

Assessment and Recording in Art, Design and CDT

The article that follows is an extract from a Welsh Office Research Project Schools in Action based on a questionnaire used in Clwyd schools and reproduced with permission.

'A number of school courses now seek to develop a wider range of knowledge, skills and attitudes than hitherto and to place more emphasis on the understanding of general principles. This, in turn, has led teachers to consider whether assessment procedures traditionally used are geared sufficiently to course objectives and to introduce new practice where discordance is evident'.

'Assessment and monitoring of progress in secondary schools, HMSO, 1983

Many schools have delegated the task of assessment revision to departments on the grounds that each discipline has unique subject-specific criteria which requires the attention of the specialist. Some 'guidelines' may have been given (E 6ff), but the

heavy responsibility of producing an integrated curriculum-assessment course structure to promote the learning capabilities of each pupil falls entirely upon the individual subject staff. The head of department has a fundamental role (A passim) as the person in charge of the quality of learning in the subject area for which responsibility is held. In fact it can be argued, with some justification, that curriculum appraisal and assessment refinement has changed the face of much departmental teaching in advance of whole school action, and that pressure to improve the institution's system has often come from 'within' subject departments and not from 'above'!

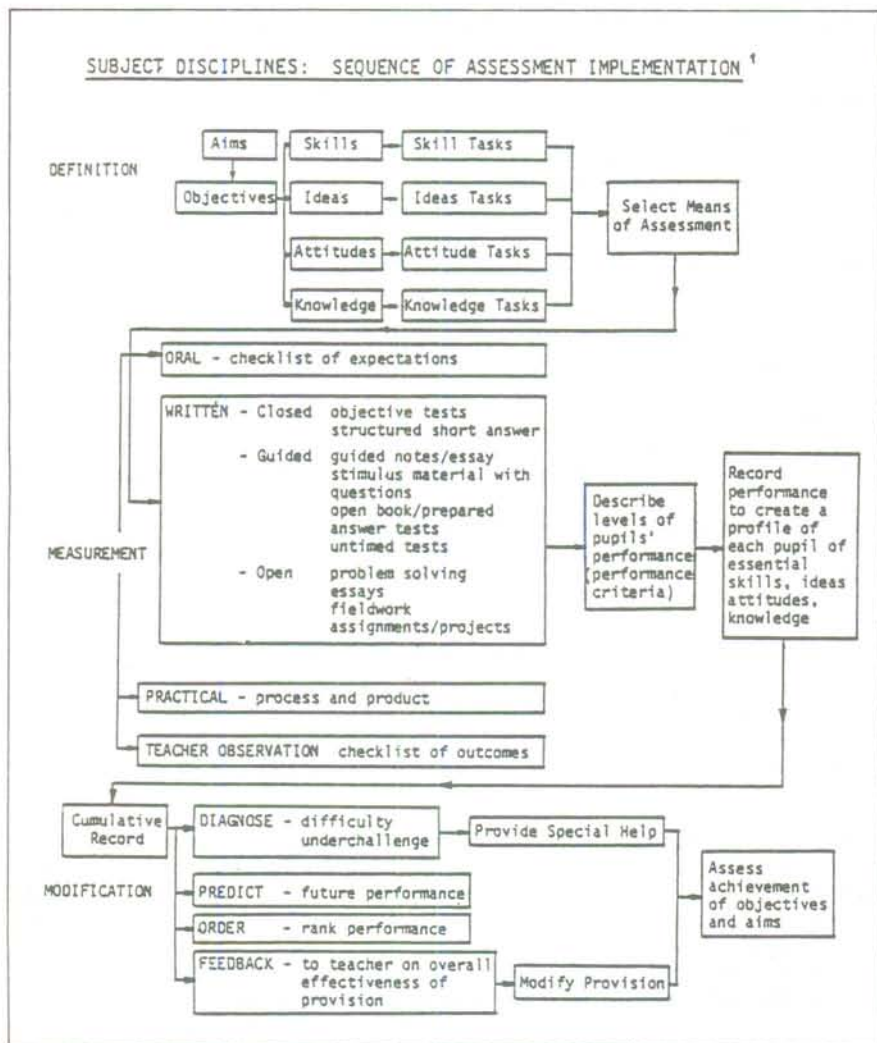
A 'loose' selection of subject assessment documents, compiled from a random rather than a regulated collection during the six months period of the project, forms the basis of this section. An attempt has been made to reflect broad faculty areas and to include examples of special departmental initiatives as well as of new examining systems, although it is acknowledged that these aims have not been fully realised. The concentration is on assessment in the Lower School, the assumption being that the new GCSE examination requirements will be well documented and avidly assimilated. The future influence of both the new 16+ examinations and the newly emerging examinations on the teaching methods used below the fourth year must not be under-rated. 'A' level work is not represented as time did not permit such an intensive survey.

The section opens with an assessment flow chart and the documents which follow are included because they are conscientious attempts to meet the criticisms levelled at the narrowness of assessment techniques employed in our schools. In many cases the schemes are in their infancy and refinements, even whole-scale revisions, are inevitable in a dynamic situation. It is recommended that the whole section receives attention as many ideas are transferable across departmental boundaries. With the recommendation goes the warning — some schemes may be tantalisingly attractive but disconcertingly incomplete! The policy adopted was to sample from as wide a range of documents as possible, rather than to limit the illustrations to just a few subjects.

Art & Design

Art and design teachers tend to place greater value upon originality of response from pupils than most other subject specialists. Because of this, objectives for assessment have to be framed sensitively and somewhat differently from other areas of the curriculum in order to make them suitable for the evaluation of particular learning experiences (B 15).

In certain cases, the assessment objectives may relate fairly closely to those of the more cognitive subjects in specifying the intended outcome of a particular sequence of lessons. In teaching and assessing the skills of potato printing or lino-



cutting, for example, the art teacher can be specific about particular standards and grade-related criteria appropriate to these techniques.

In design-related activities, where the emphasis is upon a problem-solving approach, assessment objectives are not always easy to pre-specify in great detail. The criteria tends to relate to the way in which the pupil responds to the design brief in terms of exploring a range of possibilities and selecting the most appropriate solution within the constraints of the specified problem.

Much of the work of art & design departments, however, is concerned with expressive objectives which are defined in terms of the kind of *learning experience* in which pupils are stimulated and encouraged to investigate and develop their personal ideas and skills. Under these circumstances, it is probably more meaningful for assessment objectives to evolve from the particular responses of individual pupils rather than for them to be specified in advance. In planning worthwhile learning experiences and evaluating the outcomes, the criteria

1 USE OF MEDIA	10 marks	4 PRODUCT/STANDARD	40 marks
2 EXPRESSIVE QUALITIES	15 marks	5 ATTENTION TO DETAIL	15 marks
3 COMPOSITION/EXECUTIVE SKILL	10 marks	6 APPLICATION	10 marks

MEDIA

What use has the child made of the artistic materials at his disposal?

To what extent has he been able to convert them into the media of expression and communication?

To what extent has the child consciously selected media that are suitable for the purposes he intends?

To what extent can the child control and manipulate the media in favour of some level of expectation?

EXPRESSION

Has the child something to say?

What evidence is there of an extension and active exploration of ideas and concepts?

Is there some evidence of a thinking mind at work?

To what extent have alternative ideas been considered?

How well has the child conveyed through the medium of graphic design/letter form/illustration the essence of the ideas embodied within his work?

To what extent does his work evoke a response in the spectator — does it raise interesting points for discussion and so on?

COMPOSITION AND EXECUTIVE SKILL — Does it look right?

How well does the composition work?

Does it have visual impact?

Does it fit the purpose for which it was intended?

How have its various elements been put together?

What attention has been given to letter forms, choice of letter forms, spacing layout and balance in the design?

What consideration has been given to the balance between illustration and lettering?

To what extent does the layout of words actually correspond to a logical pattern of language use — does it make sense or not?

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

What consideration has been given to the selection of colours, shapes, forms, subject matters and so on?

How accurately have letter forms and other details been recorded?

What is the general level of technical competence displayed?

How much research has gone into the work/evidence of research material/sketches?

APPLICATION

Here it is important that one should build into the assessment scheme some means of rewarding and supporting the child who does not necessarily achieve a high level attainment but who displays personal qualities in their application to work such as perseverance and tenacity; the will to revise their approach or start again if things are not going too well and who despite all sorts of odds, keeps going. These are qualities which are not the prerogative of the artistically gifted, rather they are the qualities that help to differentiate between pupils with similar marks/levels of performance and they make possible the evaluation of an aspect of learning performance that is too seldom taken into account.

MARKS

The marks are so arranged that they provide a reasonable distribution between each of the component parts and within each of the levels of performance described. Flexibility is important in that it permits differentiation when obtaining rank-orders for external examination procedures. Thus it is that a child with an average level of performance say in use of media could score either a high 6 or a low 5. The total marks add up to 100.

ADDITIONAL COMMENT

This is a summary of the individual's performance in terms of affective as well as cognitive behaviour, and can cover either a years work or just a particular course of lessons or examination. It aims at completing the information available about the total performance of the pupil.

NAME(S)		EXAM UNIT	
2D DESIGN AND LETTERING ASSESSMENT SHEET			
TOTAL 10	USE OF MEDIA	10	Y. GOOD USE OF MEDIA
		8	GOOD USE OF MEDIA
		6	AVERAGE
		4	POOR AND INADEQUATE
		2	USE OF UNDERSTANDING
TOTAL 15	EXPRESSIVE QUALITIES	15	Y. GOOD QUALITIES
	INCLUDING ARTICULATION OF IDEAS/USE OF COLOUR AND ED. OIL	12	GOOD QUALITIES
		9	AVERAGE
		6	WEAK
		3	MINIMAL
TOTAL 10	COMPOSITION/ESSAY	10	Y. GOOD
	INCLUDING VISUAL RESEARCH	8	GOOD
		6	AVERAGE
		4	FAIR
		2	WEAK
TOTAL 40	PRODUCT/STANDARD	40	EXCELLENT PRODUCT
	INCLUDING CREATIVITY FOR PURPOSE VISUAL IMPACT AND SO ON	36	GOOD PRODUCT
		30	WELL EX. BUT NOT PRODUCT
		24	AV. PROD. AND STANDARD
		18	AV. PROD. NOT STANDARD
		12	UNDESIRABLE BETWEEN 6-6
		6	POOR PROD. AND STANDARD
TOTAL 15	ATTENTION TO DETAIL	15	EVERY ASPECT LOOKS ID
	INCLUDING LAYOUT AND WORD/LETTER SPACING WHERE APPROPRIATE	12	SOME AREAS SKIPPED
		9	AVERAGE
		6	POOR ATTENTION TO DETAIL
		3	BORED BY DETAILS
TOTAL 10	APPLICATION	10	BEHAVED CONSID. TIME
	INCLUDING EXAM PREPARATION WHERE APPROPRIATE	8	WORKED SOME EXTRA
		6	WORKED STRATEGIC AS
		3	LACKED APPLICATION
		1	LACKED APPL/MOTIV
	DATE		
	%		
	TOTAL		

for assessment are based on standards which are inherent within the activities, similar in many ways to the kind of judgement we use when responding to the work of an artist. Reference to this 'process' mode is made on page B15.

Although this approach to assessment seems fundamentally different from the vogue of pre-specified objectives, it still supports the development of criteria for assessment by offering a viable and valid alternative for the arts and for aesthetic aspects of other subjects in the curriculum. This alternative approach should be actively encouraged since it could help to resolve some of the emerging problems of new assessment methods, particularly those associated with negotiated assessment and the summative/formative dilemma. Certain curriculum development projects, notably Critical Studies in Art Education,¹ in encouraging pupils to adopt a reflective view of their practical work in the art room, could provide useful guidance for new forms of assessment across the curriculum.

In practice, many art & design departments will utilise a variety of approaches in assessing pupils' work, and the following example illustrates the assessment of one particular aspect of the subject.

CRAFT, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

General Introduction. Craft, Design and Technology (CDT) is an area of the secondary school curriculum concerned with designing and making. It also encourages an awareness of the application of design and technology in the environment Where CDT differs from the earlier style and content of craft and technical subjects is in the integration of designing, planning and testing with workshop practice..... It provides demanding and rewarding experiences which challenge the most able pupils as well as those of average or more limited ability..... The subject area, through the full sequence of designing, making and testing, can now make a significant contribution to general education, especially in terms of the development of transferable skills and positive personal attitudes.....

Faculty Structure

The Head of Faculty is responsible for three main departments: CDT, Home Economics, and Visual Studies. Each department has a head and specialist staff. Intra and full faculty meetings ensure close liaison between staff, with all staff being encouraged to participate in the efficient running of the faculty.

CDT Suite Upper School - semi-open plan: two wood-based workshops, two metal-based workshops, two graphic studios and a large covered area used mainly for building, concrete and project work.

Lower School - one wood-based and one metal-based workshop.

Timetable

The school operates four double-time blocks of 75 minutes each - single periods are possible. Years 1-3 6p. per week, Years 4-5 4 p. per subject, Years 6-7 8 p. per subject. Design is part of the 'common core' curriculum and is taught in mixed ability groups. In Years 1-3 half year groups are divided to give approximate teaching numbers of 20 e.g. 3' tutor groups are divided amongst 4 design staff.

Craft Design and Technology

Introduction

The importance being attached to Craft Design and Technology as a curriculum subject may be judged from the recommendation in the DES Curriculum 5-16 Paper that it should be compulsory for all pupils up to 16 years of age. The APU publication *Understanding Design and Technology* suggests that the subject should seek to assess 'the bringing together of skills, experiences, knowledge, understanding, imagination and judgment, whatever their limitations, in the execution of a specific task'. Most CDT courses are project-based and increasingly personal, group and teacher assessments are elements which are included: these assessments are matched with the specific objectives identified when designing project activity. Pupils' approaches and responses are structured in what is termed the 'design process' and each stage of investigation, development of ideas, communication (graphic and verbal), realisation, etc., is capable of precise assessment.

One school's option choice booklet to parents notes that CDT 'has developed into a multifaceted and interdisciplinary subject area, the heart of which is the development of not only transferable skills but also personal attitudes such as rational thinking, initiative and resourcefulness'. (It would be as well if universities credited it with all these qualities and rated it more highly for entrance selection purposes!)

The school documentary material which follows is highly precised from attractively produced booklets.

Years 1-3 General Design Programme

An introductory 'Design across the Faculty' booklet shows that Home Economics, Visual Studies and Craft, Design and Technology are concerned with design, and especially with certain aspects of it. In the second year another booklet issued to all pupils distinguishes six main aspects of design which the faculty has agreed on as being common departmental concerns. They are:

- Design & People
- Design & Communication
- Design & Learning Skills
- Design & Developing Solutions
- Design & our Environment
- Design & Life Skills.

Years 1-3 Craft, Design and Technology Programme Summary

Important aspects of design are presented in units which are packages of theory and practical work, and mini-projects..... These important CDT aspects are listed in units below (Fig. 1). Alongside these are sequential packages of work that develop the units through Years 1-3.

CDT UNIT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Design and People	Tools, Home today, people	Appearance of objects	Visual appreciation
Design and Problem solving	What is Design	Breaking down choosing approach	Design loop Evaluation
Design and Communication	Drawing	Freehand drawing Technical drawing	Freehand drawing Technical drawing
Design and Technology	General	Structure Mechanisms	Electronics Structure Mechanisms
Design and Making Skills	Controlled Craft, in material investigation	Part of full Project	Material Investigation
Full Design Project	Three piece storage box	Desk Calendar	Lighting System

Fig. 1

The year programmes (see 3rd yr. CDT Fig. 2) are the responsibility of individual teachers..... A unit of work frequently has an attendant booklet compiled by staff - only relevant material which is pitched properly is included, and there is usually a work section for pupil contribution. Technology is taught through a modular approach in Years 1-3 using Tandy Electronic kits and Fischer Technics kits to support the units. Electronics in the third year is based on a 'Sparkes' practical approach.

CDT Examination Studies: Summary (with CS now introduced)

Examinations are taken at C.S.E., 'O' level and 'A' level, Building Construction and 3D Graphics as Mode II C.S.E. subjects and 3D Engineering at Mode III C.S.E. level.

Assessment of CDT work Years 1-3

Each unit is assessed for suitability - the assessment sheets then help in the revision of the following year programmes. (See Fig. 3).

Pupils' progress is monitored on a special assessment/register sheet (see Fig. 4). This sheet contains faculty assessment checks and others that are departmental in concern. Records are made by ticks on a 5 point scale thus

5 4 3 2 1

		3rd yr. CDT YEAR PROGRAMME 84/85			
UNIT	UNIT PLAN A	UNIT PLAN B	UNIT PLAN C	UNIT PLAN D	UNIT PLAN E
0 - DESIGN	1	1	1	1	1
1 - MATERIALS	2	2	2	2	2
2 - COMMUNICATION	1	1	1	1	1
3 - TECHNOLOGY	1	1	1	1	1
4 - MAKING SKILLS	1	1	1	1	1
5 - FULL DESIGN PROJECT	1	1	1	1	1
6 - PEOPLE	1	1	1	1	1
7 - PROBLEM SOLVING	1	1	1	1	1
8 - DRAWING	1	1	1	1	1
9 - STRUCTURE & MECHANISMS	1	1	1	1	1
10 - ELECTRONICS	1	1	1	1	1
11 - TANDY ELECTRONIC KITS	1	1	1	1	1
12 - FISCHER TECHNICS KITS	1	1	1	1	1
13 - SPARKES PRACTICAL APPROACH	1	1	1	1	1
14 - BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	1	1	1	1	1
15 - 3D GRAPHICS	1	1	1	1	1
16 - 3D ENGINEERING	1	1	1	1	1

Fig. 2

