

**CCEA GCSE - Contemporary Crafts
Summer Series 2018**

**Chief Examiner's
and Principal Moderator's Report**

contemporary
crafts

Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Contemporary Crafts for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCSE CONTEMPORARY CRAFTS

Chief Examiner's Report

Northern Ireland is home to a wide range of creative arts, new maker's hubs and creative industries. From an ever growing tourism sector, award winning film and television productions to the thriving games industry, the sector plays a vital role in the economic development and growth of the area.

Over 36,000 people work in the creative industries or in creative occupations in Northern Ireland, making up 4.6% of the NI workforce.

The Creative Industries have been recognised by the NI executive as a key priority in developing our economy, driving innovation and impacting on other sectors, such as tourism and manufacturing.

Last year the Ulster University created 15 new academic posts to position itself as a leader in the creative industries and opened the new £20 million Creative Industries Institute. This was a direct response to the University's consultations with the creative industries, and identifying the skills needed for the local sector.

This thriving industry relies on individual artists, creatives and makers and their unique skills and talents. The Contemporary Crafts GCSE is a springboard for young people to move into these industries, armed with a depth of knowledge in their field.

In **Component 1** (Controlled Assessment), students have the opportunity to:

- explore materials, techniques and processes;
- understand the importance of health and safety;
- make connections between their own work and work produced in the wider creative industries; and
- understand business models and employability options.

In **Component 2** (Externally Set Examination), students focus on:

- understanding, responding and working to a brief.

General

The work produced for Contemporary Crafts continues to impress each year as the subject grows, with 2018 being an excellent year for diversity of use with materials, presentation of work and innovation in practice by both teachers and students.

A range of traditional making skills and materials were mixed with a contemporary approach and use of materials. And work being produced this year was up to a commercial and professional maker's standard in some materials.

Ceramics, textiles and three dimensional product designs were particularly successful in 2018.

Credit must go to centres where displays had gallery standards being applied, even in very limited spaces, but producing a showcase of work worthy of public viewing.

Some beautiful sketchbooks and preparation sheets were produced this year. As is evident each year, gallery visits and research into practising artists or visits by artists, always help develop students understanding of their own practice and also of the business side of the creative industries.

Visits to studios or galleries and research enable students to develop their own identities, with personal branding and a clearer knowledge of life as a maker.

For centres that require resources and information, the Contemporary Crafts microsite contains a list of contact organisations and art centres to visit or obtain information. Local crafts and makers collectives are also a good resource and members can be available for talks and demonstrations at little or no cost.

Overall, the fourth year of the GCSE Contemporary Crafts has shown a continued rise in confidence and growth by students and teachers.

Examples of Good Practice

2018 brought a range of beautiful sketchbooks and preparation sheets accompanying final pieces and evidencing learning and development with materials.

Simple framing in some centres gave work a professional and commercial viability.

Each year, the use of maker's visits or visits to galleries/exhibitions is a huge influence on students work.

A range of exhibitions, galleries, studios, talks and workshops exists throughout Northern Ireland, giving excellent opportunities for candidates to experience the creative industries at work first hand.

Craft NI, the Community Arts Partnership, local Council Arts Services and Voluntary Arts Ireland all promote free craft and makers events throughout Northern Ireland on a monthly basis and local Councils can direct centres to local Makers agencies where young craftspeople are producing work and are available to speak about setting up crafts businesses.

Listings of maker's sites and crafts organisations can also be found on the CCEA Contemporary Crafts micro site.

Points for the Agreement Trials

With the Contemporary Crafts GCSE now in its fourth year the initial work from the beginning of the qualification is now accessible for those Centres teaching this qualification, allowing easier access to standards, requirements, examples, images and support.

Displays of Work

Some centres applied gallery standards to exhibition work, resulting in classrooms worthy of public openings. This isn't always possible in limited space and tribute should go to all teachers for their hard work and long hours producing excellent displays to showcase their students work.

Centres are asked to ensure that each candidates work is clearly labelled, particularly where space is limited.

Work folders and sketchbooks should be given suitable consideration as they exhibit the candidate's understanding and also show the starting point for the development of the design idea or final outcome.

Concluding Comment

The continued growth and development of Contemporary Crafts is evident in year four and teachers should be congratulated for their commitment to the GCSE and their understanding of its employment and further education benefits and pathways.

2018 produced exciting work, innovative practice and commercial standards of craft and products.

Thanks also go to all the centres for their professionalism and dedication and also for their hospitality and co-operation during the moderation visits.

Principal Moderator's Report

I am pleased to report on another highly successful examination series. GCSE Contemporary Crafts continues to thrive and has once more shown a raised standard of practice across all centres.

The Moderation Process

Centres were well prepared for moderation with clearly labelled displays and accurate paperwork. Internal standardisation had been undertaken and teachers had endeavoured to apply the assessment criteria accurately and consistently. In Centres where only one teacher was responsible for the teaching of Contemporary Crafts, departmental colleagues had assisted with marking and double-checking paperwork, this reduced to errors overall. Moderators noted that centres had presented their candidates' work in spaces that were secure, private and well suited to exhibition, display and moderation. Displays on desktops were convenient and easily accessed and all Centres had gone to great effort to ensure that their candidates' work was accurately labelled and presented in a way that easily facilitated the moderation.

Assessment

On the whole, candidates' work was marked accurately and fairly. There was evidence of marginal leniency in some centres. However, there was also evidence of severe marking arising from a lack of confidence when interpreting the assessment criteria. Attendance at the Contemporary Crafts Agreement Trial is essential to support accurate awarding of marks and to instil confidence in the use of an assessment matrix. Moderators welcomed the addition of brief annotation on the Candidate Record Sheets in some Centres. This clarified the marks by pointing the Moderator to evidence of how the assessment criteria had been met thereby aiding the moderation process.

Component 1 Making: Exploring Materials, Techniques and Processes

In many Centres, the Edited Portfolios were comprehensive and creative. They contained a wide range of media and techniques and evidenced sound learning of skills, planning and health and safety practice.

Moderators noted the sophisticated use of Laser Cutters and Computer Aided Design (CAD). However, teachers should encourage students to create their own original patterns for final outcomes. This also applies to the direct copying of existing images and products. Students should be encouraged to gather information on other craft products, analyse and determine what makes them successful then use the information to make their own original products.

Many Centres have established strong links with designers and makers across the craft sector and have organized studio visits and also invited makers into their school to talk and demonstrate their craft. In these Centres, the students benefited greatly from first-hand contact with a working maker. There was evidence recorded in Learning Files showing that it increased students understanding and appreciation of the subject and enhanced their

knowledge of the possibilities for alternative routes in education and employment. This good practice is to be commended.

Local craft fairs continue to be an excellent way to demonstrate the importance of making, pricing and selling work, in addition to sparking entrepreneurial thinking. Contact with the public together with the opportunity to talk to other makers from a wide range of disciplines and backgrounds, can be a sound basis for discussion in the classroom surrounding the benefits of craft design and making.

The Learning Files in some Centres were excellent. Candidates had produced files that evidenced creative planning and thorough understanding of health and safety, together with detailed information on the working practice of other craftspeople and a good understanding of basic business knowledge. However, Moderators were concerned that in a small number of Centres, these files contained work that was overly teacher directed and showed little commitment from the candidate. An important element of this course is appreciation and critical thinking. In those Centres where students were encouraged to talk about their own work and that of others, the Learning Files were more personal and reflected personal opinions and understanding.

Component 2 Working to a Brief

All Centres responded well to the examination paper, which is written to offer candidates a wide choice and to encourage creative thinking, planning and making.

The work produced in Component 2 in many cases was confident and reflected the good learning that had taken place throughout the course. There was strong evidence that candidates had been encouraged and supported during the planning stage and had challenged and stretched their skills to produce a fully relevant outcome. Planning is an important aspect of this component and this year it was noted that although in many centres a project plan was evident, in some centres this was not the case. Whatever format this plan takes, it should be clearly evident within the work. Project plans should be talked about and encouraged in Component 1, allowing the skills of project planning to be developed throughout the course. Planning is an essential life skill that will aid students far beyond the classroom.

It was pleasing to see that this year that references to health and safety were integrated throughout Component 2 in most Centres. Candidates who do not evidence awareness of health and safety in their work cannot satisfy all of the criteria to attain full marks in Assessment Objective 1.

Summary

Contemporary Crafts in 2018 has continued to grow and develop. Yet again, candidates' submissions have improved in creativity, quality and understanding; this is undoubtedly due to the hard work, effort and motivation of the teachers responsible for this subject. Art and Design and Technology and Design departments are beginning to see the common ground between Craft Design and Design Engineering and this is having a positive impact on the subject and the candidates.

This subject has immense potential. The skills acquired by students are valuable transferable skills for employment and life. It also provides students with the opportunity to progress to higher levels of study, vocational training and employment.

The Contemporary Crafts Agreement Trial is planned for the autumn term, to facilitate discussion of teaching methods, assessment and the further development of the subject. I hope that you will be able to attend.

Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

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