AQA

GCSE
ART & DESIGN

8200/C and 8200/X
Report on the Examination

(8201, 8202, 8203, 8204, 8205, 8206)
June 2019

Version: 1.0

General

In the second year of awarding for the 8200 specification, centres generally continue to adapt well to the subject content and evidence required for assessment. A two-year course during Years 10 and 11 was mostly seen by moderators, whilst in some centres a three-year course starting in Year 9 was evident. Two-year courses concluding at the end of Year 10 often appeared to lack the maturity or levels of understanding and skill seen in the submissions of Year 11 students. Very few examples of one-year courses were reported.

In a small number of instances, students had only completed Component 1 of the award. 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. This resulted in a significantly reduced mark and level of award.

There were fewer errors by centres submitting marks via e-Subs this year. Any changes needed due to incorrect submission rarely resulted in samples for moderation being changed during the centre visit, but they did on occasions delay the process of moderation quite significantly. Candidate Record Forms were generally completed correctly and Centre Declaration sheets were regularly available for the moderator to sign. Where there were mistakes with the CRF, incorrect addition was often the culprit. Centres reportedly appreciated the addition to the CRF in relation to confirming the mark for AO3 against the requirement for evidence of drawing and annotation.

In Component 1, most centres fulfilled the essential requirement for a 'sustained project' in addition to a 'selection of further work'. There were a small number of exceptions. These were mostly centres new to the award. It is worth reminding centres that a Subject Advisor is available to support each centre and clarify any issues of understanding related to the Specification. Your Subject Advisor's email contact details are available from AQA.

Within Portfolio courses there was growing evidence of 'foundation' courses designed to introduce basic principles and practice skills, processes and techniques using a variety of media. These were sometimes followed by more extensive projects based on the study of sources, leading to explorations with a greater degree of personal development and response. Portfolios often concluded with a body of work allowing students to experience timed conditions in the form of a 'mock exam'. The starting points for this type of project were often taken from past ESA papers.

Some centres encouraged students to submit two or three projects, each one fulfilling the requirement of a 'sustained' project. This varied with the nature of the Title chosen. There is no advantage or disadvantage to following any particular model of delivery.

There were a small number of centres where all evidence had been included without a process of selection by the student. This runs a risk of appearing disjointed and can also make it difficult for the moderator to understand the narrative of the student's creative journey and apply a judgment.

In Portfolio courses, where students had been encouraged to develop an understanding of sources and knew how to use that understanding in developing their own ideas, this prepared them well for the demands of Component 2. Such students often had greater confidence to work independently, to take ownership of ideas and take creative but calculated risks. Moderators also reported increased evidence of students tackling a range of contemporary social and topical issues. In addition to an ever increasing range of contemporary sources evident, the use of phone apps and pads were also commonly reported in both components.

Where Portfolio courses appeared overly managed or particularly prescriptive and restricted in freedoms of choice, many comments indicated that students were not as well prepared for the independence of thought and decision making needed for the choice of starting point in Component 2.

Reports from all moderators were positive in relation to the reaction of students to the range of Externally Set Assignment starting points for each Title. The phrase 'something for everyone' was commonplace and there were no reported instances of students not being allowed full access to the starting points.

The management of security in relation to evidence produced during informal supervision, prior to the ten hour formally supervised period, was good overall. The handing in of work produced in the 'preparatory period' was not reported as causing any problems. The demarcation of evidence produced during the ten hour period was, however, not consistent. It should be remembered that this is a requirement for all students and for all Titles. Most centres, however, had adhered diligently to this using a variety of effective ways to record the nature and state of any evidence being taken into the ten hour period. A variety of strategies had been employed effectively with both paper-based and digital presentations to ensure there was clear demarcation between the evidence produced in the two periods of supervision.

Many centres organised the ten hour period over two days. In addition, many centres commented on the pressures of time both to deliver students' learning and for producing evidence for Component 2. Pressures related to the reduction of time available in order to comply with the JCQ requirement to issue marks for both components were often referred to. There were also many reports of a reduction in teaching time in the Spring term due to students being withdrawn for 'catch up' and for revision in other subjects.

It is worth repeating the comment that summative evaluations by students are not a requirement. There is no compulsion to spend large amounts of time producing evaluations within the ten hour period. Formative reflection and continual evaluation throughout the process of development can indeed provide useful assessment information across the objectives. Any summative evaluation produced at the end of the student's journey must be produced within the ten hour period.

The requirement for evidence of written annotation and drawing produced fewer problems this year. However, a small number of centres had not deducted marks where appropriate and some centres had mistakenly deducted marks for each of these requirements when not appropriate. The support documents available on the AQA website, 'Guide to written annotation' and 'Guide to drawing' should help to clarify any uncertainty, alongside advice from the Subject Advisor.

Submissions for both components were presented in a rich variety of ways, both digital and paper based and two and/or three-dimensional, often combining different forms. In relation to some titles there was an increase in evidence presented via the centre's website facility, an indication often of the familiarity by students with digital platforms and of the centre's investment in digital recording and communication of information and process across the curriculum. Whatever the chosen format, many Art and Design students continue to impress with their ability to develop uniquely personal creative responses and with their mature, articulate expression.

There were many instances reported where centres' assessment was accurate. The correlation between attendance at Teacher Standardisation meetings and this accuracy was clear. Where assessment was not in line with AQA standards it was nearly always too lenient. Comments from

moderators in relation to generous assessment mostly indicated over marking in the higher mark bands and in particular the band indicated by 'exceptional ability'.

The integration and links between qualities denoted by each assessment objective produced predictable results. If a student understood the purpose of one assessment objective they often had greater success with others. Students who understood how to use information gathered from a source were able to develop pertinent ideas. The process of refinement then became a process of gradual personal ownership and purposeful engagement. The inevitable result of this level of involvement was clear intentions and the development of a relevant personal response.

AO1, at its best, exhibited purposeful initial investigations and growing personal responses. When not at its best, sources were referenced with little indication as to how they might be of use. When quantity ruled over quality, moderators reported that submissions referenced many sources but demonstrated few or no links to the students' own development of ideas.

Similarly, the highest attaining responses in relation to AO2 and AO3 evidenced genuine enquiry and investigation together with evidence of a process which was well considered in thought, reflection and refinement. Ideas were considered, refined, and sometimes rejected in light of reasoned judgment. This was in contrast to students who involved themselves in a series of one–off tasks, sometimes repeating them, albeit with a different material, as an end in itself, to the detriment of a notion of purposeful investigation or development.

For some teachers, AO4 continues to be seen as the objective relating to a final outcome. Although any final outcome is always a part of the student's realisation of intentions, this, and the students' personal response, can occur at any point throughout the creative journey.

Moderators witnessed film making in Fine Art courses, installations and digital projections in Art, Craft and Design and Photography courses, recycled materials used in Textile Design, materials and processes traditionally seen in Design and Technology courses used in Three-dimensional design and evidence of students winning National Competitions by producing industry standard design work in Graphic Communication. Amongst their many comments, moderators reported a wealth of quality in production and a huge range of experimentation in a wide variety and combination of media. Some students produced impressive, exciting, creative and personal responses in both components.

8201/C: Art, craft and design - Component 1

Component 1 provision in Art, craft and design was structured with consideration for the student cohort, practical resources and timetable provision. The majority of centres delivered two sustained projects, with many submitting one sustained project and a further selection of work. Initial themes were frequently teacher-led, skills-based and built around the assessment objectives. Subsequent projects were designed to offer a degree of choice from a number of starting points, sometimes taken from past ESA papers. This structure clearly supported the progression of knowledge and understanding from a position of 'dependence' to one of 'independence' in preparation for the requirements of Component 2.

The majority of centres delivered Art, craft and design from an 'art' perspective. 'Craft' was frequently seen in submissions which were inclusive of a 'Design' approach. The majority of centres had understood that the title does not require students to adopt any more than one art-based, craft-based or design-based approach, but that they must evidence work from more than

one title in the specification ie Fine art, Graphic communication, Textile design, Three-dimensional design and Photography.

Component 1 submissions in Art, craft and design were very varied in approach and content with the most successful seen being purposefully expressive, inventive in working process and evidencing a variety of appropriate scale and media, including installation pieces and projections. Successful Component 1 submissions included highly personalised work, evidencing levels of maturity and visual intellect. Popular areas of study seen in Art, craft and design combined painting, drawing, printmaking, printed and constructed textiles, graphic media, three-dimensional practices, film, digital and silver-based photography. Some submissions incorporated mixed media, where materials and working processes were brought together in very different ways. In other submissions, two-dimensional practices were combined with three-dimensional construction and sculpture. Some submissions reportedly followed a more direct and formulaic pathway through the assessment objectives, systematically fulfilling the requirements of the specification and making submissions compliant, but perhaps constraining creative possibilities for students to explore ideas in a personal manner.

In relation to AO4, some centres still measured this objective by the success of the 'outcome' with less recognition for the personal response evidenced through developmental work in sketchbooks, journals, digital portfolios and design sheets throughout the creative journey.

8201/X: Art, craft and design - Component 2

Teachers reported that the Art, craft and design paper provided a platform for imaginative and personal responses. All starting points were responded to. Students of all abilities made reference to the named artists alongside many other relevant self-sourced practitioners. In the best practice seen, students had explored the starting points in a highly individual manner and investigated relevant sources with great purpose, leading to some very confident personal responses.

Starting point 1: Texture

Many students drew inspiration from the natural world, making reference to the topographic photographs of Bernhard Edmaier and the textured embroideries replicating weathered surfaces seen in the textile panels of Deidre Adams. Many students worked in mixed media, recreating textured surfaces from observational photographs and drawings of natural forms. Surfaces were created in response to work by The Boyle Family and the ceramics of Ewen Henderson. Photographs of peeling paint, rusted nails and crumbling plaster led to some very interesting responses such as large-scale wire and glass sculptures. Frank Auerbach's highly textured paintings and the surface qualities seen in Anselm Kiefer's figurative work led to personal creative journeys.

Starting point 2: Abstract

Students of all abilities selected this starting point. Reference to the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky resulted in simple, colourful, two-dimensional arrangements of shapes. A broad range of responses using inks, pencil crayons, coloured papers, wax and acrylic were seen. 20th Century abstract painters such as Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko and Gerhard Richter were referenced. Students also researched the work of Christopher Owen Nelson, Timothy Hawksworth, Alberto Seveso, Sandra Blow, Prudence Caroline and Alexander Calder, whose work inspired combinations of digital and painted responses, photography and sculpture. Some students made abstract artworks in response to music. Photography was frequently used to record ideas which

were then digitally manipulated through Photoshop and developed into predominantly painted or printed works.

Starting point 3: Messages

As one of the most popular starting points, Messages generated a very broad and diverse range of working processes crossing many different areas of study. Digital presentations, mixed media, billboard design, installation, light and sound work, film, packaging design, poster design, ceramics, printmaking, photography, illustration, sculpture and painting were all seen. Some of the most personal submissions related to 'issues' that directly concerned the students. One response included a film in the genre of a 1990's music video which synced the words of the music to messages written and projected onto dancers. Photographs of the French battle fields and war graves led to a response based on an actual 'lost in action' telegram. A textile representation of a soldier and a three-dimensional construction of a grave were developed from the photographs. The work of Teesha Moore and Tom Phillips, together with The Peace Pole project inspired students to create large installation pieces. Ceramic responses were inspired by Grayson Perry's ceramic vessels, and the work of Barbara Kruger inspired responses to media coverage of international events. Personal and social identity and body image, mental health issues, climate change, global warming and international leadership were seen as reoccurring themes.

Starting point 4: The elements

Many of the sources inspiring responses to 'The elements' related to the natural world and landscape frequently featured as a subject. Claude Monet's paintings of haystacks were researched and analysed with reference to the effect of elements of weather and changing light on landscape resulting in responses in Photography and paint. Assemblages using found objects weathered by the elements were built into temporary structures in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. Other submissions related to the 'formal elements' of art, craft and design and included photographic, printed and painted studies of natural forms such as flowers. Works by Duarte Vitoria, Andrew Salgado and Alessandro Pautasso inspired photographic, digital and illustrative responses. In some graphic illustration responses, students had produced Manga-inspired characters based on each formal element. Three-dimensional design work, related to formal elements and inspired by the sculptural garments of Iris van Herpen, was developed through line drawings and translated into wire sculptures.

Starting point 5: Working

Many students took advantage of the opportunity to work from first hand observation using either artefacts related to 'working tools' or 'people at work'. Visits to workshops, studios, garages, restaurants, coffee bars, farms, ports and offices were undertaken. Students made drawings and took photographs to develop their ideas further into paintings, digital photomontages, illustrations, soft sculptures and sculptural assemblages. Frank Brangwyn's industrial paintings and prints, John Bratby's domestic interiors and Fernand Leger's 'workers' were frequently referenced. Work by Jim Dine and Claes Oldenberg inspired responses based on the tools of work. Drawings and photographs of cogs and wheels were refined into a print process or manufactured by overlapping layers of image using Photoshop techniques. Wood, cardboard, wire and ceramics were used in an ambitious response relating to 'working mechanics', inspired by named artists Jean Tinguely and Ann Goddard.

Starting point 6: Habitats

This starting point was selected by students in all ability ranges. In some submissions from lower-attaining students, nominal analysis, development, recording and refinement of ideas resulted in simple copied studies of animals in photographic, print or illustrative formats. Some students investigated a range of human, animal, marine and plant habitats from an 'issues based' perspective with a focus on the human impact on international environments. Works by named photographer Nick Brandt, and Tom Eckersley's 'World Wide Fund for Nature' graphic designs, were referenced. Submissions that referenced natural habitats such as bird nests resulted in three-dimensional mixed media pieces in wire, found wood and textiles. Machine stitch work on dissolvable fabric was also used to create fine detail. Ceramic responses based upon high resolution images of sea creatures and plankton were inspired by named craftsperson Catrin Mostyn Jones. Urban habitats referenced work by street artist Banksy and painter George Shaw. Students recorded their own environments through photography and developed ideas further in digital, mixed media, textiles and print formats. Some autobiographic submissions related to home and family, mostly based on student's photographs and observational studies of places and objects with personal meaning.

Starting point 7: Spaces

This was interpreted in a wide variety of styles through different working processes.

In response to 7(a) 'crowded spaces' submissions, predominantly used photographic media with one submission presented as a virtual reality 'room installation', mainly viewed through a virtual reality head set which revealed a crowded scene. Another response explored the idea of 'outer space' with black holes, galaxies and stars, referencing the work of illustrator Mark Garlick and developed through digital media.

In response to (7b) 'enclosed or open spaces' students had looked at the idea of 'confinement' such as caged birds and animals. One submission was based on the distortion of a human figure compressed into a very small space. Studies were made using photography and developed into drawings and paintings.

Submissions seen also included the study of positive negative spaces inspired by reference to Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson and Giorgio Morandi. Ideas were developed through combinations of painting, printmaking and Photoshop layering.

Very few submissions were seen in relation to 7(c). A small number of graphic design posters were reported in response to the commission for promotional materials.

8202: Fine Art

Component 1

Evidence of good practice in Fine art portfolio courses was seen where initial teacher-led activities, designed to allow students to acquire appropriate skills and techniques, led to greater choice in the development of individual journeys of exploration and lines of creative enquiry, often in response to self-generated ideas. Elsewhere, over-emphasis on written research, frequently coupled with the laborious copying or emulation of the work of artists, often led to limited evidence of experimentation and refinement with outcomes that failed to demonstrate meaningful personal responses.

The most successful courses provided opportunities for students of all abilities to engage with different media and allowed for risk taking and plenty of experimentation. Digital photography accounted for an additional method of recording and as a means of self-expression through creative exploration in appropriate digital manipulation techniques. Drawing was used for observational recording and for imaginative expression of ideas. A range of two-dimensional media, acrylics, gouache, watercolour, oil pastels, fabric, collage, mono printing, pencil drawing, pen and ink, coloured crayon and charcoal were used by students to develop their ideas. Evidence was often seen of mixed media experiments and the use of collage to create texture and surface investigations. Although the majority of work seen by moderators was in two dimensions, there were some exciting examples of work assembled from found materials. The most creative practice provided opportunities for students to holistically meet the assessment objectives and develop their ideas from themes and starting points with ease and purposeful intention.

Component 2

Moderators reported that the Externally Set Assignment starting points were well received by schools and provided many opportunities for students of all abilities to build on the knowledge and skills acquired in their portfolio submissions. Less successful responses were seen where students had been unable to progress beyond repetition of aspects of their original sources.

Starting point 1: Texture

This popular starting point allowed students of all abilities opportunities for exciting experimentation with a wide range of media, materials and processes. The mark-making of Van Gogh and Aaron Siskind's photographs were referenced in some schools, as were the close-up photographs of Colin Winterbottom, Valery Koshlyakov's architectural paintings incorporating distressed card and Ian Murphy's detailed studies. Student responses were frequently based on first hand photographs of textures such as bark, peeling paint, rust, moss and lichen on walls and trees, woven and plaited textiles, knitted jumpers, close-up studies of skin and footprints in mud. Subsequent drawings and experiments with media provided rich areas for abstract, colourful work on a large scale. Inspired by the work of Helen Chadwick, a student created an installation with textures of human hand prints projected onto groups of objects. Others looked at the application of texture and created surfaces using decorators caulk, hot glue guns and acrylic medium with added sand. The landscape collages of David Tress inspired layering of textures. One submission referenced the work of Karen Margolis. A soldering iron was used to burn holes in coloured acetate sheets, which were then layered in a lightbox.

Starting point 2: Natural forms

The accessibility and familiarity of this starting point appealed to many students. Often familiar with many of the named sources, they were able to develop ideas independently at an early stage, with Karl Blossfeldt and Ernst Haeckel frequently used to initiate research into shells, seedpods and insects. Photography was used extensively to explore and record ideas. One interesting submission used microscopic images of plankton as an inspiration towards sculptural forms. Lower attaining students used the work of Dennis Wojtkiewicz and Dawn Eaton as the basis for some successful compositions based on sections of fruit and vegetables.

Starting point 3: Messages

Many students welcomed the opportunity to express their views and feelings about current issues affecting young people, such as body-image, mental health, cyber-bullying and social media, climate change and gender identity. The use of text in the work of Barbara Kruger and Jenny

Holzer featured in many submissions. Responses were highly personal and, in some cases, poignant responses to very real issues. One student, referencing the work of Henrietta Harris and Michal Rovner explored messages conveyed through movement and displacement, with several small animations, before moving onto distorted portraits showing emotion. The work of Audrey Flack and Grayson Perry inspired some students to use photography to create their own vanitas-style still life paintings with varying degrees of success.

Starting point 4: The elements

Few responses to this starting point were reported, mostly from lower attaining students, with many focusing on interpretations of Earth, Air, Fire and Water. Investigations into the symbols and images associated with the elements were seen. In one response, a student created a portrait compiled from cold to warm colours. In another example, a student focused on the element of water, producing a piece of fused glass during the supervised time, developed from their own photographs of the beach and waves., Inspired by the wave paintings of Maggie Hambling and glass work by Stevie Davies, the student experimented with stencil prints, collage and spray paints during their journey of exploration. Other students charted the changing weather and its effect on the local landscape, referencing the work of Constable, Kurt Jackson and Don McCullin. One student photographed the same view at different times of day and over a period of weeks as the basis for a series of paintings. Another student used research into Turner to develop their own response to a local beach under snow. They then took photographs of the coastline, referencing the blurry photographs of street scenes through wet windscreens by Gregory Thielker, and created their own photo-realist paintings in his style.

Starting point 5: Working

In areas with strong associations to heavy industry and farming this proved to be a popular starting point. Responses in many examples were based on the local urban environment, where students photographed old industrial buildings such as mills and cotton factories. Others, inspired by references such as Gustave Caillebotte, Evelyn Dunbar and James Ravilious, photographed people working on farms, in offices and shops, as well as garages and even parents at work around the house and garden. Some students focused on the historical context, using archive photographs of coal miners, mills workers and images of child labour, to create mixed media collages. In one response, images of cogs and other mechanical forms moved through the world with pollution being discharged into space, clearly making a reference to 'Extinction Rebellion'. Another example focused on a student's genetic heart condition, exploring the idea of the heart not working through photographs and highly rendered drawings of an animal heart with nails and screws driven into it. Observation drawing of tools, linked to the work of Jim Dine and Michael Craig-Martin, rarely went beyond pastiches of their sources.

Starting point 6: My surroundings

This was a popular starting point in some schools. Personal surroundings, often the subject of extensive photo-shoots, included local stables, bike sheds, skate parks and the gym, as well as more personal spaces, such as students' own bedrooms, living rooms and kitchens. The work of named artists George Shaw and Ian MacDonald, together with The Boyle Family, John Measures, Alicia Merrett, Lucy Jones and Ian Murphy, helped to inspire many students to explore their surroundings and experiment with a range of media . One submission came from a student who had recorded the music she liked, her family, teachers and her friends using references to Peter Blake, Grayson Perry and Tracy Emin. These were then photographed and combined with paintings to form the background of a fragmented and distorted self-portrait, clearly influenced by Hockney's 'Joiners'. Another student explored the urban imagery of Goce Ilievski. Night-time

photographs of their own suburban surroundings were digitally manipulated and developed using chalk pastel during the supervised 10 hours.

Starting point 7: Space

Relatively few responses were seen for this starting point, but students often found unusual and interesting interpretations to the open-ended possibilities of this starting point. One student studied confined spaces, looking at contortionists and the Victorian circus and developed ideas towards a large scale painting that showed clear evidence of the influence of Gustav Klimt's decorative patterns. Another student looked at the way Pat Perry combines spaces that lie within the human form and portraits with the landscapes they inhabit. Experiments in photography and digital manipulation were then undertaken and developed into a series of highly rendered drawings in the style of the source. Another student used the architectural floor plans of the Guggenheim Museum and, referencing the work of Rachel Whiteread, created wooden frames into which plaster was poured to create the negative spaces of the building. In one response to 7(a) a student looked at the use of negative space in the figurative paintings of Christina Troufa and the photographs of Luke Gram to explore the human figure in space producing some confident bold outcomes.

8203: Graphic communication

Component 1

This year entries for the Graphic Communication title included students who had moved from the Design Technology specification to Art and design courses. Portfolios evidenced a variety of project combinations and moderators often saw a greater understanding of the specification requirements of a sustained project and examples of further work. The portfolios seen presented 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. Visits to sites, galleries and locations often benefited the work. Some were organised by the school, others by the students themselves. Producing personal responses whilst responding to work-related, given or self-directed briefs was, at times, seen to be of the highest order. Some courses taught through Design and Technology departments brought a new perspective to graphic communication by introducing techniques such as laser cutting and CAD. There was a greater interest in producing three-dimensional outcomes, such as point of sale and packaging.

A range of approaches included traditional skills in drawing, painting, collage, printmaking and paper cutting. These sat very well against the digital submissions and were combined successfully in a number of schools. Photography played a key part in much of the work, used either as a resource for collecting research or as a method of illustrating ideas. In the highest-attaining submissions, the students' ability to seamlessly integrate the assessment criteria through studied sources, research, drawing and annotation and the effective development of ideas was seen to lead to some very successful responses.

Component 2

Teachers reported that the Externally Set Assignment starting points were well received by their students and the breadth of starting points allowed students of all abilities and a range of background opportunities to succeed. The most successful submissions evidenced ample trials and experimentation, whether digitally or hand drawn. Connections made with artists and designers that informed and influenced ideas contributed to the more successful responses.

Students with the determination to refine ideas through sustained development and an understanding and knowledge of processes involved produced the most successful work. Posters, packaging, print graphics, book illustrations and typography were seen in ESA responses, and some students produced motion graphics.

Starting point 1: Animal textures

A large number of responses were seen for this starting point. In the most successful submissions, named sources alongside the work of graphic illustrators such as Iain Macarthur, Patricia Ariel, Gale Hunt and Anna Brigitta were studied. Students recorded family pets as well as visits to zoos, pet shops and farms through both drawing and photography. This provided a successful start to developing personal ideas. Where students had relied on Google images of animals, birds and fish, results were less successful. The illustrations of Peter Clarke and Mark Hearld inspired students to create collages using textures found in printed papers and also to create their own papers through marbling, frottage and painted textures. Collage was often combined with lino and mono printing. Some students chose a more digital approach and used vector graphics and scanned textures to create their designs. Responses ranged from animal illustrations, stamps and promotional material for a zoo. In one response, current issues such as global ecology and environmental preservation were used as a starting point.

Starting point 2: Gardens

This really popular starting point gave students a clear direction to begin their research with visits to popular gardens such as Kew, RHS Wisely and the Eden Project as well as many other local attractions. Some students used flowers and foliage on which to base their primary research. Drawings, paintings, digital scans, photographs and digital manipulation were used in a variety of ways to create patterns, lino and silk screen printing in the style of Andy Warhol. Watercolour paintings in response to Elizabeth Blackadder and Georgia O'Keeffe were seen. Responses included a corporate identity for Kew Gardens, posters inspired by the work of designers at Johnson Banks and more practical applications such as constructed cardboard plant carriers, cardboard engineering for merchandising garden tools and seed packets.

Starting point 3: Messages

This starting point sparked the imagination of students across the ability range. Thought showers and mind maps featured a diverse range of topics from mental health, gun crime, body image, racism, gender equality, animal rights and global environmental issues to give a voice to and communicate issues that many students found important. In the most successful examples, students used their own photography and drawings to develop ideas. These often resulted in a poster or series of posters with a mix of image and typography. Some students produced short films to explain an issue. Lower-attaining submissions tended to rely on second hand imagery with traced and coloured illustrations. Tom Phillips, Barbara Kruger, Banksy, Gillian Wearing, Shepard Fairey, Alex Williamson and Bob and Roberta Smith were some of the artists and designers that inspired the students to create very personal responses.

Starting point 4: The elements

The small number of responses seen included successful logo designs, menus, children's menus, business cards and posters. Some students chose to illustrate earth, wind, fire and water with images divided into four sections – in a rather literal response. Some submissions lacked relevant

contextual links or appropriate recording of ideas. One student linked the starting point to 1960s design, using psychedelic images and text to link the elements with a campaign for healthy eating.

Starting point 5: Working

This starting point gave students the opportunity to create wall art and some based their ideas on their own school, a local office or coffee shop. The graphics often reflected a message from healthy eating to mental health issues related to the working environment. One response referenced 'Graffiti'. The student had taken extensive photographs of graffiti in various settings and broken it down to more abstract forms. The work was intended for the walls of a hospital setting to bring brightness and colour to the surroundings. The student had 'mocked up' what it would look like in the setting and had produced a sample wall panel.

Starting point 6: Typeface design

Although there were few examples in response to this starting point, students who chose it fully immersed themselves in the development of appropriate fonts for different advertising campaigns. Collage and hand drawn techniques, alongside the use of Illustrator and Photoshop were all in evidence in the development and creation of typeface design.

Starting point 7: Spaces

Some students enjoyed the opportunity to write their own brief.

(a) Responses to negative spaces had students referencing the work of Steven Quinn, David A Hardy and Tang Yau Hoong. This resulted in interesting outcomes from a poster for electric lights with the message 'Save energy, survive today' to advertisements for crisps.
(b) Posters for city centres were a popular response to advertising for public spaces and allowed the students to combine their own photographs with text. Often the end result was superimposed on locations such as bus shelters and large advertising hoardings.
(c) Although there were few examples seen, one student looked at the work of Alfred Gockel and Kandinsky to inspire an abstract design. The student had produced a series of photographs of urban spaces in Manchester and used Photoshop to create work based on positive and negative spaces.

8204: Textile design

Component 1

By attending Teacher Standardisation events and referencing on-line standards and visual support materials to inspire their courses, a number of teachers of Design Technology successfully embraced the requirements of the Art and design Textile design title this year. Many skills were evidenced with a wide range of experimentation in stitching, printing, weaving, felting and construction methods apparent. The use of students' own photography and its development in Photoshop was seen in many courses and successfully helped to underpin refinement. Transfer printing onto fabrics, garments and constructed textiles and the use of laser cutting techniques was much in evidence this year. The experimentation with different materials and techniques was reported by moderators to be, on occasions, exceptional.

Drawing in its broadest terms relevant to Textile design was seen, with ideas recorded as mind maps, design sketches and plans along with drawing in thread and dye. Pertinent written

annotations permeated submissions reflecting student choices and decisions made. However, excessive amounts of annotation and lengthy evaluations summing up the student's performance throughout a brief are unnecessary. Written observations should be meaningful and informative and show evidence of analysis and understanding.

Starting points from past papers as ideas for projects in the portfolio component were seen. Sustained projects included such themes as 'In the news', Body Armour, Surface patterns from around the world, Coast, Ethical textiles and Personal Identity.

Many courses were teacher-led and very highly organised. Often a range of textile techniques formed a skills base which then led to an understanding of styles and working practices of designers and artists, as well as artists working in other fields. This had a positive effect on developing different options and outcomes for students. The most successful courses made provision for increasing independence throughout the course, which led to more personal responses. Where there was a great emphasis on the technical aspect of textiles, such as sewing in a zip, the essential creative side of the course was often not exploited.

Visits were undertaken to costume museums, the Dior exhibition, Tate Modern, Tate Britain, the V&A, Kew Gardens, sculpture parks and galleries throughout the country. City centres and the school environment were all referenced to look at architecture, urban landscape and to use location photography. Such visits led to worthwhile areas of development along with imaginative and personal responses.

Component 2

The comments received from schools about Component 2 were favourable. It was felt that the range of starting points enabled each student to make a personal connection and students of all abilities were able to develop their ideas, research sources, materials and processes and work independently in realising their intentions.

Starting point 1: Texture

This popular starting point resulted in very exciting experimental studies. Students explored weathered surfaces seen in nature as well as manufactured surfaces. Decay and the effect of time on surfaces was an inspiration to layer and distress fabrics. Students undertook photographic research followed by analysis and textile sampling. Successful work was seen where students had developed their own personal ideas inspired by those of a particular artist or textile designer without using pastiche. Outcomes were stitched, slashed, torn and coloured to recreate the textures observed.

Starting point 2: Wearable art

Responses to this starting point were innovative and often out of the ordinary. Moderators reported interesting examples of lingerie design and clothing made from recycled materials referencing Junk to Funk and a range of contemporary fashion designers and artists. Processes included knitting with plastic bags and pleating magazine pages to create garments. Gary Harvey's designs for clothing created from recycled garments influenced students' designs, as did Jane Perkins' button pictures and the fast fashion work of El Anatsui. Experimentation on silk ties was linked with the history of the Silk Road.

Starting point 3: Messages

Messages was interpreted in a variety of very interesting ways with students of all abilities aiming to present personal messages to a wider audience and many issues-based submissions seen. Several samples used machine stitched wording to convey very personal messages, often about body image, the 'Me Too' movement, mental health and LGBT issues. Words were printed onto T-shirts in outcomes influenced by Katharine Hamnett. Wall hangings referenced Barbara Kruger and showed powerful messages and imagery translated through textile means. Other sources ranged from images taken from the media and included typography, poster art and street graffiti.

Starting point 4: The elements

This was a very popular starting point, with many students developing literal interpretations of earth, wind, fire and water. The most successful submissions seen came from students who researched landscape and the effect of weathering. Felted, hand embroidered and machine stitched abstract landscape outcomes meaningfully referenced Lesley Richmond and Heather Collins. India Flint's eco prints influenced outcomes which were mainly constructed textiles and printed material.

Starting point 5: Working with archives and collections

Students explored family archives and family trees. These included images across the ages that were mounted and stitched. One submission featured a suitcase of textile objects depicting the items that a family member would have packed to take away to WW2. The contents included a stitched image of a grandparent in military uniform. In another sample, a collection of wildlife, plant forms and insects formed a landscape composition referencing Ana Teresa Barboza. The history of fairy-tales was researched and selected historical illustrations influenced the work.

Starting point 6: Maps

This very popular starting point saw responses containing paper and fabric manipulation, origami, layering of materials and machine-stitched images. Printed maps were embroidered into textile portraits and garments were constructed from old distressed maps that had been printed onto waxed paper. One student looked at WW2 maps printed onto silk, used by soldiers when dropped behind enemy lines. Some students explored elements of the London Underground map before developing a textile response. Another student produced issues-based work that related to immigration.

Starting point 7: Spaces

Various responses were seen. Successful submissions showed students working with architectural shapes and motifs. Ideas relating to nature and urbanisation, architecture and sharing space, led towards a range of textile outcomes. Positive and negative spaces in printmaking were explored to produce dyed and printed work. The London skyline was presented using printing techniques and fabric collage. Some students chose to use Outer Space as their inspiration, representing planets and the solar system within their work.

8205: Three-dimensional design

Component 1

An increase in three-dimensional design submissions taught within technology departments was seen by moderators this year. By fully embracing the changes and liaising with colleagues delivering the Art & Design specification, many D&T teachers have engaged their students in stimulating cross-over courses where new and exciting developments have successfully migrated into the Art & Design departments and student submissions. Where new requirements had not been incorporated into course design and/or integration between departments was less successful or non-existent, problems in the standardisation of student work was seen.

Positive changes included an increase in the use of CAD, and greater evidence of constructional work in metals, wood, glass, plastics and found objects. Equipment traditionally used in DT lessons was employed to create three-dimensional objects. Examples included welding and cutting equipment, laser cutters, 3D printers and clay bots. Links with industry or industrial designers was seen as an innovative step forward, with students in some schools encouraged to go into the working industrial environment to develop their ideas. Less reliance on secondary sources from the internet, books and magazines and greater use of primary research was an encouraging trend. Some forward-thinking courses used local artists, designers and craftspeople to influence ideas and projects. Purposeful recording included traditional drawing techniques, hand-rendered sketches and quick visual planning. These were integrated into portfolio and ESA submissions, alongside CAD, Isometric and orthographic studies. Written annotations, allowing students to use their knowledge and understanding to analyse the work of others and to develop their own work with informed personal and pertinent commentary, were also seen as an integral part of submissions. The introduction of writing frames by some schools enabled some students to understand process analysis.

Component 2

In general, the Externally Set Assignment paper was well received, with students of all abilities able to respond to the variety of starting points. Decisions regarding which starting point to respond to were often influenced by the nature of the Component 1 course and students' previous experiences.

Starting point 1: Texture

This popular starting point allowed students greater freedom to source personal ideas and themes. Students visited the coast, farms and outbuildings, allotments, aquariums and woods to collect primary source ideas. Natural forms and textures frequently featured in photographs of wood, shells, leaves and patterns in wet sand on the beach, lichen on rocks, crustacea, reptiles and fish scales. These were also developed through observational drawing. References to several artists, designers and craftspeople helped students to progress ideas and led to experimentation in form and surface qualities. The use of test tiles, maquettes and models to identify alternative methods of construction was a positive development.

Starting point 2: Construction

Students who attempted this starting point created some exciting work. Most outcomes fell into two distinct categories: those who studied methods of construction in the studio and those who studied man-made constructions in their local environment. In the first category students utilised a variety

of materials, techniques and processes to build work with reference to specific designers. This gave their work context. The second group used photography and technical research into local building methods and produced pieces of work in response to this. Studies of decorative brick work, steel and glass constructions, hung tile coverings and carved wooden panels led to interesting responses.

Starting point 3: Messages

Many students used the named sources as their starting point, together with independently sourced references. Personal experiences were used to enhance their work and issues relating to gender and teenage metal health, anxiety, depression, personality and identity were some of the reoccurring themes of investigations. The opportunity for students to record their thoughts and feelings both in written and visual form helped put submissions into context. Analysis in sketch books, visual diaries and on mounted sheets confirmed the link between sources and students' personal views. Responses included sculptural figurative forms, vessels with added text, constructions made from found objects and tile relief murals.

Starting point 4: The elements

Students responded well to this starting point, producing a variety of outcomes. Recording the elements in the landscape was a popular theme. Students used photography to capture images of water in the form of lakes, ponds, rivers and streams. Air was represented by clouds and mist. Fire pits, bonfires and domestic hearths formed ideas of fire and images of plough lines, beaches, vegetable plots and dirt tracks represented earth. Solutions were either made up of one of the elements or a combination of some or all of them. Some students used the materials that they found in the landscape to construct their own pieces. Suitable artists, designers and craftspeople permeated students' preparatory studies and written annotation helped contextualise the ideas behind the work. Responses derived from found objects were popular, as were design ideas for furniture incorporating laser-cut motifs based on symbols of the elements. Ceramic vessels and tiles with applied decoration combining all four elements were also seen.

Starting point 5: Working

Quite a few students who responded to this starting point gathered resources from outside the confines of the studio. People working in farms, garages, factories, canteens, in gardens, doing housework etc. were all used as sources. Development from original studies was generally good with students using a range of traditional drawing skills to explore alternatives and solve manufacturing problems. Sources included local commemorative sculptures of mine workers, factory employees and farm labourers alongside other historical and contemporary sources. Written commentary was strong giving the preparatory studies a personal slant. Most responses were of a sculptural nature, but tile panels and commemorative plaques were also seen.

Starting point 6: Insects

This starting point was popular with students because of the range of materials suggested by the named sources. Students who had a background in both art and design found something that they could work with. Experimentation with materials was seen in most students' preparatory studies with models and maquettes used to problem solve prior to the manufacture of the final timed piece. Students used a range of sources, mostly from the internet, to inspire their designs. Personal responses included steel scorpions, enamelled copper butterfly brooches, dragonflies constructed from electronics parts and hornets made from clay.

Starting point 7: Spaces

This starting point was less popular and was only attempted by a very small number of students.

8206: Photography

Component 1

Moderator reports frequently cited Portfolio components designed to deliver basic skills and understanding as a foundation for developing more independent exploration and ideas. Reports suggested that this greater understanding and control of technology and photographic principles led to more effective responses across the assessment objectives and greater opportunities for creativity. Often these foundation tasks were linked to the referencing and analysis of sources.

In general, there was no problem regarding the requirement for annotation. In fact, many moderators reported large amounts of annotation in relation to responding to chosen sources and to the recording of the student's process. However, without consideration of the relevance of the annotation, this ran the risk of replacing more valuable evidence of visual understanding and analysis.

It was pleasing to hear that most centres had differentiated the evidence produced within separate periods of supervision related to Component 2. However, moderators expressed a continued concern about the relevance and understanding regarding the requirement to include evidence of drawing within both components. Whatever form drawing takes, the activity should be relevant to the student's learning and contribute to AO3 – recording an observation, an insight or an idea. There are many activities, both digital and traditional, that can be considered drawing. As with all definitions there can be discussion as to what does and what doesn't fulfil the requirement, but we would urge teachers to explore the very many drawing activities and the myriad of contextual sources that do not need contentious debate but can also add value to students' learning at this level.

There was still a level of concern about assessment in the 'exceptional ability' band. This mark band does not replace the qualities apparent in the 'highly developed' band but, instead, exceeds them. Exceptional evidence should exhibit levels of sophistication, subtlety and/or maturity that go beyond those previously sufficient for the award of 'highly developed'.

There were very many positive comments on the practice found in the Portfolio Component. Comments reflected innovative practice, thorough understanding of photographic principles, emersion in the media and descriptions of the high standard of student attainment and achievement seen at moderation.

In contrast the negative comments on student performance very often referred to the continuing practice of attempting a superficial copy of a photographer's work as opposed to understanding and using it as an influence for developing a personal response. The process of superficial copying contributed little to the student's understanding and little to AO2 and A03, and even less towards AO4, a personal response.

Silver based darkroom processes were sometimes evident in Portfolio studies as were pin-hole camera work, photograms and cyanotype.

Thumbnails and contact strips can provide valuable evidence for each assessment objective however the presentation of photographic evidence still caused problems at moderation. This happened when images were not organised, when the authorship was not acknowledged, when there were too many because there had been no selection process or when they were presented in a size that was too small to see.

Component 2

Starting point 1: Texture

A popular, accessible starting point; students found readily available natural, architectural and manufactured sources. Leaves, feathers, water, grass and wood featured regularly as did bubble-wrap, skin, corroded metal, weathered rocks and cross sections of fruit, both ripe and rotten. Many students referenced the work of Lucy Shires, The Boyle Family and Aaron Siskind.

Innovative responses included a wooden box with glass lift up lid, containing nine small card boxes each labelled with a photograph of a texture on the outside with an example of the actual texture on the inside such as wood, dirt, ivy, straw, rusted metal and peeling paint, all collected from the shore of the Thames.

Starting point 2: Discarded Items

This starting point inspired some 'issues based' exploration. Many submissions explored coastal and urban environments recording the damage of waste products and litter. One response used a turntable to arrange a still life of discarded objects which in turn was spun whilst photographed using a slow shutter speed. In addition one student produced images with an autobiographic content reflecting how they personally felt discarded. Installation work used waste bins to present images of objects falling from the bin.

Starting point 3: Messages

This was a hugely popular starting point. Some strong issues based and very personal ideas emerged; forbidden love, mental health, bullying, body image, the role of women and men in society, war, Brexit, animal rights and racism. As with much issues-based work, sometimes photographic consideration was overlooked by the interest in conveying the idea or message. Some students struggled with the conceptual nature of the task. Sometimes practice was less successful because students had not carefully considered how to research their chosen topic whilst also communicating their ideas using photography. One submission used photographs of the French battle fields and war graves taken by the student to produce an outcome which included rainbow colours and quotes from Wilfred Owen. One interesting response consisted of photographing two- or three-word messages trapped in wax or inside teabags. These were set against text from books and referred to the content on a page. Outcomes were thought provoking, personal and challenging.

Starting point 4: Elements of the Landscape in Portraits

Many responses attempted with more or less success to emulate the work of Miki Takahashi, Jasper James, Christoffer Relander, Dan Mountford and others that layer landscape forms with portraiture. Their success depended on choices made about the subtlety of software use and decisions about juxtaposition of subject matter.

Starting point 5: Working

Many responses used relatives and friends as subjects, visiting their places of work with the degree of success dependent on prior planning and consideration of the photographic opportunities on offer. Some responses produced interesting photograms and scans of tools and workers costumes from across the ages, whilst some others used inspiration from Futurist Art to inspire motion blur and multiple exposure pieces showing how parts move in order to work.

Starting point 6: Choice of colour

Many arrangements of coloured pencils and other brightly coloured objects such as sweets and fruit were seen. Urban scenes were treated with selective and saturated colour after studying the work of Sven Pfrommer, and colourfully manipulated portraits were inspired by the artist Bijou Karman.

Innovative responses included a conceptual response where colour changes on each portrait gradually became more de-saturated to represent social standings of the people in society.

Starting point 7: Spaces

Spaces in still life arrangements were driven by a focus on negative space influenced by artists such as Morandi. Michelle Young's studies of interior space and light influenced some successful thoughtful compositions of school corridors and personal spaces in the home.

Studying the recent work by Sam Taylor Wood created illusions of floating in space through software manipulation and layering and there was an interesting use of time lapse photography producing a short film of a digital 'pen' cutting and cropping spaces in still photographs.

Students also studied the work of Nachiketa Rao by fragmenting, repeating, rotating and twisting sections and spaces in buildings, creating kaleidoscopic outcomes.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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