GCSE Art & Design – Graphic Communication

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: 8203

Art and Design GCSE 8201, 8202, 8203, 8204, 8205,

Contact details:

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AQA GCSE Agenda

A guide to what work MUST be completed over the course of the project – Tues after school club till 4.45pm is highly recommended

AQA GCSE		Graphic communication Year 11 Term 1 2026		
Date	**Assessment Objectives**	**Tasks – RAG this weekly**	**R=**incomplete **A=**started/unfinished **G=**fully completed	**Teacher/self/peer targets and notes** I have chosen to focus on:
Week 1	**AO1/3 Researching & recording**	• **Reflection** – the first lesson you will review your y9 and 10 project/grades/feedback and decide if you will revisit one of these projects. • Please save a new version of the project into a Y11 NEA 1 folder		
Week 2	**AO1/3 Researching & recording**	• **Brief and specification** – are these fit for purpose? Review and improve where appropriate. • **Research** - Designers, artists and illustrators – are these fit for purpose? Are they relevant to your brief/style/direction? If not add new ones.		
Week 3	**AO1/3 Researching & recording**	• **Responding to research** – if you have introduced new research make sure you respond to this either with written analysis or by creating an appropriate piece of work inspired by the research. • **Annotation** – reread all your annotations, are they analytical? If not spend time adding analysis – use the help sheets in Teams		
Week 4	**AO1/3 Researching & recording**	• **Photography** – are there any opportunities to add your own photos to your project? These could be for **research** of typography, colours, textures, layouts and context. • **Photoshop/Affinity** could be used to edit these photos, creating new sources of pattern and colour to use. Even if that is only in the initial experiment stages.		
Week 5	**Reflecting and consolidating**	• **Consolidating** – focus on the above points, use the checklist below and refer to the *AQA points to remember. Look at the assessment sheet*, and focus on the language used. 'Skilfully, effectively, thoughtfully, confidently, creatively and purposeful'. Is this describing your project? If not do something about it, not sure how to improve, look at your feedback and ask for help!		
Week 6	**AO2/3 Recoding & experimenting**	• **Experimenting** – look with fresh eyes at what you created when you experimented with initial ideas, what is missing? What can you add to improve your work? Is it too narrow, confusing, repetitive, or random? Add to this stage of your project. • **Recording** – Can you add more annotations, photos of your work or some mock-ups of experiments? *Look at the checklist below, what can you RAG green?*		
Week 7	**AO2/3/4 Development of ideas & materials**	• **Developing** – Now you have reflected on and improved your initial ideas are the developments fit for purpose, can you add new developments based on your improved work? • **Creative and purposeful** – there should be a variety of iterations that explore colour, layout typography and style. These iterations should link to your research and inspiration.		
	Half term			
Week 8	**AO1-3 Developing & refining**	• **Refining** - Now you have reviewed your ideas and developed some new ones. Make sure you choose the idea that best meets the brief. Remember to use language like 'my intentions are …' as this links to the AO4. Keep all iteration, document and analyse (bullet points) Start to look at the physical outcomes for your project. Can you make any of the following: t-shirts, badges, stickers, boxes, bags, posters, leaflets, cards, gift wrap, album covers, zines...		
Week 9	**AO1-3 Developing & refining**	• **AQA says - AO2: Refinement** includes reflection on work produced. Exploration includes **alternatives** based on information or inspiration. Look at the above AQA point, can you get gain feedback that you can use to refine your ideas and make improvements. Think about the client or end user, does your design/s meet their needs?		
Week 10	**AO1-4 Refining and finalising**	Now you are ready to finalise your project, use the checklist below. Ask another student to review your project. What are the gaps, where are ideas not clear, reasons not clear? Is the experimenting and developing purposeful?		
Week 11	**AO1-4 Refining and finalising**	Finalise your PPT; make sure the layout works and that there is a clear journey throughout. Have a plan for your exam time, break it down in to time chunks. Organise materials/equipment where needed with your teacher. Save assets in your folder as you wont have access to the internet during the exam.		
Week 12	**Mock exam week**	**Revise for other subjects/exams**		
Week 13	**Mock exam week**	Mocks		
Week 14	**AO1-4 Presentation**	• **Exam Days 14th & 15th - all day (10 hours)** • Hand in all work to assignment: Front page must be the following: ***Name as it appears on exam entries, candidate number, Project Title.***		Complete any outstanding physical work – T Shirts, badges, packaging, posters

- This document gives you an overview of the project requirements for Y11 Graphic communication students.
- During the project the students will be set progress check assignments on Teams, where they upload their work.
- This work will then receive feedback in the form of individual or general whole class feedback.
- Students are expected to respond to this feedback in time for the next progress check.
- Missed deadlines will result in senior staff detentions at lunch time.

No.	Evidence	RAG

1.	There is a title page to your PPT/sketchbook – name & candidate number	
2.	Brief (with specification if appropriate) This should be clear and set out the expectations of the client, so you know what you are aiming to make as outcome/s	
3.	Research – relevant and informative. This should be for both inspiration and to give you direction with style, colour, typography, layout …. Include designers/illustrators where possible.	
4.	Response to research – clear visual links. This means you make work inspired by your research. Try copying the style of the designers. Use thumbnails of their work next to your work.	
5.	Analysis of the research and response. Use annotations that include key terms and words. Demonstrate you understand why you are doing this work and how it links to your research.	
6.	A range of initial ideas (min 3) You always must show more than one idea, at the start they should be reasonably different ideas. Maybe one idea for each designer researched.	
7.	Annotation and analysis of these experiments linked to research. Reflect on your work, use a strength and EBI. Be critical using a focus like typography, link it to what you know from your research.	
8.	A range of experiments with the most successful initial idea (min 4) If you can get feedback before choosing your best idea. Review them based on the brief. Are they going to allow you to meet the brief? Experiment with all areas of the design, show all edits, good and bad, try pushing yourself to make big changes even if you still go back to the original one.	
9.	Review these experiments with annotations and analysis (link to brief) Make sure you can justify your thought process and decision making.	
10.	Take the most successful idea/s forward to final experiments Play around with a range of changes, these can be more subtle changes. Show all changes good and bad.	
11.	Review and analyse these final experiments, link to brief and research Use images from your research to make the visual links. Try some mock ups.	
12.	Create final work that fully meets the brief (this might include mock ups/photos) Try and get the outcome made and photographed or digitally mocked up to make sure it is convincing.	
13.	Evaluate how successfully you have met the brief (positive but constructive and reflective) making links to research, contextual sources and outcomes.	

AQA Assessment Objectives

Assessment Objective 1 (AO1)
RESEARCH – IMAGES, DESIGNS & ARTISTS
Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.

Assessment Objective 2 (AO2)
EXPERIMENTS WITH MEDIA, PURPOSFUL
Refine work by exploring ideas, *selecting and experimenting with* appropriate media, materials, *techniques and processes.*

Assessment Objective 3 (AO3)
EXPLAIN IDEAS, OBSERVATIONAL DRAWINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS & SHOW PROGRESSION
Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.

Assessment Objective 4 (AO4)
MEETING THE BRIF, FINAL IDEA/S, LINKS w. ARTISTS, RESEARCH
Present a *personal and meaningful response* that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

AQA's Points to remember – GCSE Assessment objectives

AO1: • 'Sources' is a word with a broad meaning and does not exclusively refer to artist work.
• Understanding is evidenced by using sources as well as collecting or naming them.
• Sources can be investigated visually and through written annotation.
• Sources should inspire ideas.
AO2: • Refinement includes reflection on work produced.
• Exploration includes alternatives based on information or inspiration.
• Ideas might be issues-based or connected to formal elements or the properties of materials.
AO3: • Ideas, observations and insights can be recorded visually and through written annotation.
• Understanding may be evident in experimentation.
• Progress can be measured through comparison with stated intentions.
• Evidence of drawing and annotation is required for AO3 but can also evidence other AOs.
• There is no specific requirement regarding the quantity of drawing or written annotation.
• Drawing and annotation takes many forms and should be purposeful in relation to the student's intention.
• If a student provides no evidence of drawing or written annotation, or both, four marks must be deducted from the total mark awarded in AO3.
AO4: • AO4 does not refer exclusively to 'final outcomes or a final piece.
• AO4 can be evidenced through the investigation and selective use of sources, working methods and observations documenting the progression of ideas.
• Personal responses take a wide variety of forms and should reflect the knowledge, understanding and skills developed over the course.
• A personal, meaningful response can occur at any point in the creative journey and could be seen across the whole submission in realised intentions as well as in any outcome(s).

AQA mark scheme	**Assessment Objective 1 (AO1)** *Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.*	**Assessment Objective 2 (AO2)** *Refine work* by exploring ideas, *selecting and experimenting with* appropriate media, materials, *techniques and processes.*	**Assessment Objective 3 (AO3)** *Record ideas, observations and insights* relevant to intentions as work progresses.	**Assessment Objective 4 (AO4)** Present a *personal and meaningful response* that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.
1-4 U/1				
5-8 *2/3*	**Some ability** to develop ideas through Investigations. **Some ability** to demonstrate critical understanding of sources.	**Some ability** to refine ideas. **Some ability** to select and experiment with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.	**Some ability** to record ideas, observations and insights through drawing and annotation, and any other means relevant to intensions, as work progresses.	**Some ability** to present a personal and meaningful response and **realise** intentions. **Some ability** to demonstrate understanding of visual language.
9-12 *4/5*	A **moderate ability** to **effectively** develop ideas through **purposefu**l investigations. **A Moderate ability** to demonstrate critical understanding of sources.	A **moderate** ability to **thoughtfully** refine ideas. A **moderate** ability to effectively select and purposefully experiment with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.	A **moderate** ability to **effectively** record ideas, observations and insights through drawing and annotation, and any other means relevant to intensions, as work progresses.	A **moderate** ability to **effectively** present a personal, informed and meaningful response when **realising** intentions. A **moderate** ability to demonstrate understanding of visual language.
13-16 *5/6*	A **consistent ability** to **effectively** develop ideas through **creative and purposeful** investigations. A **consistent ability** to demonstrate critical understanding of sources.	A **consistent ability** to **thoughtfully** refine ideas. A **consistent** ability to effectively select and purposefully experiment with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.	A **consistent ability** to **skilfully** record ideas, observations and insights through drawing and annotation, and any other appropriate means relevant to intensions, as work progresses.	A **consistent ability** to **competently** present a personal and meaningful response and **realise** intentions. A **consistent ability** to demonstrate understanding of visual language.
17-20 *7/8*	A **highly developed ability** to **effectively** develop ideas through **creative and purposeful** investigations. A **highly developed ability** to demonstrate critical understanding of sources.	A **highly developed ability** to **thoughtfully** refine ideas. A **highly developed** ability to effectively select and purposefully experiment with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.	A **highly developed ability** to **skilfully record** ideas, observations and insights through drawing and annotation, and any other appropriate means relevant to intensions, as work progresses.	A **highly developed ability to competently** present a personal and meaningful response and realise **i**ntentions with **confidence and conviction**. A **highly developed ability** to demonstrate understanding of visual language.
21-24 8/9	An **exceptional ability** to **effectively** develop ideas through **creative and purposeful** investigations. An **exceptional ability** to engage with and demonstrate critical understanding of sources.	An **exceptional ability** to **thoughtfully** refine ideas with discrimination. An **exceptional ability** to effectively select and purposefully experiment with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.	An **exceptional ability** to **skilfully and rigorously** record ideas, observations and insights through drawing and annotation, and any other appropriate means relevant to intensions, as work progresses.	An **exceptional ability to competently** present a personal and meaningful response and realise **i**ntentions with **confidence and conviction**. An **exceptional ability** to demonstrate understanding of visual language.