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The post-16 subject guidance series currently comprises: art and design; business education; classics; design and technology; drama and theatre studies; engineering and manufacturing; English; geography; government and politics; health and social care; history; information and communication technology; law; mathematics; media education; modern foreign languages; music; physical education; religious studies; science; sociology.

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Introduction

This booklet aims to help inspectors and staff in schools and colleges to evaluate standards and quality in art and design for students post-16. It complements the *Handbook for Inspecting Secondary Schools* (1999), the supplement *Inspecting School Sixth Forms* (2001) and the *Handbook for Inspecting Colleges* (2001). It replaces the earlier guidance *Inspecting Subjects and Aspects 11–18* (1999).

This guidance concentrates on issues specific to art and design. General guidance is in the *Handbooks*. Use both to get a complete picture of the inspection or evaluation process.

This booklet is concerned with evaluating standards and achievement, teaching and learning, and other factors that affect what is achieved. It outlines how to use students' work and question them, the subject-specific points to look for in lessons, and how to draw evaluations together to form a coherent view of the subject.

Examples are provided of evidence and evaluations from college and school sixth-form inspections, with commentaries to give further explanation. These examples are included without any reference to context, and will not necessarily illustrate all of the features that inspectors will need to consider. The booklets in the series show different ways of recording and reporting evidence and findings; they do not prescribe or endorse any particular method or approach.

Inspectors and senior staff in schools and colleges may need to evaluate several subjects and refer to more than one booklet. You can download any of the subject guidance booklets from OFSTED's website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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OFSTED's remit for this sector is the inspection of education for students aged 16–19, other than work-based education. In schools, this is the sixth-form provision. In colleges, the 16–19 age-group will not be so clearly identifiable; classes are likely to include older students and, in some cases, they will have a majority of older students. In practice, inspectors and college staff will evaluate the standards and quality in these classes regardless of the age of the students.

Courses you are most likely to encounter in school sixth forms are General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and Advanced Level (A-level) art and general vocational courses in art and design (Intermediate and Foundation General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE)). The GCE AS and A-level courses have the umbrella title of 'art', but under this there are specific titles: fine art; 3D design; fashion/textiles; graphics; photography; film and video; history and critical studies; history of art and design; art – painting; and art and crafts. In colleges, in addition to these courses, you may find National Diploma courses in design (available in a wide range of specialist design subjects) and Foundation Diploma studies in art and design. Although these courses have different orientations, you should expect to see students exploring and developing ideas, investigating, making and evaluating art and design and, through their studies, extending their knowledge and understanding of materials, processes, codes, conventions and artistic purposes.

This booklet concentrates on the most commonly found courses in or related to art and design for students 16–19. However, the principles illustrated can be applied more widely.

Common requirements

All inspectors share the responsibility for determining whether a school or college is effective for all its students, whatever their educational needs or personal circumstances. As part of this responsibility, ensure that you have a good understanding of the key characteristics of the institution and its students. Evaluate the achievement of different groups of students and judge how effectively their needs and aspirations are met and any initiatives or courses aimed specifically at these groups of students. Take account of recruitment patterns, retention rates and attendance patterns for programmes and courses for different groups of students. Consider the individual goals and targets set for students within different groups and the progress they make towards achieving them.

You should be aware of the responsibilities and duties of schools and colleges regarding equal opportunities, in particular those defined in the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. These Acts and related codes of practice underpin national policies on inclusion, on raising achievement and on the important role schools and colleges have in fostering better personal, community and race relations, and in addressing and preventing racism.¹

As well as being thoroughly familiar with subject-specific requirements, be alert to the unique contribution that each subject makes to the wider educational development of students. Assess how well the curriculum and teaching in art and design enable all students to develop key skills, and how successfully the subject contributes to the students' personal, social, health and citizenship education, and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Judge how effectively the subject helps prepare students aged 16-19 for adult life in a culturally and ethnically diverse society.

¹ See Annex *Issues for Inspection arising from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson Report)* in *Evaluating Educational Inclusion*, OFSTED, 2000, p13.

1 Standards and achievement

1.1 Evaluating standards and achievement

From the previous inspection report, find out what you can about standards and achievement at that time. This will give you a point of comparison with the latest position, but do not forget that there is a trail of performance data, year by year. Analyse and interpret the performance data available for students who have recently completed the course(s). Draw on the school's *Pre-Inspection Context and School Indicator* (PICS) report or, in the case of a college, the *College Performance Report*. Also analyse the most recent results provided by the school or college and any value-added information available. When numbers are small, exercise caution in making comparisons with national data or, for example, evaluating trends. For further guidance on interpreting performance data and analysing value added, refer to *Inspecting School Sixth Forms*, the *Handbook for Inspecting Colleges* and the *National Summary Data Report for Secondary Schools*.

Where you can, form a view about the standards achieved by different groups of students. For example, there may be data which enable you to compare how male and female students or different ethnic groups are doing, or how well 16–19-year-old students achieve in relation to older students.

Make full use of other information which has a bearing on standards and achievement, including success in completing courses, targets and their achievement, and other measures of success.

You should interpret, in particular:

- trends in results;
- comparisons with other subjects and courses;
- distributions of grades, particularly the occurrence of high grades;
- value-added information;
- the relative performance of male and female students;
- the performance of minorities and different ethnic groups;
- trends in the popularity of courses;
- drop-out or retention rates;
- students' destinations, where data are available.

On the basis of the performance data and other pre-inspection evidence, form hypotheses about the standards achieved, whether they are as high as they should be, and possible explanations. Follow up your hypotheses through observation and analysis of students' work and talking with them. Direct inspection evidence tells you about the standards at which the current students are working, and whether they are being sufficiently stretched. If the current standards are at odds with what the performance data suggest, you must find out why and explain the differences carefully.

As you observe students in lessons, look at their work and talk with them. Consider the extent to which they can:

- communicate ideas in visual form;
- recognise and use the expressive potential of a range of materials and processes;
- draw for different purposes;
- make connections between their own work and that of other artists and designers, past and present;
- evaluate their own and others' work, drawing on a suitable technical and critical vocabulary;
- use information and communication technology (ICT) appropriately to store and generate images, and to undertake research and investigation;
- take increasing responsibility for their own learning;
- use effectively the resources of galleries and contemporary design practices;
- articulate a personal view of the subject.

1.2 Analysis of students' work

An analysis of students' work – in portfolios and displays – provides an important source of evidence for standards and achievement. It complements the evidence from lessons. You should be able to judge whether students are making progress in knowledge, understanding and skill and what demands the teaching places on them. Hence, you will gain valuable insights into the quality of their achievement. In addition, you will be able to form a view of the structure and balance of the curriculum for art and design and the regularity, accuracy and helpfulness of the assessment of students' work.

Some portfolios, in particular those for vocational courses, often contain large amounts of work and can appear daunting. Do not try to look at everything. Focus on the quality of the work, and do not spend time checking the details of vocational course requirements: that is not your job. Select one or two specific units and compare the quality of work across the portfolios of different students.

Ask the teacher to identify students operating at different levels, not least to help you to gauge whether the teacher's expectations are appropriate. This is also an opportunity to follow up students or groups of students you identified in your initial hypotheses.

Example 1: evidence from AVCE art and design course in a school sixth form; students at 3 levels, identified by school.

An analysis of folders.

(Higher attaining student: work for a unit on sculpture)

Student has explored the potential for making and marketing small bespoke sculptures. A sample commission has resulted in a well-made metal sculpture, which she has used as a model for production costing. She has carefully researched and recorded potential locations and rents for a gallery, contacted local galleries to ask about costs, surveyed local people to identify how much they would be prepared to pay for art work and linked potential orders to waiting times and costs. Her plans are well advanced and show real understanding of the business context. The practical work is of excellent quality, supported by finely produced sketchbooks and sculptures. Student has started the course with above average attainment in art, but the amount of effort she has put in and the standard of work she has produced (well above average) indicate good achievement.

(Average attaining student: work for a unit on developing a personal portfolio)

The student has explored the theme of Egyptian art and its potential within decorative art. She has done some visual investigation using a local museum, books from the art department library and the Internet. A range of drawings in different media identifies and interprets the Egyptian design motifs, showing flair and imagination. Written and visual notes clearly describe their characteristics and show well how patterns develop from motifs. Links with the designs of William Morris are explored through the common use of natural forms. The final work synthesises the two types of motif in a textile print, producing a highly effective design. The standard of the work is above average. This student had below average attainment before she started the course, and so this suggests very good achievement.

(Lower attaining student: work for a graphics unit on photography)

Student has designed publicity (posters, flyers, and tickets) for local rock music gig. Rock music CD covers are used derivatively in the research, with limited original design. Where different versions are attempted, they are repetitive and rely on a fairly narrow range of motifs and technical skills. Written commentary is largely descriptive, but shows some skills of analysis of the visual effects achieved. The quality of presentation shows some signs of hasty completion. Nevertheless, this student started on the course with low levels of attainment, and so the work, though below average, indicates satisfactory achievement.

[Attainment above average (3)]

Commentary

Although the units have different emphases, they all require the demonstration of particular skills: for example, drawing, researching and evaluating. Two of the students have undertaken considerable research and have developed a good understanding of the areas they have studied. They have combined this with a good level of design skill to produce work of a good quality, well matched to the identified objectives. The third student's work is of a basic level, but if this range of work is typical of the whole group then attainment is above average. The amount of effort and responsibility shown by two of the students and the standards of work in comparison with their previous attainment indicate that this is good achievement for them. The achievement of the third student is satisfactory. Thus, on the evidence of these three students, overall achievement looks to be good.

Example 2: evidence from 3 GCE A-level students in an FE college.

An analysis of work.

(Higher attaining student)

Mixed media drawn studies in sketchbooks show mechanical forms, including local steel bridges and machinery on derelict factory sites. Impressive drawing skills and good use of digital camera to gather imagery rapidly. Very large freehand pencil drawings analyse the meshing of two cogwheels, creating, in the process, a series of complex abstract tonal patterns. From these drawings, the student confidently creates large, intricate 3D sculptures in card and plaster based on her meticulous visual analysis of the machinery. Large volumes of sumptuously presented coursework sheets support the finished work. In discussion, she links her application to do civil engineering at university with her liking for mechanical forms. Her personal study is based on the work of contemporary women artists, with a theme of 'the home and home life', and shows that she is well informed and already developing strong, well-argued opinions about art. The study is beautifully presented, using inventive graphic techniques and word processing, and has a powerful visual impact. Student working towards grade A. Having started the course with grade B in GCSE art, this student has achieved well.

(Average attaining student)

Sketchbook shows routine, rather conventional small-scale pencil drawings of still life, natural forms and some figures using pencil and pastel. Carefully observed drawings and painted studies of cloud formations and landscape and some references to cloud studies by Constable. Competent but unadventurous approach to painting, heavily reliant on rather timid watercolour technique and use of small brushes. Reflecting the limited approach to sixth-form teaching at the school. This restricts student's ability to explore new approaches to handling scale and texture in painting. Personal study on theme of Constable's landscape painting is thorough and carefully presented, but more descriptive than evaluative. Student working towards grade C. This student started the course with grade A in GCSE art, and so this attainment suggests unsatisfactory achievement.*

(Lower attaining student)

Student has gathered together a rather scrappy collection of figure drawings, many of them repetitious in pose and technique, but showing some development of skills. Several rather too ambitious experiments developing drawings into paintings, but not backed by skills in handling of colour and texture, and showing only limited improvement on GCSE skills. Portfolio very slim, and limited as a record of the process of learning. Personal study on local architecture is poorly presented, derivative, and relies heavily on published material. Student on target to achieve grade E. Limited progress from standard attained in GCSE art; suggests unsatisfactory achievement.

Significant variations in achievement – no clear picture from this sample.

[Attainment average (4)]

Commentary

A good breadth of study (the study of contemporary women artists, Constable, local architecture, 2D and 3D processes). Some work to a good depth. The range of attainment indicates that, if these students are typical of the group, then attainment is about average. However, this analysis of work raises questions about achievement which will need to be explored further.

1.3 Talking with students

As well as analysing their work, it is valuable to talk to students either in small groups or individually. Discussion, focused on what is (and is not) in their portfolios, can provide further evidence of their understanding.

Example 3: evidence from a discussion with 3 GCE AS students in an FE college.

The students – all female – have done pencil and pastel studies of domestic interiors for homework. In a sustained discussion, they talk confidently about their work, accurately using technical terms such as ‘linear perspective’, ‘convention’ and ‘tone’. As they talk, they connect their current work with that of artists they have studied. One student compares her drawing of a bedroom with an interior by Andrew Wyeth, talking admiringly of the atmosphere the painter achieves through a ‘billowing curtain’. Another talks of the ‘richness’ and ‘strong design’ of a painting by Matisse and how she wants to create the same qualities in her own work.

They value their preparatory studies, seeing them as a means of gathering information for future paintings and sharpening their drawing skills. Turning back to an earlier page of drawings in her sketchbook, one comments on the progress she has made in ‘drawing light’ through the use of cross-hatching. Another speculates whether she has chosen the best drawing medium (pencil) for capturing a particular mood.

The understanding, interest and awareness of progress which these students show indicate good achievement.

[Attainment above average (3)]

Commentary

These students indicate that they have a good knowledge and understanding of some of the purposes of drawing and can connect their work meaningfully with that of other artists. The commentaries on their sketchbooks indicate an ability to assess their own progress and to work independently. Good learning has been taking place, leading to good achievement.

Example 4: evidence from discussion with 6 students in an FE college: early in their second year on National Diploma course in fashion/textiles.

Students talk about their project in designing swimwear and show work they have done. They have completed thorough research in sketchbooks, reflecting the colours, cultures and patterns of a chosen country. Pages in their ideas books are combinations of drawings, collage and stitchables. They have done research from found objects, drawing from observation in the exploratory phase of the project. In this research work, all students show very good awareness of design trends and the requirements of the project. The two most capable students have completed sketchbooks which contain excellent colour visuals, pieces of fabric colourways and idea development. These are all based on primary sources. Two weaker students have completed adequate research but have not yet developed their ideas to show as many possible alternatives for their final designs. Their work is still good, and they have improved their standard considerably from earlier work.

The students talk with enthusiasm about their design visuals and chosen theme, using an appropriate design vocabulary. They have been asked to produce a number of layouts showing full figure with detail; their drawing work is fluid. In conversation, they show good understanding of sequential development from each of their ideas. One textile student explains how he has drawn shells and used colours from the work of Paul Gauguin to develop the colourways and subsequent designs for garments.

They explain that they are encouraged by their teacher to grade their work. It is clear that the feedback from the teacher and other students has been constructive and has emphasised each person’s individuality and progress made. They have a good understanding of their strengths and of the aspects of their work on which they need to make further progress. Awareness of design trends in fashion is high. They have made good use of the Internet to access fashion forecasting sites.

Client presentation visuals and working visuals are clearly presented and students show confidence and enjoyment in their work as they talk about their designs.

The standard of students' work and understanding is very good for this stage of the course. There is a high level of interest and enthusiasm for the work, with a strongly developed critical sense, indicating very good achievement.

[Attainment well above average (2)]

Commentary

The standard of these students' research, design development visuals and finished presentation sheets is considerably higher than is usual at this stage of the course. They show they are developing well their skills of evaluation and discernment about their work.

1.4 Lesson observation

You will also obtain evidence on standards and achievement from lesson observations, during which you can talk to students about the work they have done.

Example 5: evidence from a GCE AS art class in an FE college; 4 students working on individual projects.

*The students are working on a range of individual projects. Most involve using the department's modest collection of prints to copy paintings by Friedrich and Klimt. Three have limited concentration, breaking off to talk to each other or look out of the window. One student copying in powder paint Friedrich's *The Cross in the Mountains*, has no knowledge of the painting's historical significance as an altarpiece, nor of the artist, except that he 'Might be French or German'. While those copying paintings by Klimt have some knowledge of his context, drawn in part from the Internet, they have little to say about the style of his work or the way his female subjects are mediated, even though the project would seem to invite such considerations.*

Students show only very limited technical skills in painting and drawing and lack confidence when talking about why they have chosen to work on a particular scale or – even though easels are available – on cluttered tables.

The undeveloped level of skill, the slow pace of working and the lack of interest in the background of the projects indicate poor achievement on advanced work.

[Attainment well below average (6)]

Commentary

The students give little indication that they understand or value what they are doing. Their knowledge of the selected paintings is slight and they are unable to talk with conviction about the practical choices they have made.

2 Teaching and Learning

2.1 Evaluating teaching and learning

Interpret the *Handbook* criteria with specific reference to art and design, and keep in mind the characteristics of effective teaching and learning in which:

- through the teacher's own ability as an artist/designer and skills in explaining and demonstrating, students learn an appropriate range of skills and develop them to a high standard (*subject knowledge, methodology*);
- because teachers are sensitive, encouraging and responsive, students develop their own style and are confident to explore and experiment (*expectations, methodology*);
- through the good use of external resources, such as museums, galleries and artists in residence, students' breadth of knowledge and skill is extended (*resources, methodology*);
- students' progress is helped by the teacher's sensitive intervention with concise and accurate verbal and written assessments of their work (*assessment*);
- teachers use displays and presentations of the work of students and other artists and designers as a basis for discussions and comparisons of techniques and approaches used, with the result that students develop the ability to evaluate and reflect critically on their own work (*subject knowledge, expectations, assessment*);
- through the encouragement of teachers, students learn to express opinions about their own and others' work, using an appropriate aesthetic and technical art and design vocabulary (*subject knowledge, expectations*);

and, especially on vocational courses:

- through the use of good-quality industrial and professional links, students develop a good understanding of the relevance of the vocational context of their work and of the standards expected in the professional world (*resources, methodology, expectations*);
- through undertaking live assignments and competition briefs, students' breadth of knowledge and skill is extended (*resources, methodology, expectations*).

Be alert to teaching which may have superficially positive features but which lacks the rigour, depth, insights and command of good subject teaching.

Examples might be teaching in which:

- narrow technical skills are successfully taught but there is insufficient emphasis on the development of students' capacity to study independently (*methodology, expectations*);
- projects or tasks result in outcomes which are superficially attractive but identical or repetitive, with students given insufficient scope for a personal, expressive or imaginative response (*methodology, expectations*);
- visually 'slick' imagery or technique has been based too much on secondary source material, or possibly results from over-prescription by the teacher (*methodology, expectations*).

2.2 Lesson observation

Example 6: evidence from a Year 12 GCE AS art lesson in a school sixth form; 16 students present; double lesson of 2 ½ hr, first and last half-hours observed.

Landscape paintings (watercolour) based on local environment.

Teacher gathers group around table. Explains compositional principles and demonstrates, step by step, techniques of aerial perspective. Then sets students off and provides frequent advice and guidance to individuals.

Space is cramped but teacher anticipates potential problems and exploits every corner of the room through good organisation.

Teaching	Learning
<p><i>Uses good-quality watercolour material. Refers to well-chosen examples of Turner’s work.</i></p> <p><i>Through question and answer, checks understanding. Insists on accurate use of technical vocabulary – eg, ‘chiaroscuro’.</i></p> <p><i>Refers back to students’ previous work and makes wide-ranging references – eg, Turner’s influence on Pissarro.</i></p> <p><i>From time to time, encourages students to teach each other and to explain compositional principles to rest of group.</i></p> <p><i>Little variation in performance between male and female students.</i></p>	<p><i>Begin to show good understanding of composition: talk about reconciling demands of verisimilitude and design.</i></p> <p><i>With increasing confidence, most are able to combine inks and watercolours to create effect of aerial perspective. Some are quite systematic, building tonal effects through overlapping horizontal lines of paint; others are more experimental, dripping ink onto a thin wash.</i></p> <p><i>Lower attainers use the techniques in less sophisticated, but nonetheless effective, ways.</i></p> <p><i>Work very well independently and listen to teacher, clearly affected by his enthusiasm for his subject.</i></p> <p><i>Previous work in sketchbooks used well – for example, drawings and photographs of local landscape and art history sources.</i></p> <p><i>Note: drawings in folders demonstrate a high level of competence in analytical studies from plant/seed-head/leaf/flower forms.</i></p> <p><i>All are very keen and willing to share with the rest of the group how they have achieved particular effects – another sign of a mature confidence in the subject.</i></p>

[Teaching and learning good (3)]

Commentary

Despite cramped conditions, the teaching and learning are good, with some strengths and no significant weaknesses. The teacher’s knowledge about watercolour painting is good. He is able to demonstrate techniques very effectively and relate the work the students are doing to that of other artists. He has planned the work carefully to build well on previous work, including sketchbook activities. All the students receive his frequent attention and all are appropriately challenged. Students’ ability to recognise, if not necessarily to reconcile, the demands of verisimilitude and design indicates good conceptual and technical grasp. Students are very keen to learn and are able to work independently and respond very positively to the opportunity to share their developing expertise and insights.

Example 7: Intermediate GNVQ art and design lesson in an FE college; 8 students present.**Design brief 'Packing in the visitors', to redesign visitors' pack for local museum on road transport.**

Teacher's introduction based on detailed design brief, which is distributed to students. Introduction is delivered with clarity – and some force, so that students are left in no doubt what to do and when.

Teacher questions students very effectively, checking understanding, rephrasing and explaining the task where necessary. Directs students to good range of visual resources (posters, flyers and other materials from this and other museums) accessible in the classroom. She sets out time-scale: early research before visit next week (visual notes etc) – must be completed by end of visit. Teacher chivvies without being unnecessarily prescriptive. A large whiteboard shows a grid, which details students' progress to date in coverage of assignments and GNVQ requirements. Teacher and students can see and compare progress – and do so.

Students are tuned to teacher's high level of expectation and are, from the start, very attentive and on task. During the introduction they ask questions about the brief, some of them right away thinking about the requirements and the opportunities and problems they might encounter. There is evidence of good motivation and a well-established work ethic. Learning benefits from the brisk pace of the lesson. There is plenty of positive pressure from the teacher, and from the structure of the lesson, which is closely defined.

Looking at previous work indicates differing attainment (but no evidence that differences reflect gender or ethnicity), but it is never less than satisfactory: one student's sculpture is varied and shows good range of skills – soft sculpture, ceramic sculpture, and skilfully painted wooden construction maquette based on Picasso piece. Another lower attaining student did not do GCSE art, but has made good progress, and is well supported by teaching and, in particular, the progress grid. By the end of the lesson, all students have completed some initial visual research, have identified their tasks for the museum visit and have explained their plans to the teacher, who checks each one individually.

[Teaching and learning very good (2)]**Commentary**

A good example of a teacher using the resources of a local museum in a planned way and setting the right tone and expectations for successful work to be achieved. As a result, students are planning very well for the visit. Evidence from work done earlier confirms that there has been very good teaching and learning on this course.

Example 8: Year 12 GCE AS art class in a school sixth form; 8 students present; lesson of 120 min (first 60 min observed).**Unit on drawing the human figure, involving drawing/modelling for each other.**

Teaching	Learning
<p>Shows some Rodin drawings and provides clear explanation of proportions of figure, using A2 exemplar of his own.</p> <p>Challenges students through quick sketch work: requiring them to define basic proportions, using only five lines (Rodin reference useful here). Gives commentary on skills and techniques students might try: whole-class teaching, but with weather eye on individual progress. However, too little teaching time given to lower attainers.</p>	<p>Most students apply themselves steadily and purposefully to task and participate in introductory discussion. Two are much less involved.</p> <p>Act on teacher's advice and respond to encouragement. Most rise to challenge of quick sketchbook task but two lower attaining students frustrated by requirement to define proportions within time limit. Students are learning to observe accurately. Developing awareness of proportions – for example, head to body length.</p>

Completes first part of lesson with timed, 20-minute sketch. Monitors carefully and provides targeted one-to-one support for most students, including least confident.

Learning support assistant is present, but because of the nature of exercise has no real role to play, except as model for students to draw.

Most apply what they learn from first, quick exercise to the longer, later exercise, so some progress in learning. The two lower attaining students continue to have difficulty with defining the basic proportions, but eventually do make progress, when they get the individual help from the teacher.

[Teaching and learning satisfactory (4)]

Commentary

The teacher has good subject knowledge and skill. This results in good learning and progress for six of the students. He is not equally successful with the whole class. He misses opportunities to support the weaker students in the initial stage of the lesson and, although they do eventually get the help they need, this is rather late in coming and their learning is barely satisfactory.

Example 9: evidence from lesson for Foundation Diploma studies in art and design in an FE college; visual studies lesson 180 min, followed in afternoon by 120 min workshop; observation carried out at two stages (50 min total); 26 students.

Project-based research on the work of Dada artist Kurt Schwitters and others.

Generally good punctuality – students arrive with suitable materials, ready to work. They have been asked to collect objects which could exemplify a journey they have made, either literal or imaginary. They have undertaken their own research outside the lesson and brought in a 3D construction with chosen objects inside. Good planning for a well-chosen task; most students have shown imagination and given careful thought to their collections.

Brief and effective introduction about the work of Schwitters encourages debate. Well-directed questions to individuals – teacher knows the students well and relates the difficulty of the question to the capabilities of the student, thereby giving students of different abilities opportunities to extend themselves. As a result, students are interested in the ideas and enthusiastic about the work they are to do.

The teacher has set up a large construction of boxes with various objects inside to stimulate the group. Students can draw either their construction or the set group – in the first part of the day, they are asked to produce A1-size drawings in black/white charcoal and ink. Teacher suggests that they might collage newsprint and printed media on to the page before drawing the objects. Teacher is very good at demonstrating in words and in drawing various ideas to think about, without being prescriptive. She gives clear direction on the time for each drawing and how this will lead on to development in the latter part of the day. Effective in ensuring that students, including those with English as an additional language, understand well what they are to do. Intense concentration from group. Students work quickly and with energy, very interested and involved in their work. Teacher monitors individual progress carefully, giving advice on drawing technique. Uses humour to keep all students in this large group on task. Very good progress in work, with all students producing drawings with good spatial awareness and strong tonal qualities.

In afternoon lesson, each student develops the images into a colour study. They use collage, mixed media, photographic image and colour. Good encouragement for them to be individual and use techniques from their main option specialism. They refer to their sketchbooks and own photographs for additional imagery in the later stages of the lesson. The lesson concludes with a display of the work produced during the day: good interaction between students and feedback from the teacher set out future expectations during the week.

[Teaching and learning very good (2)]

Commentary

The teacher has set the right group dynamic for this course level. She shows excellent subject knowledge and has a good rapport with the students. She takes good account of individual students' abilities in her questioning. She is attentive to individual and group needs. Learning is very good: the students work independently, pursuing individual lines of enquiry within the parameters set and developing their skills and understanding. Students work at a very good pace, each producing a number of large-scale drawings in black/white, colour, mixed media. Progress is very good during the day. This is confirmed by the display of work at the end of the lesson – giving students an opportunity to reflect on their learning.

Example 10: Year 12 GCE AS art group of 5 students in a sixth-form college; double lesson of 100 min – observed for first 30 min and last 10 min.

Students working to a brief to use drawings of mechanical forms as basis for motif in printmaking.

Teaching	Learning
<p><i>No clear introduction to the lesson. Students told to get work from cupboard and continue. Materials are set out beforehand.</i></p>	<p><i>All work at the same table. Students interested in what they are working on, despite limited instructions.</i></p>
<p><i>Walks off with one student to find artefacts.</i></p>	<p><i>Despite absence and apparent lack of interest of teacher, behaviour satisfactory and pace of work purposeful. Little real initiative required but low-key enthusiasm evident from both male and female students.</i></p>
<p><i>After 20 minutes returns and discusses arrangements for students' visit to museum. Discussion is rambling and too long, and educational purpose of visit unclear.</i></p>	
<p><i>The lesson does not draw on existing skills or relate to students' previous experience. Teacher does check whether students are working and provides well-judged technical support when asked, but fails to communicate what he wants them to achieve.</i></p>	<p><i>Despite lacklustre teaching, students pick up well on some of each other's comments about their work, and on the few points made by the teacher. There is clear progress in students' learning. Technically, quite competent and have learned the underlying concepts of effective design.</i></p>
<p><i>Management of equipment is sometimes poor – eg, brushes used in previous lesson left head-down in water containers.</i></p>	
	<p><i>Satisfactory achievement in lesson.</i></p>
	<p><i>All but one of the students have good grades in GCSE art and in their portfolios there is evidence of them making adequate progress in the first two terms of Year 12 so far.</i></p>

[Teaching unsatisfactory(5); learning satisfactory (4)]

Commentary

Teaching is unsatisfactory but, through their own efforts, students learn well enough. The teacher has no clear view of the purpose of the lesson, but his lack of direction is not reflected in the students' attitudes, which are largely positive. The technical support the students get when they ask for it is the determining factor in preventing teaching being poor. All but one of the students are able, and their fundamental interest and enthusiasm for the subject have prevented any coasting.

Example 11: GNVQ Intermediate art and design lesson in a school sixth form; 5 students present.

Start of unit of work on theme of artists' depictions of work, using local industry and artists.

Teacher's introduction is intended to set the scene for the project. He shows his extensive knowledge of local industry and its history, and emphasises pride in region, but without reference to work of artists. So, although steeped in local knowledge, the introduction fails to target the subject-specific requirements of the assignment. Questioning of students is low-level and limited to demand for one-word answers about local industrial landmarks. Students give monosyllabic replies during questioning – no more is demanded from them. There seems to be no expectation of any discussion or extended responses.

Teacher sets initial task of finding images of local industry from pile of old local newspapers. Also sets up ill-defined task of 'looking-up' local industry on Internet. Students begin the task of flicking through local newspapers, looking at images of local industry, and cutting them out with scissors. This is 'research' at the lowest level and does nothing to develop learning.

Two students express interest in going on to the Internet right away. Access to Internet is in separate ICT suite, and a check on availability of machines must be made. Teacher, not students, makes the phone call, missing a ready-made opportunity for development of students' communication skills. The two students move down to the ICT suite to search for further local industry images on the Internet. Teacher accompanies students to ICT suite, but fails to give any guidance on how to search the Internet. They have no idea how to search for information – eg, one of them stumbles into the annual report of a commercial dockyard, but is unaware that it is based in the USA. Teacher watches them flounder, seeming to have no idea how to support them. Much time is wasted in this way.

Students in both rooms are docile and biddable, but lack any idea of how to research, and have little motivation. Progress in the lesson is minimal, with no identifiable gains in skills or knowledge. Lesson ends with students drifting off from ICT suite and art room without any review of work and no targets for next session. Teacher has good rapport with students, but makes too little demand on them. He shows no grasp of appropriate teaching and learning styles for students of this age.

[Teaching and learning poor (6)]

Commentary

Teaching and learning are weak because the teacher lacks certain key skills – for example, questioning. He has inadequate subject knowledge, especially in relation to ICT, and has low expectations of the students. The one redeeming feature is the good relationship the teacher has with the students which, although important, can mask the inadequacies of an unsatisfactory lesson.

Example 12: Year 12 AVCE art and design lesson in a school sixth form; 14 students present.

Review and feedback on previous unit and introduction to new unit: 'Working to set briefs'.

Students are given general feedback on their previous work. This involves a rather rushed, point-by-point account of strengths and weaknesses. As teacher talks, the noise rises in the adjacent studio, making it difficult for her to be heard. She compensates by speaking louder, but is clearly irritated. The students are interested to know about the previous work but find the teacher difficult to hear because of the noise from next door, and two or three switch off. Students are invited to comment on the feedback: 'Have I got it right?' Most are keen to contribute – teacher listens to their comments and agrees list of key points to consider in future work.

Introducing the new unit, she explains they are to design a logo for a national airline. This will involve them choosing a country, 'identifying images' associated with it, and using these as a starting point for a design. The explanation is clear and concise. Students show interest in the new unit (the noise from next door has abated). To get them thinking about the process, the students are asked to work in pairs and, using a handout to prompt them, review what a logo is for, who the clients might be and the kind of image they might want to project. Teacher talks with each pair, ensuring

they understand the task. As appropriate, she suggests ways forward. She has a very direct but supportive manner, which the students respond to positively. They gain a good deal from this pair work, spurred on by teacher's enthusiasm and sharp questioning.

After 15 minutes or so, teacher convenes the group for a concluding discussion. During this, they discuss the importance of logos generally and reflect briefly on what the logos of certain brand names connote. The debate 'takes off', and she deftly ensures all participate. One or two make links with design work they have done in D&T and several are keen to offer evaluations of logos observed. These students are clearly willing to make judgements and can use a critical vocabulary ('convention', 'denote', 'gender').

By the end of the lesson, all students have an unambiguous view of the task ahead and some are already beginning to sketch out ideas in their visual notebooks. Homework is set (to identify three images that sum up a country) and the nature of the next session explained.

One of the students in the class is in a wheelchair. Her particular needs are appropriately met – there is a table at the right height for her. In the group work, her pair and another work at this lower table with her. They take a full part in class discussion. At the end of the lesson, the teacher carefully but unobtrusively checks that all stools have been tidied away and ensures that there is no clutter which would make it difficult for the wheelchair.

Visual notebooks are well kept, containing sketches, photographs, including some digitised images, and notes on a visit to Tate Modern. The group is in the process of making digital notebooks and contributing examples of their artwork to the school intranet.

[Teaching and learning good (3)]

Commentary

The teacher has planned the lesson well and has high expectations of the students' ability to evaluate and plan images as logos. While she has to cope initially with unfavourable conditions, her enthusiasm and planning retrieve the situation, as do the good relations she has with this group of students. Communication skills are developed through the purposeful pair work and plenary sessions, and through the excellent questioning. Care is taken to include fully the needs of the student in a wheelchair.

2.3 Other evidence on teaching and learning

Lesson observation is usually the most important source of evidence on the quality of teaching and learning, but the analysis of work and discussions with students can also yield valuable information. This is particularly important when the work includes a coursework component undertaken over time. Under these circumstances, the observation of individual lessons may give a very partial picture of the students' learning experience and of the support provided by teachers.

The work analysis will give you a good feel for the overall rate of progress, and, therefore, the pace of the teaching and learning. It will show the range and depth of the work which the students are required to do. For example, it will indicate whether they have worked with a sufficiently wide range of media and contexts and whether they have been taught to analyse and evaluate art and design practice. It will also show whether the teaching has placed a sufficient emphasis on understanding the possible moral, social and cultural issues when developing a project brief.

Discussions with students will give you a sense of their motivation and the range of their experiences. You can ask questions to show whether they understand clearly how well they are doing and what they must do to improve.

3 Other factors affecting quality

You should report other factors only in so far as they affect the standards and achievement of the students and the quality of teaching and learning. Note and evaluate any significant features of the curriculum, leadership, management, staffing, accommodation or resources.

Curriculum

Consider the opportunities students have for undertaking live assignments and/or competition briefs and the impact of these on their learning and standards. Similarly, consider how contact with artists and designers affects the understanding which students on vocational courses have of professional studio and work practices.

Resources and accommodation

Successful recruitment to post-16 courses puts a heavy demand on consumable resources. However, good subject managers are adept at identifying and exploiting official and unofficial sources of funding and materials. Consider whether the quantity and quality of consumable resources affect the teaching or the attainment of the students. Take note of the effect of any additional funding, such as that for specialist art and design college or arts college status.

Consider also the effect which other resources, such as books and ICT facilities, have on teaching and standards. Judge the impact of access to ICT suites, to the Internet and to graphics and multimedia software and CD-ROM facilities. Consider the extent and quality of technical support available.

Work in art and design is likely to be influenced significantly by the quality of the accommodation. Sometimes good display makes the most of poor accommodation, but it is difficult to compensate for deficiencies in lighting, working space and storage. Accommodation should allow for:

- work on a large scale, where desirable;
- the safe development of practical skills;
- access outside timetabled lesson time for work to be continued;
- the safe storage of materials and students' work;
- visual stimulation through facilities for display in 2D and 3D.

Look for ways in which good or poor features of accommodation are affecting the teaching and the standards.

Distinguish between good display or presentation of good artwork and just good display or presentation. Consider the extent to which display is used as a resource – do teachers refer to displays to exemplify particular techniques or subject matter used by a student or artist/designer/craftsperson?

It is important, for post-16 students, that the teachers understand developments in higher education and vocational routes in art and design. Students need informed careers advice.

4 Writing the report

The following are two examples of subject sections from inspection reports, the first for a school sixth form and the second covering a broad range of art and media courses in an FE college. (They do not necessarily reflect the judgements in any or all of the examples given elsewhere in this booklet.) The summative judgements in these reports use, for schools, the seven-point scale: *excellent*; *very good*; *good*; *satisfactory*; *unsatisfactory*; *poor*; *very poor*. For colleges, there is the five-point scale: *outstanding*; *good*; *satisfactory*; *unsatisfactory*; *very weak*. The summative judgements *excellent/very good* used in school reports correspond to *outstanding* in colleges; *poor/very poor* used in schools correspond to *very weak* in colleges.

Art

Overall, the quality of provision in art is **poor**.

Strengths

- Year 12 students manage to sustain their interest and skills through most of the AS-level course.

Areas for improvement

- The overall standard is well below average and students' achievement is low.
- Teaching is poor: it lacks sufficient stimulus, variety and awareness of individual needs.
- Marking and assessment lack rigour.
- Students do not have sufficient opportunities for drawing and painting on a large scale.
- The quality of departmental leadership and management is weak.

The overall standard of work in art and design is well below average and has not improved on the low standard reported in the last inspection. In recent years, GCE A-level results have consistently been below national averages. This is so for the proportion of students who achieve at least a pass grade (A-E) and, particularly, for those who achieve the higher grades A or B. This represents unsatisfactory achievement, since the students' results in GCSE, before they started the course, have been average and in some cases above average. This year's A-level results showed a further significant dip, confirming a downward trend. There are no significant differences in attainment between students of different gender or ethnic heritage.

The work of current students is well below average standard. Students' achievement is poor. Few students show sufficient gains in comparison with their previous attainment. Initially in Year 12, students sustain much of their interest and skill from their GCSE work, but much of the work in Year 13 is conceptually unadventurous and shows a poor understanding of what is needed in purposeful preparatory studies. It demonstrates a lack of technical knowledge and skill in drawing and painting, and is applied only rarely on a large scale. There is little experimentation with paint to build tonal effects. Work in sketch books shows limited understanding of the compositional principles and techniques needed to create perspective. Students' preliminary sketches show a good understanding of design principles and they know how to create evocative images. However, the work in this area is not developed into finished designs. The work of students on the new AS course is, in some respects, similar, though drawing skills are rather better developed.

Teaching is poor overall and reflects the weak picture found in the last inspection. Expectations are too low and teaching methods are often inappropriate. Teachers do not show good knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses and they fail to plan activities geared to their individual needs, thus restricting learning. Marking and assessment are sporadic and lack rigour. Some good-quality visual resources are used in the teaching of critical studies, but the teachers have made no effort to use the cultural diversity in the school to enrich the work. On the few occasions where there is one-to-one tuition this can be very effective. The four art teachers have satisfactory knowledge and technical skill for working on A-level courses but have not been prepared adequately to teach the new courses. Visits to galleries, one locally and one in London, have extended students' knowledge of art and design, including aspects of contemporary practice, but staff have missed opportunities to build on these experiences. Departmental links with a local art and design foundation course and an initial teacher training course have foundered this year. As a result students have been deprived of useful perspectives on vocational routes.

Despite the weaknesses in the teaching, at times students respond positively. In Year 12 they use their time well and show an independence of mind, maturity and self-sufficiency. Students are generally clear on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. However, by Year 13 many have lost motivation as a result of the lacklustre teaching. For example, in one Year 13 session the teacher alienated students. He detailed how poorly each was measuring up to the requirements of the A-level special study and proceeded to set unreasonably challenging targets which provided little relevance to course requirements.

The department is poorly managed. There are no departmental meetings and there is little discussion between staff. A development plan relating to the introduction of the new courses lacks clarity and precision and is unhelpful to teachers and students. Weaknesses identified in the last inspection remain. There continues to be a need for an increased emphasis on the qualities of effective teaching in the subject, higher expectations and monitoring of teaching by the head of department.

Art, design and media

Overall, the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths

- There is a good range of courses.
- Recent results in GNVQ and AVCE art and design courses and in GCE A-level courses have been above national averages.
- On most courses students achieve good standards of work in relation to their prior attainment.
- The quality of teaching is good overall; it is well planned, with good integration of theory and practical work.

Areas for improvement

- Retention rates on several A-level and National Diploma courses are below average.
- Learning is sometimes disrupted by the poor punctuality of a small number of students.
- Some graphic design students' skills are insufficiently developed.

Scope of provision

The college offers a good range of art and design and media courses. These include full-time courses leading to GNVQs at Foundation and Intermediate level, a First Diploma, a number of specialist diplomas, AVCEs and a pre-degree foundation course. There are GCE AS/A-level courses in film studies, fine art, graphic design, media, photography and textiles. The college has increased its range of courses since the last inspection. These changes offer better opportunities for students to make progress and enable them to study at the level most appropriate to their needs and abilities. Art and design students can progress from level 1 to level 3 within the college.

Standards and achievement

Overall, standards are good. They have generally improved since the last inspection. Results on the GCE A-level courses have been consistently above national averages, both for proportions achieving at least a pass grade and in terms of those gaining higher grades (A or B). Results on GNVQ and AVCE courses have been well above average. By contrast, results on pre-degree art and design foundation courses have been below average for the last three years. On GNVQ art and design courses at Foundation and Intermediate levels, retention rates are consistently above national averages. However, on several GCE A-level and National Diploma courses, retention rates are below the national average and are erratic from year to year. Nonetheless, some students gain entry to highly competitive degree programmes each year.

On most courses, the quality of work in students' portfolios confirms these good standards. Students develop appropriate vocational and technical skills and can talk about their work with knowledge and enthusiasm. They display ability and understanding of ICT in their assignment work. Some students show exceptional flair and

resourcefulness. Portfolios of art and design work show that students have carried out thoughtful investigation and creative exploration of ideas. In particular, some Caribbean students have drawn particularly well on their cultural background and have positively contributed to other students' cultural awareness. The quality of students' work in textiles, photography and fine art is excellent. For example, a group of higher attaining students used traditional Qahqa'i methods and materials to make their stunning floor rugs. However, some graphic design students' skills in drawing, design development and process are insufficiently well developed.

Students on media courses produce good-quality work in a range of media, including still photography, sound recording and moving image. Typical of one course was an original documentary film about family pressures on holiday. Many students do good work in research and analysis – for example, on the political and ideological stance of newspapers.

Achievement on courses overall is good, when account is taken of the broad range of attainment indicated by the students' entry qualifications. Progress is well promoted by the demands of the work and the guidance offered.

Quality of education

The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Some of the teaching is excellent. In these lessons and the best of the others, students are set work of considerable challenge, to which they respond with enthusiasm. Teachers integrate theory and practical work effectively. Teachers are particularly successful at drawing on the cultural diversity within the college to stimulate creative ideas. Project briefs are well designed: they include clear aims and objectives, staged tasks, well-defined assessment criteria and deadlines for completion. Consequently, students understand well what is required of them and work at a good pace, making good progress. The use of a wide range of resources maintains students' interest and helps them to learn. Teachers prepare students well for group work and encourage independent learning where appropriate. They are very effective in developing students' capacity for making and taking constructive criticism. This was evident in the way the most capable students discussed and then worked with determination when trying to achieve the right tonal effect in their landscapes. Students work well on their own and in small groups and learn well from each other. Teachers give appropriate attention to presentation skills. A few teachers fail to engage students sufficiently in their work. This is sometimes due to the teaching approach and a poor choice of activities. Poor punctuality by a small number of students disrupted learning on a few occasions during the inspection.

Teachers monitor students' work thoroughly. Assignments and assessments are cross-marked and the arrangements for the co-ordination and checking of assessment processes are good. Course teams maintain detailed records. Students receive regular support and feedback on their progress and are aware how well they are doing. Assessment procedures involve a variety of methods which build progressively on students' knowledge and give them the confidence to undertake more demanding tasks. Many students speak highly of the support provided by teachers.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is good. Courses are well managed. Communications between teachers are effective. Students benefit from enthusiastic and highly committed course leaders and teachers who work well together. Course teams meet regularly. Managers set targets for retention and pass rates and regularly monitor progress against these targets. However, target-setting for individual students is at an early stage of development. Managers and teachers are dealing effectively with the issues identified through the quality assurance and self-assessment processes. Teachers are implementing successful strategies to improve the attendance and punctuality of some students. The issues raised from surveys of students' views have been resolved effectively.

