

GCSE



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

Summer Series 2023



Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2023 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

Principal Moderator's Report

Subject Overview

GCSE Contemporary Crafts offers a unique pathway into a range of occupations and opportunities in the Creative Industries or Further Education.

The subject includes making, exploring, technical advancement and creative freedom and the overall performance by centres in 2023 showed not only a recovery from the pandemic restricted years, but a new enthusiasm. With increased budgetary restrictions, centres showed adaptability and creativity in their use of methods and materials. Candidates showed confident understanding and enthusiasm for the subject and the centre displays were very professional.

A wide range of materials were explored this year, from fine textiles to assemblage, with a huge range of commercially feasible crafts, designs and products produced. In addition, some centres produced small business plans for created pieces, encouraging a commercial thought process for students, alongside the creative process.

In responding to the briefs this year we returned to the full Component 2, with the Happy Days option proving most popular. A fabulous range of materials, subjects and final outcomes were realised by students for this brief, with an equally exciting range of work created for the other two options. Textiles, assemblage and wood were particularly strong this year, with beautiful sculptural ceramics and furniture pieces' worthy of a showroom display.

Students benefitted from the inspiration of looking at the work of professional artists and makers in all areas, and this is always very important. This unique GCSE allows for exploration of ideas and concepts, the freedom of expression, and the ability to create with a huge range of materials. Teachers and students must be congratulated for the range of work produced and presented to a very professional standard in all centres.

Internal Assessment Overview

Thank you to all centres for the presentation of candidates' work for visiting moderation.

The administration and presentation of the sample in each centre ensured that moderators were clear as to how marks were arrived at. In displaying the work, it is important that moderators can read and see the candidates work clearly, it is not necessary to 'mount' work and hang it. The moderation process went smoothly with moderators largely in agreement with the marks given by the teachers. Most centres' marking was within the acceptable range and only a minimal number marked leniently and had marks adjusted. It is crucial that teachers apply and understand the assessment matrix.

We encourage all teachers to attend the Agreement Trials for the 2023-24 series. This is an important aspect of CPD and can assist with judgement, accuracy and allocation of marks.

Component 1 Making, Exploring Materials, Techniques and Processes

There were a wide range of disciplines across centres, covering the use of print, textiles, ceramics, photography, pyrography, polymers, resin and wood, resulting in some very successful and clearly challenging work. Teachers are to be congratulated for the delivery of the course and encouraging such variety and development in their students.

Whilst each centre is influenced by the particular skill-set of the class teacher, it is evident that there is a growing confidence in candidates' outcomes. The use of source material from artists and practicing makers illustrates solid research, relevance and influence on the candidate's work. However, there must be caution as to merely reproducing or copying such examples. Where candidates display imagination and ambition we see them become independent thinkers, developing refined ideas through exploring, selecting and experimenting with appropriate materials, techniques and processes so that they could present a personal and meaningful outcome.

Edited Portfolio

The Edited Portfolio should be an edited selection of work that best shows how the candidate met the assessment objectives and attained the marks awarded. In some centres there is a 'formulaic' approach to the portfolio and whilst this scaffolding is necessary for weaker candidates it can similarly stifle the more capable. There is a requirement to explore at least two different craft disciplines within the edited portfolio. Centres are reminded that this is compulsory. In a minority of cases there was limited evidence of this.

Learning File

The learning file continues to be an area for development. At times there was a sense that it is additional rather than integral to the assessment. A focus on the portfolio and the range of manufactured outcomes should not be to the detriment of the marks available in the learning file.

There exists an opportunity in the learning file for cross curricular work with the Business Studies and LLW departments within centres; this could be encouraged.

There was clear referencing to Health and Safety practices in the techniques employed in all learning files.

In some of the better files there was evidence of centres having either visited or hosted 'Craft Fairs'. This is good practice which will ultimately demonstrate to candidates that Craft and Making is an opportunity for employment and a viable business model.

Chief Examiner's Report

Component 2 Working to a Brief

In this Summer 2023 series there was delivery of the full specification with the return of the Component 2 examination brief.

The Chief Examiner presented 3 contextual options

Brief A – The Space Flight Centre

Brief B – Happy Days

Brief C – Optical Illusion

Teachers must allow all students access to the full paper, to investigate the possibilities offered in all three design briefs and thereafter the candidates can select that which inspires them. Candidates should be independent in their selection at this stage of the course. Please see the Instructions to Teachers Appendix 4 Page 18.

More often, it is a case where the teacher directs the cohort toward a particular brief and manages the class from that start point. Over directing can constitute malpractice, and it prevents candidates from making their own decisions and developing independently.

Centres predominantly produced pieces in ceramics, although a number of candidates presented work in embroidery, textiles, print and commercially focused pieces in wood and plastics. The majority of centres were within the agreed standard in marking, but a small number of centres were on the generous side of tolerance and required an adjustment.

Very many of the candidates across centres pursued the 'Happy Day's' option and this lent itself to a broad interpretation; resulting in a variety of outcomes recalling family holidays, pets and animals, musical experiences at concerts, happy spaces and places where candidates found expression, for example sporting contexts, performing arts and theatre.

A smaller amount of candidates opted for brief A and Brief C to no less effect, producing some very imaginative and joyful work.

Acknowledgement

It is only possible to conduct this process collaboratively. I acknowledge and thank the contribution of centres and teachers in preparing candidates for assessment. This was complemented by the support and judgement of the assessment team and I wish to formally thank them for their contribution, work and professionalism in the process

Contact details

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