimentation, surface texture rubbings, lino prints and primary sourced drawing appeared in many personal responses.

Starting point 5: Light and dark
A large number of students who responded to this starting point used photography to create shapes and patterns. The use of laser cutters, to create holes in wooden and card constructions was very well executed. Folded paper and card constructions were evidenced. In one response, a fear of the dark was explored to produce a sculptural response. Cornelia Parker and Eileen White were extensively used as sources with other references collected through search engines and Pinterest. There was a lack of evidence of exploratory recording through drawing used as a way of investigating ideas in many samples seen.

Starting point 6: Suspended
Lower-attaining students who attempted this starting point had not really explored the possible options open to them. Moderators reported that most examples were very close representations of the work of named sources, in particular the sculptures and mobiles of Alexander Calder. There was a lack of initial investigation through alternative two-dimensional designs with students relying upon trial and error to come up with solutions. Higher-attaining students photographed the process of construction and development.

Starting point 7: Connections
Students had considered a variety of connections such as architecture and nature, friends and family, life and death, strong and weak, war and peace etc. Some students struggled to make reference to appropriate contextual sources although one student used the work of Frank Lloyd Wright as inspiration.
(a) Low-attaining students produced mixed-media work with little or no reference to existing work or appropriate sources. Secondary sourced internet studies of natural forms were used to generate ideas of surface texture, but this led to a lack of understanding about the tactile qualities of the chosen objects.
(b) No responses to this starting point were reported.
(c) Some successful responses were seen, with students referencing a range of appropriate sources. Video and on-line games were used as contemporary sources of body-armour and proved particularly popular with some students. The carapace of a variety of crustaceans, skins and scales of dinosaurs and reptiles and chain mail, were all used as sources of design. Explorations into methods of joining materials were thoroughly explored. Fire welding, cutting, drilling, laser cutting and stitching were all seen. Responses, however, were frequently predictable.

8206 Photography Component 1

Many portfolio experiences started with a foundation course delivering basic camera knowledge and skills. Set tasks for teaching fundamental skills and understanding camera control, with photographic principles learned in the early weeks, could be referred to and built on throughout the student's journey. Two sustained projects were frequently seen in Component 1 but, not uncommonly, some courses were delivered through a greater number of smaller projects. This proved useful in terms of students exploring a range of ideas and sources, but had the potential drawback of limiting the possibilities of learning through sustained investigation. Less positive reports from moderators referred to evidence where the level of understanding and control was weak and that 'off the peg' software effects camouflaged a lack of ideas and understanding on the part of students. There was a genuine concern about the inclusion of inappropriate production which seemed to be easily achieved without any genuine decision making, discrimination or attainment (on the part of the student) through software and technology.

Moderator reports of darkroom investigations, pin-hole camera experiments, cyanotypes, photograms and silver based printing trials were received this year. These often appeared as 'stand-alone' processes rather than part of a journey of investigation. Whilst such exercises proved important and relevant to learning, they were frequently not developed further and did not become part of a sustained investigation. As such, unless they were evidenced as part of the 'selection of further work', they did not always make a contribution to the assessment objectives.

The inclusion of drawing was seen as the biggest issue in respect of requirements for the new specification. The nature of activity that was compliant was the major issue. Too many interpretations of what actually constituted 'drawing' were seen, be it hand-rendered or digitally produced. Some moderators reported that the inclusion of drawing for purpose had been welcomed by teachers, was of value and had caused no issues at all.

Presentation of evidence digitally still caused moderators problems. This appeared to be due to the organisation of digital evidence without enough thought towards access and navigation on the part of the viewer or moderator. Issues such as thumb nails too small to see, very large numbers of images in folders with little or no organisation or identification were cited.

Component 2

ESA starting points were very well received and all were responded to by some students. Some schools were under the impression that the requirement for drawing in AO3 applied only to Component 1. In those cases where there was no evidence of drawing, four marks were not awarded for AO3.

Starting point 1: Human figure
This starting point saw a huge range of photographic reference material, named and un-named. In the majority of responses, students chose to explore the idea of distortion with both physical and digital manipulation of images. Often the human aspect took the form of a portrait but there were other interpretations involving the whole figure and many versions where processes of cutting and rearrangement had taken place. Students often based ideas on the photographs of Sakir Yildirim and Brno Del Zou.

Starting point 2: Framing

This proved to be a very popular choice of starting point. Real frames were used to contain objects and people and many other devices such as reflections, silhouette and layering were seen to 'frame', isolate and compose a subject. There were many very good responses to this starting point. In the best examples, students made well-considered judgements about the strategies employed within a variety of sources. They subsequently used this analysis by exploring and combining the concept of framing within their own compositions.

Starting point 3: In the news

Moderator reports suggested that this starting point attracted the extremes in terms of ability and attainment. Reports also suggested that the standard of responses exhibited these extremes. These ranged from very simple collaged versions of headlines and images on a page to a very sophisticated consideration of page layout and format. There were also responses that presented a well-researched and confidently considered journalistic coverage of real events within the student's location.

Starting point 4: Materials

This starting point offered an opportunity for students to employ mixed media approaches. The work of Sally Mankus, Lee McKenna and Diane Meyer were popular sources for the development of ideas, the exploration of materials and ways to incorporate photographic images into and onto objects. Other interpretations of this starting point explored the texture of many different materials, both hard and soft.

Starting point 5: Light and dark

This starting point was responded to by a large number of students. For some students it was an opportunity to use camera skills and lighting ideas acquired through portfolio projects. There were many named and unnamed photographers and collected images acknowledged as sources. Often, with purposeful visual analysis, the resulting personal responses displayed high levels of technical skill and a creative approach.
An alternative interpretation of this theme led to the exploration of contrasting mental states and values such as happiness and sadness, good and evil, truth and lies, etc.

Starting point 6: Machines

Students often produced black and white images involving observed detail and surface qualities of engines, big and small. Innovative ways of presenting the images were sometimes incorporated, using transparencies on frames and light boxes. Some interpretations led to visionary images of robots and cyborgs. Images of mechanical parts were carefully and seamlessly layered onto faces, arms and legs.

Starting point 7: Connections

This starting point was almost entirely responded to by students physically making connections between photographic images, or by students making symbolic connections. The latter often manifested themselves within a series of family images, plotting ancestry and relationship. More poignant ideas associated people with objects and often incorporated text. There were some mature and sensitive interpretations reported in some of the responses seen.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.