



LEVEL 3 EXTENDED PROJECT

7993

Report on the Examination

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November 2022

Version: 1.0

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November 2022 has seen a slightly larger entry than previous November series and some incredibly high standard submissions. A clear majority of centres were found to have marked projects in line with the AQA standard and many examples of exemplary centre practice have been reported by moderators; excellent, well detailed assessment/internal moderation commentary was seen and excellent presentation records were found in many cases. This report will share some of the good practice seen but will also refer to instances of less excellent centre practice.

A marked improvement in centre practice during the proposal/approval stages was found. Many centre coordinators gave wise advice at this stage. (Unfortunately, this was not always followed.)

A number of projects were seen where a substantial change to the project had occurred after approval and this invariably resulted in lower marks for both AO1 and AO3, students did not provide the detail and clarity for the new (unapproved) project. In such circumstances, students should restart completely, starting with a new record of initial ideas and submitting their new working title for coordinator approval.

A significant minority of projects were seen where coordinator comments were (too) perfunctory – failing to challenge unsuitable titles.

It was found that in some centres very careful scrutiny of project proposals by coordinators was followed by supervision that lacked challenge. In some cases, students were left to their own devices and pursued inappropriate aims, developing few skills. Almost invariably such situations were then followed by over-generous marking.

The issue of the use of 'to what extent' within titles continued to cause problems, especially for less academically mature students for whom the 'extent' was not really a consideration – neither its necessity nor in terms of measurement/judgment.

Generally, however, the quality of supervision was impressive, with challenge and encouragement that did not become direction. Fewer instances of dual accreditation were reported, and fewer instances of improper assistance.

Many truly outstanding artefact submissions were seen, but also there were a substantial number of artefact submissions that were largely driven by student ideas and creativity with research tagged on as an afterthought. It must be stressed that this qualification has research at its core, but this is appearing to be not yet fully understood. All projects, whatever the intended product, should be driven by research. The reports within some artefact submissions did not fully underpin the artefact and sometimes the purpose of the artefact was not clear. Sometimes students failed to adequately research or document the process of making the artefact. From some students there was some recognition of the need for some form of testing and/or third-party evaluation of the artefact but this was not understood by all students.

Another common issue seen by moderators was students setting out the content of their 5000-word report at a very early stage and undertaking research that would support their own ideas. For these students, moderators saw titles fixed at the 'record of initial ideas' stage and unchanged thereafter resulting in conclusions based largely on student opinion.

Despite many examiner reports written that highlight the issue of inappropriate primary research, moderators continued to find centres where students were told that they must include some primary research, others where little or no consideration was given to the ethics of primary

research and many where the primary research undertaken added very little value to the project. Collection of primary data continues generally to be poor; questionnaires have irrelevant questions, there is lack of information on sampling, presentation of data lacks clarity etc. Students should consider very carefully whether the time and energy expended on primary research might be better spent on in-depth secondary research. Having said this, however, it must be stressed that some students demonstrated tenacious and determined research, seeking out experts in their field of enquiry, resulting in some superbly transcribed interview data. When referenced and triangulated with wider secondary data this primary research proved to be of very high value.

The 'taught skill' most frequently absent was the detailed scrutiny of resources. In some submissions, students were interested largely in utility rather than currency, reliability etc. In some centres, students were asked to evaluate their resources as a final task prior to submission. Resources require scrutiny before they are used for the evaluation to be of any purpose. Some good practice was seen in the encouragement of students to engage critically with sources at the proposal stage but the importance of this as an on-going process was not always carried throughout the development of the project.

Administration was of variable quality. The submission checklist in the Production Log was often filled in inaccurately, e.g. the final title listed does not match the actual final title.

Generally, the understanding that the preferred mode of submission involves the use of simple treasury tags was well demonstrated but there were some students choosing to submit loose pages in plastic polypockets and others who submitted far too much unnecessary material, resulting in huge unwieldy submissions.

Some students had given insufficient thought to legibility. There was an increasing practice of producing printouts of projects in A6 size (on A4 paper), presumably to facilitate the use of on-screen annotation. The uncomfortably small font that results is almost impossible to read. Many PowerPoint printouts/embedded charts were completely unreadable because the font size was too small.

Some students submitted artefact evidence on DVDs (as opposed to memory sticks) and this caused moderation problems as most modern computers have no facility to play them.

The vast majority of the marking from centres has been accurate or within tolerance. Where moderators have come across a few projects marked leniently so that marks fell outside of moderation tolerance it has been the exception in that centre rather than the rule. Only a small number of centres consistently marked with unsupported leniency. But some centres, for example, seemed to think that planning meant meeting deadlines and that students submitting in the face of adversity should be praised and rewarded with high marks in AO1, regardless of the actual evidence submitted. In other cases, credit was awarded without evidence to support it; for example, where students referred to planning tools (e.g. Gantt charts) throughout the Production Log, but failed to provide them as evidence.

Presentation evidence was variable. There are still a few centres entering projects with absolutely no Q&A evidence other than a generic comment such as 'he dealt with all questions very well' which is not at all helpful to students or moderators who are doing their best to find evidence for specific AOs. At the other extreme there were some centres awarding too much credit for presentation evidence that the student had chosen not to submit. If a student chooses not to

include, for example, a printout of their PowerPoint slides or presentation notes then this evidence cannot contribute to assessment.

Where lenient marking was found to be an issue it was sometimes the product of ineffective internal moderation. Too many internal moderators raised marks for no justifiable reason. Moreover, it was sometimes really difficult to work out the final mark awarded by a centre if it was not recorded in the Record of Marks – sometimes the Internal Moderation evidence was ‘hidden’ without signposting, in the appendices.

There were some instances of projects being created on social media platforms without due to consideration of the JCQ Regulations. Also, many instances of proof reading by friends and/or family were seen without this being declared on the Candidate Record Form nor taken account of in the centre’s assessment- again a lack of appreciation/understanding of the JCQ Regulations was seen. Centres are reminded that assessment must be for a student’s ‘unaided achievement’.

Some truly outstanding A* submissions were submitted, with skill development evidenced at very high levels. It is a privilege to read such submissions and moderators stand in awe when seeing what students have produced. It is equally humbling to read submissions from less able students who have clearly developed valuable skills throughout their project journey. The hard work clearly evidenced in the majority of submissions, put in by the centre coordinators and supervisors, is providing great benefit to students of all abilities.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.