

# Learner Guide

## Cambridge O Level Art & Design 6090

For examination from 2023



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## Introduction

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This guide explains what you need to know about your Cambridge O Level Art & Design course and examinations.

It will help you to understand:

- what skills you should develop by taking this course
- how you will be assessed
- what we are looking for in the work you create
- how you should prepare for both components of the course
- how you can check and evaluate what you have achieved.

Cambridge O Level Art & Design provides opportunities for you to engage in a personal and independent study. This should allow you to develop a wide range of skills, and a critical understanding of art. The syllabus will encourage you to explore, through practical work as well as experience, new media and technologies alongside traditional media and processes.

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## 1. Syllabus content – what you need to know

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This section gives you an outline of the syllabus content for this course.

The broad areas of study are:

- painting and related media
- graphic communication
- three-dimensional design
- textiles and fashion
- photography

You can work in any of the areas of study for both Component 1 and Component 2. You can choose the same area for both components or you can choose a different area for each component.

Component 3 Externally set Assignment: Design is an optional component, available in the November examination series only.

All candidates must complete Component 2 but can choose between Component 1 or Component 3.

Candidates may, but do not have to, explore the same area of study for Component 2.

## 2. How you will be assessed

You will be assessed using two components:

- **Component 1** – Coursework
- **Component 2** – Externally Set Assignment: Art
- **Component 3** – Externally Set Assignment: Design

### Components at a glance

The table below gives you an overview of each examination paper/component:

Component	Time and marks	Skills assessed	Details
Coursework	130 guided learning hours 100 marks	AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4	<p>Portfolio and final outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio is 4 × A2 sheets</li> <li>• Final outcome is up to A2 size.</li> </ul> <p>Choose one area of study and produce a project with a theme set by your teacher. This is marked by Cambridge. It is worth 50% of the final qualification.</p>
Externally Set Assignment: Art	8-hour test 100 marks	AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4	<p>Supporting studies and final outcome during an 8 hour examination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting studies is 2 × A2 sheets</li> <li>• Final outcome is up to A2 size.</li> </ul> <p>Choose one question from the exam paper and produce a project in response to it. This is marked by Cambridge. It is worth 50% of the final qualification.</p>
Externally Set Assignment: Design	8-hour test 100 marks	AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4	<p>Supporting studies and final outcome during an 8 hour examination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting studies is 2 × A2 sheets</li> <li>• Final outcome is up to A2 size.</li> </ul> <p>Choose one question from the exam paper and produce a project in response to it. This is marked by Cambridge. It is worth 50% of the final qualification.</p>

## About each component

### Component 1 Coursework

There is no question paper for this component. Coursework is set by your teacher and is marked by Cambridge.

There are **two** parts to Component 1:

- a portfolio **and**
- a final outcome

You can choose to work in any of the areas of study (outlined in Section 2: Syllabus content). You should explore a theme by producing a portfolio of work that leads to a resolved final outcome. You may decide to explore the same area of study for the Externally Set Assignment, but you do not have to.

First-hand studies from primary sources should be included where possible. Examples of where you could collect these could be visits to local galleries, tourist attractions or areas of interest. You could also make contact with visiting speakers, local artists, designers or craftspeople.

#### Portfolio

During your course you will have been experimenting with different materials and processes, developing your skills and ideas and learning how to evaluate and improve your work. You will be confident in how to produce a project that covers the areas you will be assessed in.

When the time comes to produce a portfolio for Component 1 you will be well practised in this way of working and will explore a theme set by your teacher to produce a project. Guided by your teacher, you will then select a small sample of this work to be used for your portfolio.

The portfolio will contain a sample of work that has been selected because it shows the research, exploration, development and evaluation relevant to the final outcome. It will consist of up to **four** sheets of A2 (both sides). Work may be created in any size appropriate to the media but if it is fragile, three-dimensional or larger than A2, it must be photographed, mounted and clearly labelled. This also applies to work for the final outcome.

The Portfolio should show that you have carried out the following.

- Recorded ideas and observations from first-hand studies, such as your own drawings and photography as well as secondary imagery and sources.
- Explored and developed ideas and experimented with different media, techniques and processes.
- Developed ideas by making reference to what has influenced you and acknowledging contextual sources where appropriate, e.g. artists, key art movements, historical events or local or national art, craft and design.
- Presented your selected, reviewed and refined ideas to show how your work progressed to inform your final outcome.

You can support your practical work with annotation or written analysis but you do not have to.



#### Final outcome

The final outcome is a resolved, individual piece of work that has been created based on your research and development. It can be up to A2 in size and will be submitted with your portfolio.

Cambridge will assess the **portfolio** and **final outcome** together against the assessment criteria and award a single mark out of 100 for Component 1.

## Component 2 Externally Set Assignment

You will be given a question paper for Component 2 when your teacher receives it from Cambridge. Cambridge will mark this component.

There are two parts:

- supporting studies created during the preparation period **and**
- a final outcome, produced during a supervised test of 8 hours' total duration.

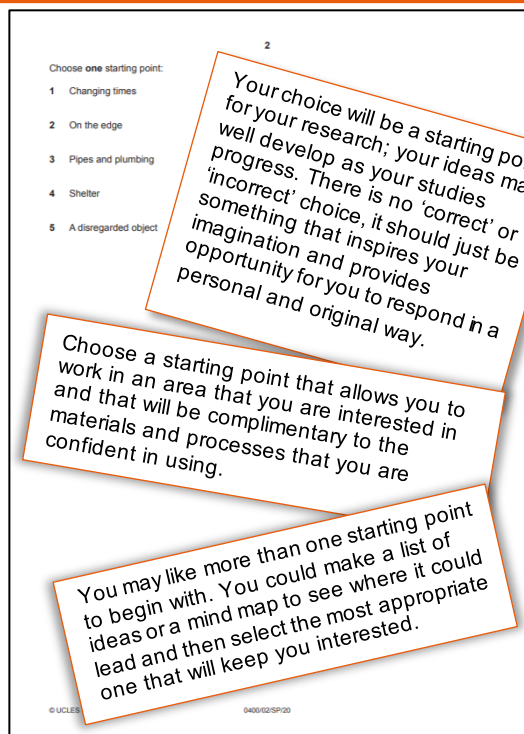
### Supporting studies

Supporting studies are made in response to one of the starting points set by Cambridge on the test paper that you will be given. You will be allocated a period of time by your teacher in which to complete your supporting studies before the controlled 8 hour test. Make sure you plan your time so that you are well prepared.

You can work in any of the areas of study (outlined in Section 2: Syllabus Content), you can use the same area of study as for Component 1 but you do not have to.

The purpose of the supporting studies is to explore and develop ideas, skills and processes to prepare for and inform your final outcome that will be produced during the supervised test.

Supporting studies can be up to **two** sheets of A2 (both sides). Any work that is fragile, three-dimensional or larger than A2 should be photographed, mounted and labelled onto the sheets.



### Final outcome

Your **supporting studies** will be taken with you into the test to help inform the final outcome. They will be the experiments and ideas that you have selected that best help to convey the journey you have made in order to arrive at the final outcome. They will show how you have arrived at the final outcome through an artistic process that has fully encompassed all of the Assessment Objectives. The test will be of 8 hours' duration and may be split over a number of sessions. Make note of when and how long these sessions are and plan how you will use each session to obtain the optimum use of time.

Cambridge will assess the **supporting studies** and **final outcome** together against the assessment criteria and award a single mark out of 100 for Component 2.



## Component 3 Externally Set Assignment: Design

You will be given a question paper for Component 3 when your teacher receives it from Cambridge. Cambridge will mark this component.

There are two parts:

- supporting studies created during the preparation period **and**
- a final outcome, produced during a supervised test of 8 hours' total duration.

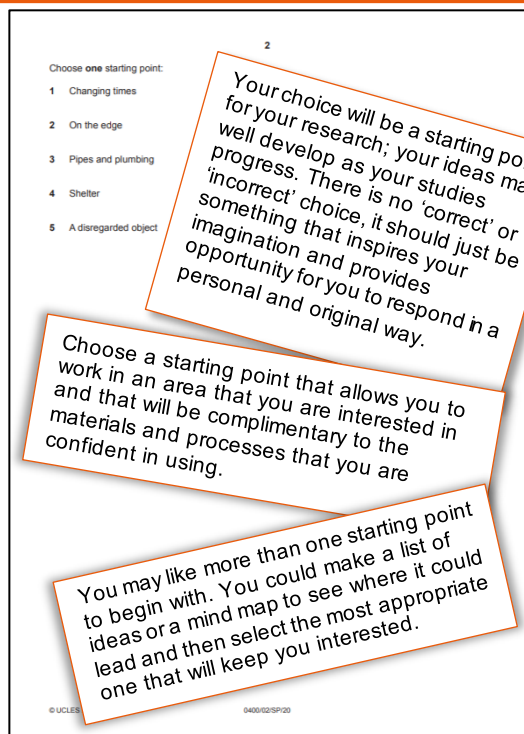
### Supporting studies

Supporting studies are made in response to one of the starting points set by Cambridge on the test paper that you will be given. You will be allocated a period of time by your teacher in which to complete your supporting studies before the controlled 8 hour test. Make sure you plan your time so that you are well prepared.

You can work in any of the areas of study (outlined in Section 2: Syllabus Content), you can use the same area of study as for Component 1 but you do not have to.

The purpose of the supporting studies is to explore and develop ideas, skills and processes to prepare for and inform your final outcome that will be produced during the supervised test.

Supporting studies can be up to **two** sheets of A2 (both sides). Any work that is fragile, three-dimensional or larger than A2 should be photographed, mounted and labelled onto the sheets.



### Final outcome

Your **supporting studies** will be taken with you into the test to help inform the final outcome. They will be the experiments and ideas that you have selected that best help to convey the journey you have made in order to arrive at the final outcome. They will show how you have arrived at the final outcome through an artistic process that has fully encompassed all of the Assessment Objectives. The test will be of 8 hours' duration and may be split over a number of sessions. Make note of when and how long these sessions are and plan how you will use each session to obtain the optimum use of time.

Cambridge will assess the **supporting studies** and **final outcome** together against the assessment criteria and award a single mark out of 100 for Component 2.

### 3. What skills will be assessed

The areas of knowledge, understanding and skills that you will be assessed on are called **assessment objectives (AO)**.

The assessment objectives that the examiners will be assessing your work against are:

- Record (AO1)
- Explore (AO2)
- Develop (AO3)
- Present (AO4)

Each AO is worth 25% of the total mark for **both** components.

Assessment objective	What you need to be able to do	Weighting %
<b>AO1 Record</b> Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses	Show evidence of your research and ideas. You may choose to use photographs, sketches, written notes or other appropriate ways of recording. You should include examples of primary and secondary sourced research.	25
<b>AO2 Explore</b> Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes	Experiment with various media and processes. Develop your skills to gain the confidence to select the most appropriate media or technique to convey your intentions.	25
<b>AO3 Develop</b> Develop ideas through investigation, demonstrating critical understanding	Show how your ideas evolve and what your intentions are. Evaluate your progress and make decisions about what is working well. Indicate what has influenced your work (possibly artists, places of interest, etc.).	25
<b>AO4 Present</b> Present a personal and coherent response that realises intentions and demonstrates an understanding of visual language	Ensure your work is an original and independent study that demonstrates a logical journey through your ideas and experimentations, culminating in a relevant final outcome.	25

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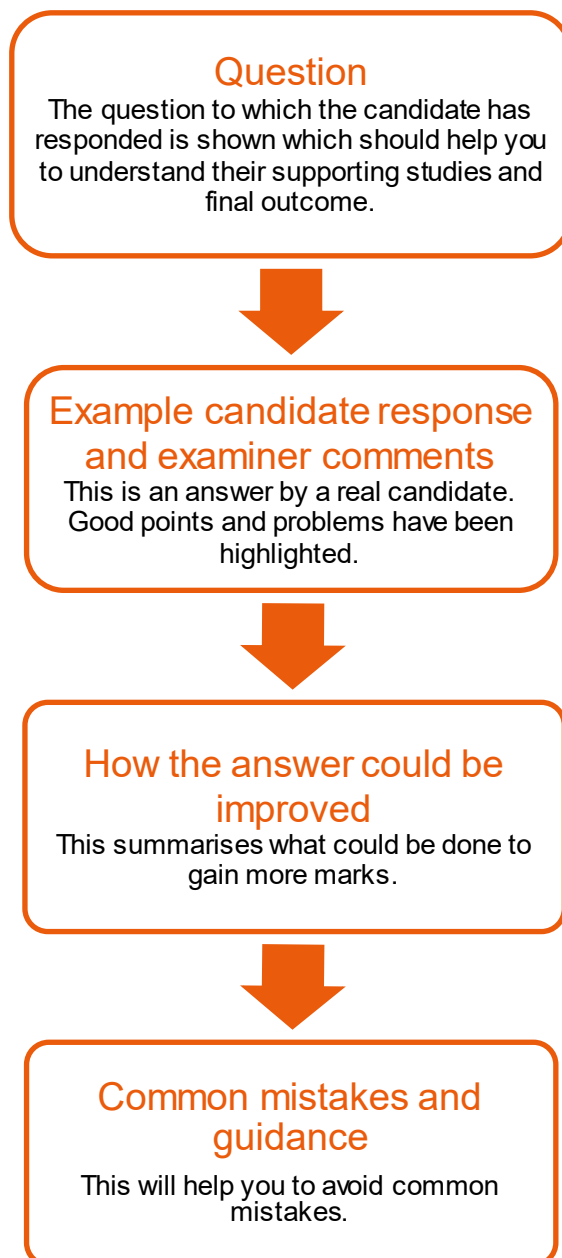
## 4. Example candidate response

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This section takes you through an example question and learner response from a past paper. It will help you to understand what is required in your response.


**All information and advice in this section is specific to the example question and response being demonstrated. It should give you an idea of how your responses might be viewed by an examiner, but it is not a list of what to do in all questions. In your own examination, you will need to pay careful attention to what each question is asking you to do.**

This section is separated as follows.



## Example candidate response and examiner comments

The question used in this example is from Component 2. The candidate selected the starting point: **4. Lost**

Component 2	Examiner comments
	<p><b>Final outcome</b></p> <p>The examination piece is a repeat of an image created in the preparatory work with additional text.</p> <p>Although this final outcome does fulfil intentions and also provides a culmination of the preparatory studies, it lacks the impact and energy of the earlier study. The repetition fails to progress the development of ideas any further forward.</p> <p>Mark for Record = 21 out of 25 Mark for Explore = 20 out of 25 Mark for Develop = 19 out of 25 Mark for Present = 19 out of 25 <b>Total mark = 79 out of 100</b></p>

## Component 2



### Examiner comments

## Preparatory studies (1)

This initial page of preparatory studies shows how the candidate considered alternative ideas in response to the question, 'Lost'.

This was achieved both in explorative, written form and by setting up and taking thoughtful photographs to support their ideas.

The photographs are purposeful, linking to the topic and are technically adept. They show different viewpoints and settings to express emotion.

Sketches created with pencil and charcoal and a painted study are copied from original photographs and demonstrate excellent exploration of materials. Colour mixing is sensitive and mark making has been adapted to each choice of medium with confidence.

The candidate could have expanded their recording of insights by including life studies from direct observation.



## Component 2



## Examiner comments

**Preparatory studies (2)**

This page demonstrates how ideas are developed through the investigation and critical understanding of chosen artist's work.

Two different, yet equally relevant artist's works have been analysed. This is communicated through annotation and in a visual form. Copies of the artworks have been included but a greater emphasis has been given to the candidate creating their own versions of the works, using their own original imagery as a basis for the pieces.

The candidate identified a connection to the subject of, 'Lost' and the emotions that the artist's images evoke. They also recognised that media and technique can help to communicate intentions and explored layering with collage and washes of paint, playing with translucency in an effective way.

## Component 2



### Examiner comments

### Preparatory studies (3)

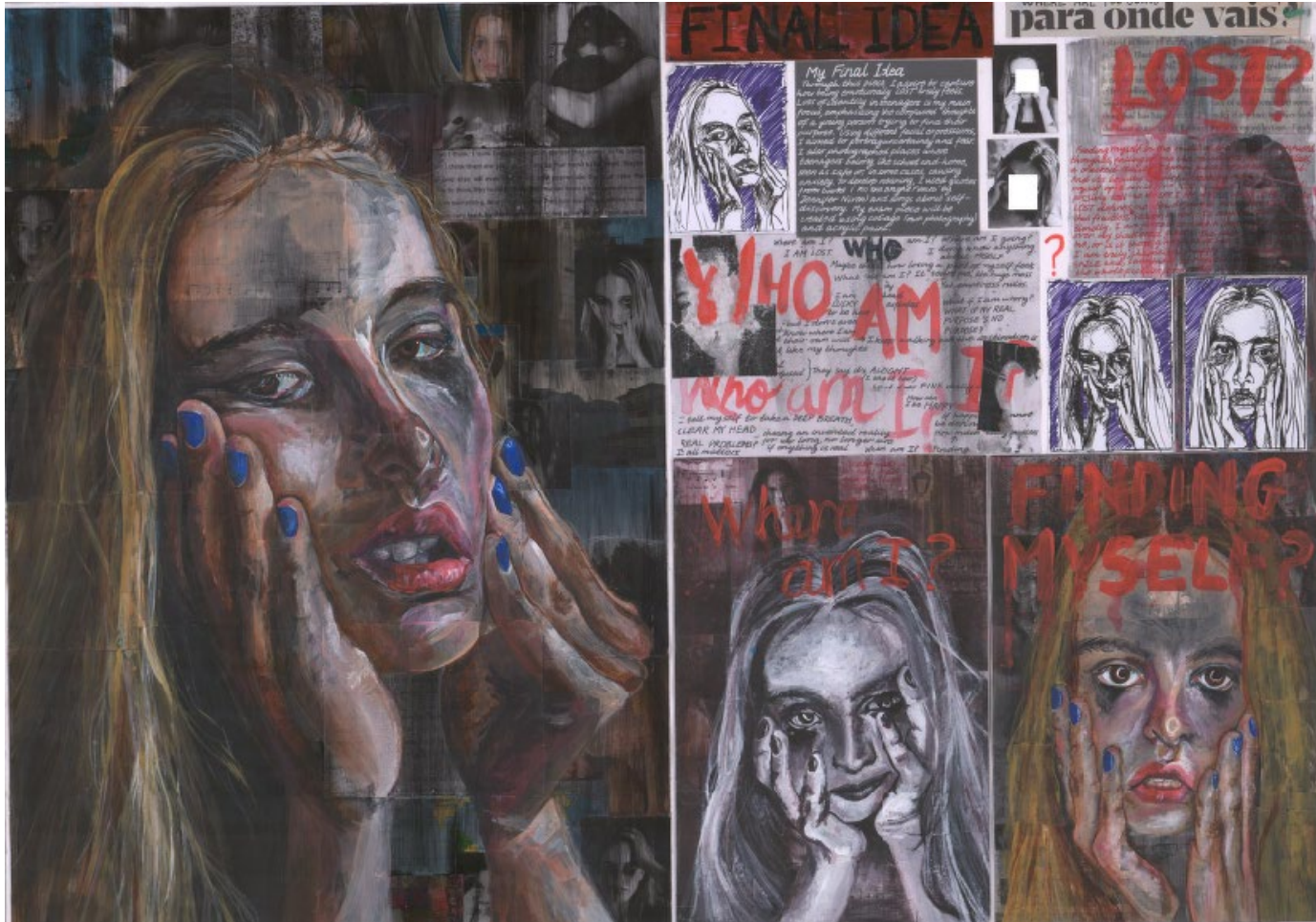
Further development of ideas including the inclusion of text within the artworks are evident on this page.

The candidate annotates their thought process alongside the visual experimentations to show consistent, critical understanding.

A broader variety of font styles and their relationship with specific imagery would have enhanced the work further.



## Component 2



## Examiner comments

**Preparatory studies (4)**

At this planning stage of the project, before the examination, the candidate attempts to find the optimum way to realise their intentions. Some variations of compositions are trialled, and media is again explored with maturity.

The largest painting shows effective mastery of the visual elements and the strength of the image is recognised by the candidate who chose to repeat it for the final outcome.





## How the answer could be improved

The candidate fulfilled each of the assessment objectives to a high level. Strengths were particularly noted in AO, Record and AO2, Explore. The candidate had recorded ideas from a variety of original sources and explored a wide range of media to communicate ideas with.

The candidate could have improved by including more direct observation. By sketching from photographs, the candidate missed the opportunity to refine technical skills through the practise of life drawing. The understanding of form and depth could have been developed further in this way.

Although the candidate consistently demonstrated critical understanding through their investigation of artworks, their own development of ideas was repetitive.

To improve, more variations of composition, portraits and the different ways text could be included, could have ensured the progression of ideas to be more personal and engaging.

Instead of repeating an image for the final outcome, the candidate could have produced a new version that matched the energy and skill evident in the preparatory studies.

The exam piece did not showcase the best of the candidate's technical ability and was not the strongest outcome.

With self-evaluation, the candidate could have recognised this and produced a stronger image, allowing for the prescribed amount of time available in the exam.

## Common mistakes and guidance

Below are some common mistakes that candidates make across all components:

- A lack of planning for the final composition often results in unresolved outcomes. Simple thumbnail sketches created during the supporting studies allow candidates to plan the composition in advance.
- Producing a final outcome in the exam that uses media that has not been explored first in the supporting studies.
- Creating a final outcome that is of a scale that has not been previously practised.
- Only using descriptive language to analyse their own and others work limits the candidate's ability to reflect on their work and make informed decisions.
- Artist references selected due to a connection with topic or a favoured style rather than for more in-depth comparisons.
- Artist's works copied rather than used to inspire or inform candidate's own responses.
- Secondary sources relied upon rather than gathering a range of first-hand and second-hand sources.
- Copying from photographs, even the candidate's own is less productive than drawing from observation.
- Work included in each project should be carefully edited and arranged in order to present the most coherent journey.
- Self-evaluation helps to identify strengths and weaknesses, guiding the best way to progress.
- Choose a topic that can sustain your interest, it should be enjoyable!
- Make sure the subject you have chosen provides you with easy access to first-hand sources.
- Utilise your environment and opportunities to make it personal.

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## 5. Preparation

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The checklists below will help you prepare for both components.

Use the tick boxes ☐ to keep a record of what you have done, what you plan to do or what you understand.

### Check list for Component 1 Coursework – Portfolio

- ☐ I have a starting point, design brief or theme.
- ☐ I have recorded my research from primary and secondary sources.
- ☐ I have experimented with different materials and processes and organised my ideas and intentions.
- ☐ I have developed my work by making connections and trying alternatives ideas.
- ☐ I have evaluated what has been successful in my work and have finalised my design or composition.
- ☐ I have produced up to four sheets of A2.

### Checklist for Component 1 Coursework – Final outcome

- ☐ I have decided on the size of my work.
- ☐ I have experimented with different materials and processes and have selected which to use.
- ☐ I am confident that my final outcome relates to my portfolio work.
- ☐ I have completed my final outcome.

### Checklist for Component 2 Externally Set Assignment – Supporting Studies

- ☐ I have found out the dates and times of the test and planned the time remaining to produce my supporting sheets.
- ☐ I have chosen a question to focus my work on (I might have explored multiple questions before making my final selection).
- ☐ I have recorded my research from primary and secondary sources.
- ☐ I have experimented with different materials and processes and organised my ideas and intentions.
- ☐ I have developed my work by making connections and trying alternatives ideas.
- ☐ I have evaluated what has been successful in my work and have finalised my design or composition.
- ☐ I have produced up to two sheets of A2.

### Checklist for Component 2 Externally Set Assignment – Final Outcome

- ☐ I have planned how I will use the 8 hours allocated for the supervised test.
- ☐ I have gathered and prepared the materials that I will need during the supervised test.
- ☐ I have decided on the size of the final outcome (informed by previous trials in supporting studies).
- ☐ I am confident that my planned final outcome relates to and is informed by my supporting studies.

As you near the set assignment period, ask your teacher for advice if you have not been able to tick any of the boxes. You will need to concentrate on these areas.

### Checklist for Component 2 by Assessment criteria

- record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses
  - ☐ I have done this by recording ideas from first-hand studies such as my own drawings and photographs, as well as from secondary imagery.
  - ☐ I understand the importance of continually evaluating my work.
- explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes
  - ☐ I have done this by exploring methods to develop themes and ideas throughout the preparatory period.
  - ☐ I have done this by trying to find more appropriate ways to communicate my ideas.
- develop ideas through investigation, demonstrating critical understanding
  - ☐ I understand the importance of the context.
  - ☐ I have developed my ability to clearly show the differences between my ideas and the ideas of others.

- ☐ I have carried out in-depth research into artists, designers and cultural influences to help develop my ideas where appropriate.
- **present a personal and coherent response that realises intentions and demonstrates an understanding of visual language.**
- ☐ I have planned and produced a personal outcome which expresses what I want to communicate
- ☐ I understand the principles and conventions of visual language.

### Checklist for Component 3 Externally Set Assignment: Design – Supporting Studies

- ☐ I have found out the dates and times of the test and planned the time remaining to produce my supporting sheets.
- ☐ I have chosen a question to focus my work on (I might have explored multiple questions before making my final selection).
- ☐ I have recorded my research from primary and secondary sources.
- ☐ I have experimented with different materials and processes and organised my ideas and intentions.
- ☐ I have developed my work by making connections and trying alternatives ideas.
- ☐ I have evaluated what has been successful in my work and have finalised my design or composition.
- ☐ I have produced up to two sheets of A2.

### Checklist for Component 3 Externally Set Assignment: Design – Final Outcome

- ☐ I have planned how I will use the 8 hours allocated for the supervised test.
- ☐ I have gathered and prepared the materials that I will need during the supervised test.
- ☐ I have decided on the size of the final outcome (informed by previous trials in supporting studies).
- ☐ I am confident that my planned final outcome relates to and is informed by my supporting studies.

As you near the set assignment period, ask your teacher for advice if you have not been able to tick any of the boxes. You will need to concentrate on these areas.

### Checklist for Component 3: Design by Assessment criteria

#### **Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses**

- ☐ I have done this by recording ideas from first-hand studies such as my own drawings and photographs, as well as from secondary imagery.
- ☐ I understand the importance of continually evaluating my work.

**Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes**

- ☐ I have done this by exploring methods to develop themes and ideas throughout the preparatory period.
- ☐ I have done this by trying to find more appropriate ways to communicate my ideas.

**Develop ideas through investigation, demonstrating critical understanding**

- ☐ I understand the importance of the context.
- ☐ I have developed my ability to clearly show the differences between my ideas and the ideas of others.
- ☐ I have carried out in-depth research into artists, designers and cultural influences to help develop my ideas where appropriate.

**Present a personal and coherent response that realises intentions and demonstrates an understanding of visual language.**

- ☐ I have planned and produced a personal outcome which expresses what I want to communicate
- ☐ I understand the principles and conventions of visual language.

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