



31 January 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: GCSE Fine Art Exam Unit 2019

I hope that your son/daughter has come home and shared with you their exciting GCSE Art, Craft and Design Exam paper, which they have been given and are now working on? If they haven't had time to talk to you about this yet I thought that I would take this opportunity to share with you the structure of the GCSE Exam Unit and how you might be best able to further support them during this time.

The GCSE Exam Unit is worth 40% of their overall GCSE meaning that these last few weeks of their course can enable them to make the difference between levels when they collect their results in August.

Some Important Dates for the Diary

- Tues 8 Jan - Exam Board Question Paper given to all students
- Tues 24 April - Day 1 Exam (5hrs)
- Wed 25 April - Day 2 Exam (5hrs)
- Mon 29 April - ALL coursework handed in (no extensions)**

How does the Exam Unit work?

Students must select one question from the seven starting points given by the Exam Board as set out on the Exam Paper. They will then create an independent project/Unit of work which responds to their chosen question/starting point. They will need to cover and provide strong evidence in their exam sketchbook for **ALL 4** Assessment Objectives. They will have 13 weeks (including February Half Term and the Easter Holiday) to complete the exam sketchbook or sheets and prepare themselves for creating their final outcome on the two consecutive Exam Days on the 24 and 25 April.

Can they continue to work on their coursework at home as well?

No. During the exam period, students **MUST** focus completely on their Exam Unit if they are going to be successful at getting the best levels possible for the Unit. During the exam period the students will hand all their coursework in for reassessment and safekeeping. Students may choose to complete or extend their coursework units, by agreement, during some supervised after school sessions. However, students will also need to use this time to develop their exam unit submission and so will need to plan their time accordingly.

Can they revise for Art?

No. The GCSE Art, Craft and Design exam unit is a practical unit of work which is structured very much like their earlier coursework units. They will need to research, investigate and explore the connected journey of their own ideas based on their chosen starting point and produce a sketchbook of evidence which shows that they fully meet all four of the assessment objectives.

What do they need to do?

I have attached a copy of the suggested structure and progress sheet which your son/daughter will have received along with the exam paper. On this blank example you can see that they will have to work through a series of tasks to develop their project to cover **ALL** the necessary assessment objectives for them to be able to succeed. Your son/daughter will be asked to complete their own targets on a lesson by lesson basis together with their own homework targets and tasks.

How can I help them?

Ask questions - Talk to your son/daughter about their chosen exam question and keep a dialogue going with them by asking what they are doing and how it 'fits' into their project journey. Sometimes just talking will help them to sort out problems they might be having with ideas or ways forward.

Home work - Please check in with their suggested progress sheet each week to see what they have been working on in class and what they have set themselves to do at home. Encourage your son/daughter to work steadily and regularly rather than for hours and hours occasionally. This way they will retain their confidence across the weeks of the exam preparation period.

Be prepared for all lessons - Please find out when their art lessons are in the week and encourage them to check that they have all their work with them for each lesson. Students often waste valuable lesson time because they have left work at home.

'Checking in' - Simply taking a regular interest in what they are working on and how it's going will really help your son/daughter to focus and remain confident throughout the exam preparation period. When they reach the inevitable low point during their work please remind them that having worked so hard for the last two years that they DO have the knowledge and skills to succeed!

What more can they do?

I have created a Student Exam Support Booklet and given a copy to each student. This booklet and their Coursework Support Booklet together contain useful tips and ideas together with vocabulary lists and suggested writing frames for their annotations. I hope that they will refer to them both and find them useful. I am always available for advice and support at every break, lunch time and at the end of the school day. Your son/daughter can access and use the Art Department facilities and materials every lunchtime and after school and should definitely be joining me for **GCSE After School Art Club every Wednesday** as often as possible.

Thank you so much for your continued support. Please feel free to contact me should you need any further clarification or if you have any concerns at Jessica.parker@icknield.oxon.sch.uk

Yours faithfully,



Mrs J.L.Parker
Head of Art