

GCSE Art and Design New Specification 4200

Interpreting the Assessment Objectives

The new assessment objectives for Art and Design have been written by QCA and are common across all awarding bodies. AQA takes the view that these assessment objectives should be interpreted as open, expansive statements that can be evidenced by candidates in many different forms.

The assessment objectives commentaries that follow have been written by AQA's senior examiners to provide an indication of possible approaches and ways that candidates might evidence the assessment objectives in their work. The commentaries are not intended to be prescriptive and can be applied to all endorsements and the requirements of both units.

Teachers and candidates should remember that the assessment objectives are equally weighted. They are not presented in order of importance and there is no implied sequencing of activities. Candidates are free to develop their own approaches to work and may address the assessment objectives either singularly or in combination as appropriate.

This document should be considered in conjunction with the Assessment Criteria Grid on p22–23 of the specification. Teachers may also wish to refer to the document *Exemplar Materials for Units 1 and 2* (which is part of the Teacher Resource Bank and available on www.aqa.org.uk).



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AO1 Develop their ideas through investigations informed by contextual and other sources demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding.

For this assessment objective candidates demonstrate their ability to develop ideas in response to a given or self-determined starting point. The journey undertaken by the candidate could be open-ended and initially wide-ranging or more narrowly focussed and determined by stated requirements, such as those presented in a design brief. Ideas could be revisited and alternatives explored at any stage in the creative process.

Candidates need to inform the development of their ideas through engagement with appropriate sources. These might include the work of artists, craftspeople and designers, the built environment, the natural world, music, performance, poetry, the moving image, traditions, customs and beliefs, or issues-based materials.

Analytical understanding could be evidenced through the candidate's personal engagement with selected sources and interests that emerge as a result of related investigations. These interests might be determined by analysis of specific considerations such as content, working methods, formal characteristics, purpose, presentation, use of media, stylistic conventions employed or intended audience.

Candidates' cultural understanding could be evidenced through reference to a variety of contexts such as those associated with personal, group, local, national or international identity. They could be encouraged to explore the culture of their society or those of other societies, both contemporary and historical and consider how resulting insights have supported the development of their own ideas.

AO2 Refine their ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes.

For this assessment objective candidates demonstrate their ability to refine ideas as their work develops. The refinement of ideas implies a form of developmental journey. The journey could be carefully planned and sequenced stage by stage, reflecting the candidate's preferred ways of working or the requirements of a given brief or starting point. Alternatively, it could be genuinely speculative, involve risk-taking and invite exploration of the unfamiliar. Work could centre on the refinement of a dominant idea or consideration of a wide range of possibilities and potential directions. Candidates' refinement of ideas might be informed by considering the use of media, materials, techniques and processes in selected sources.

Experimentation could be evidenced in various ways. For example, candidates could explore the distinguishing characteristics and mark-making potential of a range of media. They could try out different constructional techniques in two- and three-dimensions, employ a range of sizes in the execution of their work or explore the creative potential of new media practices. Experiments could involve investigation of the visual and tactile properties of the media employed. Experimentation might feature as the primary consideration throughout the journey undertaken by the candidate.

When selecting resources, media, materials, techniques and processes to be used, consideration might be given to the formal elements of art, craft and design such as line, shape, tone, texture, colour and form and how these might be most effectively used and explored. Candidates might also make choices determined by their intentions to stylise, simplify or exaggerate elements in their work. Refinement of ideas might help candidates to decide if they want to produce a functional, decorative or symbolic outcome or, for example, employ figurative or abstracted methods of representation. In any event, appropriate selection of resources, media, materials, techniques and processes is important.

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AO3 Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms.

For this assessment objective candidates demonstrate their ability to record ideas, observations and insights. Candidates may record ideas in a variety of ways including visual, written and digital forms which may be presented singularly or in combination depending on their intentions. Ideas might be recorded by such means as mind maps, design sheets, personal journals, working drawings, new media presentations, recorded discussions, plans, diagrams, annotations, documentation and thumbnail sketches.

Demonstration of their ability to record observations could involve drawing, in its widest sense, from first hand experience. Such activity could be undertaken as an end in itself or with the intention of gathering research and information for subsequent developments. Drawing activity might be driven by highly personal interests, design-brief requirements or craft-based concerns. Recording observations could also involve the use of a camera and new media practices, such as computer generated imagery. It could require the production of annotated design proposals or sketchbook entries. Evidence might be in written form as, for example, when making observations during or following a visit to a gallery, museum or specific site. The crucial consideration when recording observations is that the approaches employed need to be relevant to candidates' intentions.

Candidates' recording of insights could be informed by initial research, consideration of work in progress or reflections on outcomes and be presented in visual and/or written form as appropriate. Insights could be informed by previous experiences and memories, or be projections as to what might happen in the future. The nature of recorded insights will also be influenced by the focus of the work in question. For example, candidates who respond to an issues-based theme could express highly personal insights informed by first-hand experiences and relevant research into appropriate sources. Alternatively, candidates' insights in respect of a design-brief will be shaped by the requirements and restrictions of the brief. Recorded insights in a craft-based context could be located within the development of test pieces, maquettes or mock-up proposals.



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AO4 Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating analytical and critical understanding, realising intentions and where appropriate, making connections between visual, written, oral or other elements.

For this assessment objective candidates demonstrate an ability to present a personal response that is both informed and meaningful. Personal responses could take a wide variety of forms, but should be informed by the focus of the study, be this an individual activity, theme, starting point, brief or problem that requires a solution. For example, a project focusing on personal identity would inevitably be informed by the candidate's individual experiences and insights and would be likely to have particular meaning for the candidate. Alternatively, a prescriptive design brief with clear parameters and client expectations could similarly provide the candidate with an opportunity to present a personal response, but only within the limitations of the brief. If the response is to be informed and meaningful then candidates should work within these limitations and ensure that all stated requirements are addressed.

Candidates' critical understanding could be embedded in the progress of their work as it develops. It might be evidenced visually in the relationship between preparatory studies and resolved outcomes. It could be evident in a completed piece of work. It might be explicitly evidenced as an essential element in the design process through the production of annotated design sheets or sketchbook entries. Candidates might undertake formative or summative evaluations making use of their critical and analytical skills when reflecting on progress and the extent to which they have achieved their intentions.

Where appropriate, candidates might make connections with sources that could productively influence, inform or provide an initial focus for their personal responses. This could involve engagement with such elements as written materials, images, objects, artefacts, the environment, cultural contexts, the media and the creative industries. Engagement with chosen elements could take place at the outset of a project or references could be accessed at significant stages as work develops. Candidates should ensure that such connections are purposeful and that they enrich and stimulate, rather than restrict, the nature of their personal ambitions and intentions.

The realisation of intentions could be presented in the form of a fully resolved end product or outcomes that might then lead on to further work of a developmental nature. Candidates might choose to experiment with media, techniques and working methods and present results in forms such as collated samples, a series of studies or a new media collage. The intention could be to document a journey or experience in the form of a visual diary. The candidate might have chosen to respond to a set brief in the form of a presentation for the client.