

What every mark is for

Four objectives, worth exactly the same. Three of them are evidenced in your sketchbook, not in your final piece.

A01

25%

“Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources”

Research that changes your work.

Copying an artist’s page is not investigation. Show what you took from them, and show where it went in your own work.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN THE BOOK

A double page on one artist: your study in their medium, what you can actually see in the work, and a line on what you are taking.

A02

25%

“Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes”

Experiments — including the ones that failed.

Refine means a second and third attempt are visible. Keep the version that did not work; it is the evidence, not the mess.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN THE BOOK

The same idea tried in four media, with the two that did not work still in the book and labelled.

A03

25%

“Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses”

Drawing and annotation, as you go.

“As work progresses” is doing real work in that sentence. Recorded at the time, not written up the week before the deadline.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN THE BOOK

A dated note beside the work, written the day you made it, saying what you changed and why.

A04

25%

“Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language”

A final piece your sketchbook predicted.

If nothing in the journey points towards it, it cannot realise intentions — however good it looks on its own.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN THE BOOK

A final piece whose every decision can be pointed at on an earlier page.

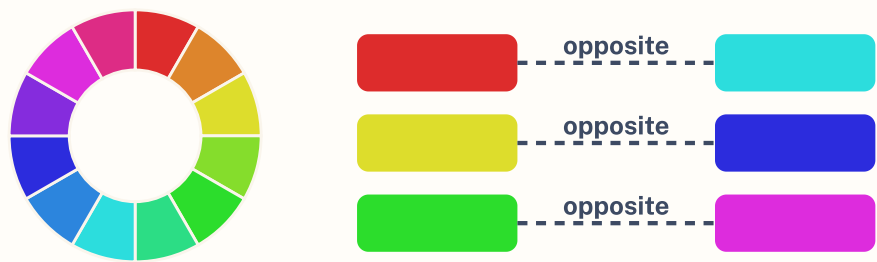
Every objective is worth the same. A brilliant final piece with no investigation behind it is one quarter of the marks.

The formal elements

Five, named by the subject content itself. Everything you make is built out of these.

colour

Hue, and what sits opposite it. Complementaries fight; neighbours agree.



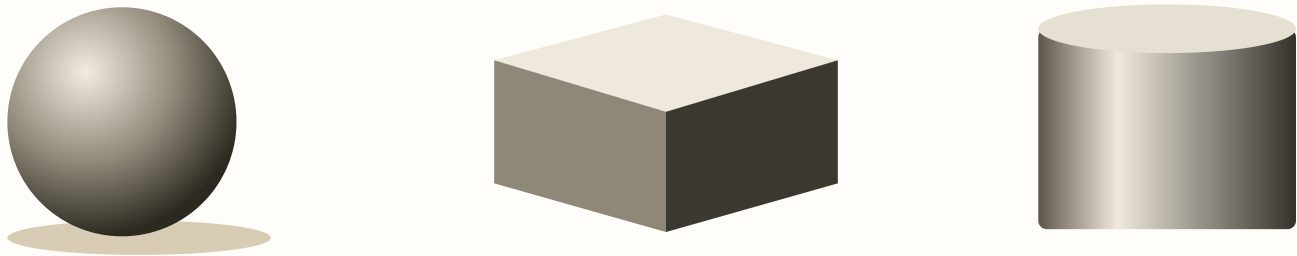
line

Weight, direction and confidence carry as much meaning as shape.



form

Shape is flat. Form has a light side, a dark side and a turning point.



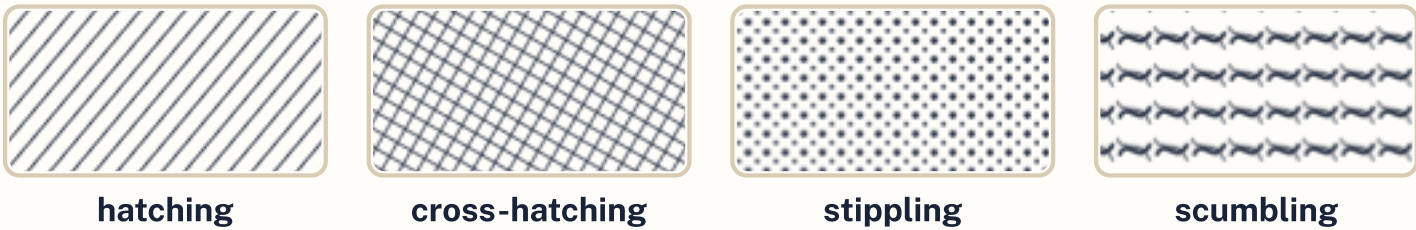
tone

The single element most work is missing. Push the darks.



texture

Real, or made with marks. Hatching, cross-hatching, stippling, scumbling.



VISUAL LANGUAGE IS DEFINED AS

“including formal elements, media, materials, tools, processes and technology as well as various methods of communication other than visual such as tactile and sensory”

Quoted from **Art and design GCSE subject content, Department for Education, January 2015**, the document every GCSE Art and Design specification must meet — it sets out what is “common to all GCSE specifications in a given subject”. Crown copyright, Open Government Licence. The five elements and their order are its own list. Every drawing here is ours, made to demonstrate the element itself — no artwork is reproduced anywhere in this set.

What your sketchbook has to show

Seven things, listed by name. Not a style, not a page count — these.

- 1** “develop their ideas through investigations informed by selecting and critically analysing sources”
Choose sources, then say something about them.

- 2** “apply an understanding of relevant practices in the creative and cultural industries to their work”
How the work is actually made, by people who do it for a living.

- 3** “refine their ideas as work progresses through experimenting with media, materials, techniques and processes”
Same idea, tried more than one way.

- 4** “record their ideas, observations, insights and independent judgements, visually and through written annotation, using appropriate specialist vocabulary, as work progresses”
Drawn and written. Both are named here, and so is the vocabulary.

- 5** “use visual language critically as appropriate to their own creative intentions and chosen area(s) of study through effective and safe use of:”
media materials techniques processes technologies
Chosen on purpose, and used safely.

- 6** “use drawing skills for different needs and purposes, appropriate to the context”
Drawing to work something out, not only to finish something.

- 7** “realise personal intentions through the sustained application of the creative process”
Sustained. Over time, not in a weekend.

“All Students must use drawing to support the development process within each chosen area of study. Students are not required to demonstrate technical mastery of drawing skills unless this is relevant to their area of study.”

Worth reading twice if you think you cannot draw. Drawing is required as a way of working. Technical mastery of it is not, unless your area of study is about that.

The language of art

Annotation is assessed, and the subject content asks for “appropriate specialist vocabulary”. This is it.

THE FORMAL ELEMENTS

- colour
- line
- form
- tone
- texture

VISUAL LANGUAGE

- media
- materials
- tools
- processes
- technology
- tactile
- sensory

WORKING FROM SOURCES

- contemporary
- historical
- contexts
- periods
- societies
- cultures
- purposes
- intentions
- functions
- artists, craftspeople and designers

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

- investigation
- critical analysis
- refinement
- experimentation
- recording
- annotation
- realising intentions
- independent judgement

KINDS OF SKILL

- investigative
- analytical
- experimental
- practical
- technical
- expressive

WHAT YOU PRODUCE

- images
- artefacts
- products
- personal outcomes
- proposals
- safe working practices
- creative and cultural industries

PROCESSES AND TECHNIQUES

- painting
- drawing
- printing
- screen printing
- etching
- aquatint
- lithography
- block printing
- stencils
- carving
- modelling
- constructing
- mosaic
- mobiles
- environmental art
- graffito
- kinetic media
- light based media
- digital media
- mixed media

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The seven art GCSEs

They are separate qualifications with separate titles — and one set of objectives between them.

Art, craft and design

“designed to promote learning across a variety of experiences and through various processes, tools, techniques, materials and resources”

The broad course. Work drawn from at least two of the titles below.

Fine art

“that aspect of art, craft and design where work is developed primarily for aesthetic, intellectual or purely conceptual purposes rather than purposes that have a necessarily practical function”

Drawing, painting, printing, sculpture, installation, land art, mixed and lens-based media.

Graphic communication

“the process of creating primarily visual material to convey information, ideas and emotions through the use of graphic elements such as colour, icons, images, typography and photographs”

Made to communicate something to somebody.

Textile design

“the creation of designs and products for woven, knitted, stitched or printed fabrics and involves an understanding of fibres, yarns and fabrics”

Fibre, yarn, fabric — and what each one will and will not do.

Three-dimensional design

“the design, prototyping and modelling or making of primarily functional and aesthetic consumer products, objects, and environments”

It has to work as well as look right.

Photography

“the practice of creating durable static or moving images by recording light with light-sensitive materials such as photographic film or digitally by means of an image sensor”

Recording light. The definition includes moving image.

Critical and contextual studies

“the critical analysis, interpretation and reflective appraisal from a contemporary perspective of the work of artists, craftspeople and designers”

The one title that is about looking rather than making.

Every board must offer “Art, craft and design” and at least two of the others. Whichever you are entered for, the four objectives and everything on these walls are the same.