

GCSE Art and Design: Conditions and Guidance



In December 2014 we published a consultation about the rules and guidance we proposed to put in place for reformed GCSEs (graded 9 to 1) in art and design.

This consultation set out draft Subject Level Conditions and guidance which would apply to all reformed GCSEs in art and design.

We have reviewed the responses to the consultation and are now announcing our decisions. We are also publishing a more detailed analysis of the responses alongside this document.¹

Conditions and requirements for GCSE art and design

Content requirements

We proposed that all reformed GCSEs in art and design should comply with the subject content requirements published by the Department for Education,² and with our assessment objectives.

Respondents supported this approach, noting that it was consistent with our requirements for other reformed GCSEs. No respondents raised any significant concerns with our proposed requirements.

Assessment requirements

We have previously confirmed that reformed GCSEs in art and design will be assessed solely using non-exam assessment.

In line with current GCSEs (and reformed AS and A levels), we proposed the following:

¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-reform-regulations-for-art-and-design

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-art-and-design

- Sixty per cent of the total marks should be awarded for a portfolio of work produced independently by the student.
- Forty per cent of the total marks should be awarded for an external assessment set by the awarding organisation.
- The external assessment task would be released at the beginning of January in the expected year of certification. Students would need to produce one or more artefact(s) in response to a set brief. They would be allowed to carrying out preparatory work before producing their artefact(s) during a period of 10 hours under controlled conditions.

Most respondents supported these proposals, noting that the current arrangements work well and have stood the test of time. One respondent noted that an opportunity had been missed to include a written assessment testing knowledge of art history and students' ability to comprehend and comment on artistic works.

In line with the majority of respondents, our view remains that our proposed approach to assessment supports our assessment objectives, and is the most appropriate way to assess the subject content. We have therefore decided to confirm our proposals.

Marking of students' work

We also proposed to allow awarding organisations flexibility either to mark students' work themselves, or to moderate marks awarded by teachers.

A number of respondents raised concerns about the practicality and validity of external marking in art and design.

While we share a number of these concerns, we do not think that they are necessarily insurmountable, and would not want to prevent awarding organisations developing innovative approaches to marking that could reduce burden on schools.

We have therefore decided to confirm our consultation proposals. We will allow awarding organisations to mark students' work directly, or to moderate marks awarded by teachers. Whichever approach they take, they will need to explain and justify it in their assessment strategies.

Guidance for GCSE art and design

Guidance on assessment objectives

We proposed to introduce guidance clarifying the interpretation of our assessment objectives.

Most respondents supported our proposed guidance, although some suggested opportunities to improve the wording.

In response to these comments, we have made changes to the drafting where necessary to clarify our expectations.

Next steps

Alongside this document, we have published final Subject Level Conditions³ and Subject Level Guidance⁴ for GCSE art and design.

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-art-and-design

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-guidance-for-art-and-design