

# CREATIVE iMEDIA

*Moderators' report*

INCLUDED ON THE  
KS4 PERFORMANCE TABLES

OCR Level 1/Level 2

Cambridge National in  
**Creative iMedia**

**J834**

For first teaching in 2022 | Version 1

**R094-R099 Summer 2023 series**

[ocr.org.uk/cambridgenationals](https://ocr.org.uk/cambridgenationals)



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## Introduction

Our Lead Moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on centres' assessment of moderated work, based on what has been observed by the moderation team. These reports include a general commentary of accuracy of internal assessment judgements; identify good practice in relation to evidence collation and presentation and comments on the quality of centre assessment decisions against individual Learning Objectives. This report also highlights areas where requirements have been misinterpreted and provides guidance to centre assessors on requirements for accessing higher mark bands. Where appropriate, the report will also signpost to other sources of information that centre assessors will find helpful.

OCR completes moderation of centre-assessed work in order to quality assure the internal assessment judgements made by assessors within a centre. Where OCR cannot confirm the centre's marks, we may adjust them in order to align them to the national standard. Any adjustments to centre marks are detailed on the Moderation Adjustments report, which can be downloaded from Interchange when results are issued. Centres should also refer to their individual centre report provided after moderation has been completed. In combination, these centre-specific documents and this overall report should help to support centres' internal assessment and moderation practice for future series.

Please note, the content for this report is based on candidate work submitted in the June 2023 series and does not include work from the extraordinary autumn submission opportunity. It is possible that not all units are covered within the report, however candidate style work is available for all internally assessed units on Teach Cambridge and candidate exemplars from the 2023 series will be available from the autumn.

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Please note, the content for this report is based on candidate work submitted in the June 2023 series and does not include work from the extraordinary autumn submission opportunity. It is possible that not all units are covered within the report, however candidate style work is available for all internally-assessed units on Teach Cambridge and candidate exemplars from the 2023 series will be available from the autumn.

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## Unit R094 General overview

The extent to which the report below focuses on each unit is a reflection of the entries this series. Where a limited number of entries were received the commentary has been reduced to reflect the lack of data on which to comment on patterns and trends in the submissions.

There have been a wide range of creative and high-quality submissions for the Metamoda set assignment, with some innovative visual identities and good demonstration of conventions in the advertisement designs. Some less successful submissions were hampered by structure and content of work which was much more suited to the legacy assignments than those of the new specification. Due to the differences in content and marking criteria this can impact on the success of submissions such as these. It is important that the centres take care to deliver the content of the new specification which will more appropriately prepare candidate for a successful submission of the new assignments. When assessing the work centres need to take care to review the marking criteria carefully when it comes to allocation marks aspects that relate to the visual identity and those that link to the digital graphic product; where these areas were confused there was some misapplication of the marking criteria.

This series has seen evidence of a number of administrative errors which create challenges for the moderation process. In a change to the legacy specification, the new specification requires all centres to submit work digitally; this can be via the Repository or Submit for Assessment or by sending a USB stick in the post: we are no longer able to accept submission on paper or CD. This aligns with another key aspect which is sometimes misunderstood: a key piece of evidence to support marks in this unit is the visual identity and the final product in final format; this should be submitted for moderation as part of the digital submission.

We saw a number of instances where work was submitted with file and folder names which were difficult to link to a specific candidate, all work submitted along with the URS should be clearly labelled with the candidate number, for the avoidance of doubt in terms of the creator of work. The URS should also provide the page number and file reference for the location of evidence. We continue to see underutilisation of the administration tab for storing URS documentation on the Repository, the process for which is outlined in the specification.

It was pleasing to see that most centres submitted evidence in suitable format which are outlined in the specification. It is worth noting here that there were a few instances where centres submitted evidence in files formats which were not PC compatible which is a requirement of the specification also.

### OCR support



[The J834 specification](#) (page 121 Section 6) provides details on the requirements when submitting your sample for moderation.

## Comments by Task

### Task 1 – Develop a visual identity and plan digital graphics for products

At the start of this task it was often observed that centres applied an approach more suited to the legacy specification where candidates completed an interpretation of the client brief before beginning the tasks in the assessment. While this is not bad practice, it should be noted that in this unit, this task does not support marks.

There were some good quality submissions for the first strand of this task which required a design concept for the visual identity. However, there were some cases where there was some confusion surrounding the difference between the visual identity and the final digital graphic product. One misconception that was frequently seen was that a logo and a visual identity are one and the same. While a logo can be part of a visual identity there are other aspects covered in the teaching content which can also be included as part of the design concept for the visual identity.

There were more variable levels of success in the second strand of this task where justifications were mistaken for the annotations of the concept sketches or even merely implied from the sketches themselves. Supporting marks here depends on the demonstration of the ability to justify the fitness for purpose of the design concept for the visual identity that will be created. The level of understanding of the requirements of a justification rather than a description of the chosen design was a weaker area of this strand.

The third strand requires the planning of the digital graphic product. The evidence provided for this strand was variable. There was a misconception, demonstrated by a number of centres, that planning for the visual identity supports marks in this strand but this is not the case. In most cases the planning was attempted by candidates but often the level of detail demonstrated did not support marks in the top mark band. In some cases, the approach to planning contained significant justification of the rationale for the chosen planning documentation; this is not a requirement of the marking criteria and does not support marks.

#### Misconception



The planning for the digital graphic product is often misunderstood in the third strand. The planning to support marks here does not include planning for the visual identity as this is assessed elsewhere.

## Task 2 – Plan digital graphics for products and create visual identity and digital graphics

The first strand of this task is all about the skills used to create the visual identity and also the properties and format of the visual identity. This was one of the more significant areas where there was some drift towards the legacy approach to assessment and marking. The marking criteria for this strand is qualitative and focused on effectiveness; it is not about either ranking skills in terms of difficulty or counting skills. The second aspect of this strand links the properties and format of the final visual identity; the appropriateness here links to the requirements of the brief in terms of how it will be used. This often focused solely on file type or properties and often neglected to consider both aspects together, when looking to make good choices in terms of effectiveness. In many cases there appeared to be limited understanding of properties and formats demonstrated in this element, which links back to the teaching content of this unit, but also the prior knowledge gained from R093. There were also a number of centres where the visual identity was not submitted as a separate file/s in its own right which is not in line with the assessment criteria.

The second strand here relates to assets which are prepared for use in the digital graphic; this is one of the few aspects where we are considering quantity, with the terms 'few', 'some' and 'all'. The second element returns to the qualitative aspects of the assessment, again linking to the technical skills used to prepare the assets. This was one of the weaker areas of most submissions, particularly where the evidence for this strand was implied from the final product, in the form of an assets folder or listed as part of an assets source table.

The third strand is the significant aspect here in terms of marks and as such contains 3 aspects of marking criteria. The first element is looking at the tools and techniques that are used in terms of their effectiveness. There was some misconception around assessment of this element, where there were comments which reflected the number of tools used or looking for advanced and standard tools which is similar to the legacy specification but not relevant to the new specification. The second element of this strand focuses on the application of knowledge surrounding design concept and layout conventions; this is demonstrated in the final product. This was generally one of the stronger aspects of the submissions.

The penultimate element of this strand is focused on the suitability of the final product for the client requirements. This aspect of the assessment looks at the final product and how well it meets the client brief. The final product in its final format is vital for assessing this aspect, as a number of centres did not provide this in their initial submission. This strand does not look at properties and formats of the final product as this is covered in the final element of this strand.

The final element of this second task focuses solely on the properties and formats of the final product. There are a number of aspects to consider for this part of the assessment and the evidence seen was not as strong as that relating to the earlier aspects of this task. In many cases candidates had considered either the file format or the properties such as resolution and size but not both. In other cases, there was consideration of the properties and format for one use of the final product but not the other, thus not supporting marks in the top mark band particularly well.

## Unit R095 General overview

For comments on the more general administration of the submissions which apply similarly to each unit, please see the introductory section in R094. This unit combines the skills of character design as the component and comic book design as the final product. There were a range of creative approaches to this unit and some great final products, it was pleasing to see to see good creativity from the candidates.

### Comments by Task

#### Task 1 – Plan characters and comics

The work for the first element of the first strand demonstrated some good understanding of the skills needed to effectively interpret the client brief. The second element of the strand, which required the candidates to create an explanation of why the product meets the client brief was less well done. In a number of cases, the justifications were limited in the demonstration of how the needs of the audience and the requirements of the brief would be met by their interpretation; as such they did not meet the requirements for the descriptor of 'comprehensive'.

The second strand saw varying levels of success in terms of the evidence provided. Most candidates provided some evidence to support aspects of the final product creation here. It was often the case that that the content and storyline of the comic was planned in good detail but plans for the character and other aspects of comics, such as layout, were not planned as well to support the higher marks. When planning the character, we didn't see as much consideration of suitability for the brief or understanding of the design principles covered in the teaching content as might be desirable. Most characters that were created were not original, having been either sourced and lightly edited or traced from elsewhere; this is not good practice in terms of a vocational qualification and does not show the depth of understanding or creativity that we would expect, to support marks in the higher mark bands.

The third element in this strand looked at assets and how they contribute to the effectiveness of the final product. Here we saw many centres applying an approach more suited to the legacy specification when assessing this element. This element is not about quantity of assets nor does it focus heavily on legislation. The criteria for this element is about showing understanding of how the assets contribute to the effectiveness of the final product, the how and why. An assets source table with the correct level of detail to demonstrate the effectiveness can be used here, but it is not the only method that could be used to support marks; there were some other creative methods which fulfilled this requirement as well.

#### Task 2 – Plan and create characters and comics

There was significant variance in the quality of the work produced for this task. The first strand, which covers the creation of the component parts was generally one that was less well done. The focus of this strand is on candidates applying the skills they have learnt along with their knowledge of conventions and some creativity to create their character and also other aspects that they need to make their comic. This is a large proportion of the marks, but the evidence suggested it was not a priority in many portfolios, for example where all components were premade by the comic software and used as they were or with very limited editing, this did not support marks for creation of components well.



There was some good creativity in the evidence for the second strand of this task. There were some areas which were less successful such as applying conventions to the creation of comics, such as the use of speech bubbles and onomatopoeia, in a lot of cases, the story telling relied on large caption boxes creating a storyboard-like appearance. At the lower end of the mark range there were a lot of single page comics or comics which were made multipage by increasing the size of the panels without consideration for story flow. To support marks in the higher mark bands, application of the learning points around panel size, shape and placement could be demonstrated. In some cases, this purpose of the comic got lost within the story telling; to make sure a product is fully for purpose, the purpose should be key to the design and making the of the comic.

The final strand of the task was generally well done. Care should be taken when applying these criteria from an assessment perspective as the marks are given for the format of the components, but for format and properties of the final product.

### Task 3 – Plan and review characters and comics

This was the least well evidenced task of the unit. In a change to the approach seen in the legacy specification there are now 4 distinct elements to cover of the 2 strands of the task and the combined marks for this task are not insignificant. In most cases the evidence produced did not reflect the mark weighting for this task.

This first strand looks at testing/checking, which focuses on the technical properties of the final product., plus reviewing which looks at the effectiveness of the product for the brief and target audience. The teaching content of the unit will support candidates with the skills and knowledge they need to select and apply a suitable method of testing/checking for this comic and character unit. The criteria focuses of the effectiveness of that testing and checking to support marks. The review element of this strand has a different focus in that it looks at the effectiveness of the final product for the client and the target audience. It was often the case that this element was done in a narrative style which talked about what the candidate had done to create the product; this doesn't show the critical reflection and consideration of how the product meets the brief that would be needed to support marks.

The final strand of this task focuses solely on the improvements and developments that could be made to the final product. To support marks in this strand the recommendations made here are considered in terms of how they would make the final product better, which we would expect to link to the brief and the needs of the audience. While most candidates could outline some ideas for this element, the second element of explaining the recommendations and their rationale was not well evidenced to support marks in the higher mark bands.

## Unit R096 General overview

For comments on the more general administration of the submissions which apply similarly to each unit, please see the introductory section in R094. This unit focuses on animation and audio; in most cases the candidates created the audio as a component part, which then featured as part of the animation as the final product. There was excellent evidence of candidates really engaging with the brief and showing great creativity in this unit.

### Comments by Task

#### Task 1 – Planning animation with audio

The first element of this first strand was generally well done. The second element, requiring the candidates to create an explanation of why the product meets the client brief, was not evidenced as well: the justifications were often limited in terms of demonstrating how the needs of the audience and the requirements of the brief would be met by their interpretation.

The second strand of this task requires candidates to produce pre-production documents to plan their final product. The planning documents selected by some candidates were not always suitable for planning animation with audio. When delivering this unit, it is key that candidates are taught the range of pre-production planning tools and understand their purposes so that they can effectively select and use those documents to plan their work.

The third element in this strand looks at assets and how they contribute to the effectiveness of the final product. Here we saw many centres applying an approach more suited to the legacy specification when assessing this element. This element is not about quantity of assets nor does it focus heavily on legislation. This criteria is about showing understanding of how the assets contribute to the effectiveness of the final product; the how and why. It is sometimes a misconception that assets only refer to items such as graphics; however, in a unit such as this one, to demonstrate assets which fully support the creation on the final product, the scope would likely be wider than this.

#### Task 2 – Planning and creating animation with audio

For most candidates, the first strand of this task focused on the technical skill used to create component parts such as graphical and audio elements for the animation. The demonstration of technical skill to create and to make sure that all component parts were effective was underdeveloped in a lot of cases.

It was pleasing to see some variety in the type and software choices used to create the animation in the second strand of this task, with which some very creative outcomes. There tended to be a lack of technical consideration regarding things such as frame rate or animation techniques. To prepare for this unit, candidates need to be familiar with and able to use the key animation techniques outlined in the specification, in order to successfully demonstrate skills in this strand. There was some evidence of understanding of conventions of animation in the final products which supported marks in the second element of the strand. The products seen in this unit, tended to have a good link back to the purpose outlined in the brief which was a stronger aspect of the submissions.

The final strand regarding saving and exporting was completed with varying success. In most cases the format of the components was appropriate to support the creation of the final product. When completing the final product candidates need to consider both the brief and the accessibility of file formats to allow their work to be viewed as intended.

### Task 3 – Planning and reviewing animation with audio

As with all the optional units, this was the least well evidenced task of the unit. There are 2 distinct strands which each have 2 separate elements to cover and the combined marks for this task are not insignificant; the work submitted did not always reflect the significance of this strand. To successfully complete this task, candidates need to be aware of the different testing and checking methods, and to understand the difference between technical properties and reviewing which is linked to the audience requirements and the client brief. Where candidates tried to tackle these two aspects together rather than as discrete elements, they were often less successful.

Most candidates were able to outline some improvements and developments that could be applied to the animation product; the weaker aspect of this strand was in providing an explanation as to why this recommendation was made. To support work in this area, section 3 of the specification should be covered in full before completing the assessment.

## Unit R097 General overview

For comments on the more general administration of the submissions which apply similarly to each unit, please see the introductory section in R094. The focus of this unit is the interactive digital media product and the component parts used to make the final product. There were some creative interpretations of the brief and a range of different creation methods to create the final product.

### Comments by Task

#### Task 1 – Planning interactive digital media

The first strand of this task looks at the interpretation of the client brief and the explanation of how the interpretation of the brief meets the client brief and the needs of the target audience. This strand was one of the stronger parts of the submissions we have seen in the series. The interpretation element was the most well done, with candidates showing an ability to pick out the key elements of the brief. The second element, where the explanation of the interpretation was required, was less strong. Often the explanation of the interpretation was more of a description of their intentions rather than focusing on how the ideas would meet the client brief and appeal to the target audience.

The second strand of this task focuses on pre-production planning. There were varying levels of success in the approach to this strand. The planning documentation created here should reflect the plan for the final product but also the component parts which will contribute to the final product. It was the latter which was often neglected which impacted on the marks in this element.

The final strand of this task was of the weaker aspects of most submissions, as we have seen across the optional units. This element is intended to allow the evidence to demonstrate the candidates' understanding of how their assets will contribute to the effectiveness of the final product. It was often the case that an assets source table was the main evidence here, but with the understanding of the purpose of the assets and their contribution to the final product neglected.

#### Task 2 – Planning and creating interactive digital media

The first strand of this task focuses on the creation of the component parts of the interactive digital media product. There is a lot of scope for candidates to support marks in this aspect, due to the variety of skills and different components that the candidate could be creating to support the creation of their final product. The marking criteria focuses on creating component parts which are effective, fit for purpose and support the creation of the final product. There is a common misconception when assessing this strand which is that the mark bands are meant to be supported by the number or level of skills such as advanced, basic, etc. as was the case in the legacy specification.

The second strand of the task is in a similar vein but is focused on the creation of the final product. Again the focus is not on the number or perceived difficulty of the skill but on the effectiveness of the skills in creating the final product. The creativity and conventions in the product creation was generally reasonably well evidenced; however, the fitness for purpose was where the evidence was often lacking. There were a range of requirements of the client brief such as the sections and information which was required. In contrast some candidates made good quality products but tried make a much more extensive product than the brief required which results in the product being either of a lesser quality or unfinished due to time constraints. Using the brief and meeting the requirements is key to effectively supporting marks in this task.

The final element of this strand required a final product to be presented in a suitable format to meet the client brief. In most cases this was sufficiently evidenced, where the evidence was less successful the final products were generally not in a suitable format for the brief such as native or proprietary formats.

### Misconception



There is a common misconception when assessing this strand which is that the mark bands are meant to be supported by the number or level of skills such as advanced, basic, etc. as was the case in the legacy specification.

## Task 3 – Planning and reviewing interactive digital media

As with all the optional units, this was the least well evidenced task of the unit. There are 2 distinct strands which each have 2 separate elements to cover and the combined marks for this task are not insignificant. However, the work submitted for this task did not always reflect the significance of this strand. To successfully complete this task, candidates need to be aware of the different testing and checking methods, and to understand the difference between technical properties and reviewing which is linked to the audience requirements and the client brief. It would also aid candidates' responses in the review section if they have a good understanding of how to critically review product against a brief and how this differs from a narrative or description. Where candidates tried to tackle these two aspects together rather than as discrete elements, they were often less successful.

Most candidate were able to outline some improvements and developments that could be applied to the interactive digital media product. The weaker aspect of this strand was in providing an explanation as to why this recommendation was made. To support work in this area, section 3 of the specification should be covered in full, before completing the assessment.

## Unit R098 General overview

For comments on the more general administration of the submissions which apply similarly to each unit, please see the introductory section in R094. There were some creative approaches to this unit, which tied in with the brief to a certain degree. In some cases, the work only had a limited link back to the brief and the purpose of the product became a little lost. This unit differs slightly from the other optional units in that the component parts are intended to comprise of video and photograph and the final product also has a video and photograph component. When submitting this unit consider which video and image items need to be included to support the marks; this will help with file size for uploading. For example, each video and image item which is not chosen by the candidate to contribute to their final products would not be necessary to include.

### Comments by Task

#### Task 1 – Planning visual imaging portfolios

There were some good examples of candidates using a range of pre-production planning documents effectively to plan for this unit. There are a range of templates provided by OCR which can be used in this unit, even though they are not compulsory and candidates will not be penalised for not doing so. In the third strand of this task there is ample opportunity to show understanding of assets and how they will support in the fulfilment of the brief; as with other optional units this was often underdeveloped, leading to a mismatch of assets created and product planned.

#### Task 2 – Planning and creating visual imaging portfolios

To support marks in this strand there should be evidence of the technical skills used to create the component photographs and videos, and as well as to construct the final portfolio. This was not one of the stronger aspects of the unit, with candidates failing to display knowledge of skills and techniques in taking photographs and videos. To support candidates, centres should make sure that these skills have been taught while in the teaching phase of this unit. Knowledge and application of these skills is vital to supporting marks in this task. The impact of purpose on the content and structure of images and video is also a key teaching point to support marks in this unit.

#### Task 3 – Planning and reviewing visual imaging portfolios

Candidates were able to show some reflection skills in terms of reviewing their work for this task. However, as with other units testing/checking technical properties was less well done. This links back to the understanding of the theoretical concepts at the heart of this unit. Without an understanding of the requirements in terms of technical properties, candidates find it difficult to know what they are testing/checking for.

## Unit R099 General overview

For comments on the more general administration of the submissions which apply similarly to each unit, please see the introductory section in R094. This unit focuses on the planning and creation of digital games. There were a range of different approaches taken to this unit, which used a variety of different software. There were some challenges in terms of accessing the final products submitted for this unit; it is important that the centre notes the requirements to make sure that their chosen software exports games in a format which can be accessed on a standalone machine. Where this means exporting as .exe files and the centre must make sure these can be generated within the centre setup and user permissions. Games that require the moderator to play the game online do not meet the requirements for the NEA to be submitted as a standalone product.

### Comments by Task

#### Task 1 – Planning digital games

In line with the other optional units, the interpretation of the brief was generally well evidenced. The explanations of how the interpretation was suitable for the client brief and target audience was not as well developed, in order to demonstrate understanding of how their planned approach would meet the requirements of the brief and the needs of the audience. There is a wide range of planning documentation covered in the specification and to support marks in this task candidates need to be able to select the appropriate documents which allow for effective planning of all the aspects of the digital game.

#### Task 2 – Planning and creating digital games

Generally, the game design document was a weaker area compared with the programming of the game. A number of candidates seem neglected the requirement for the game design document to be a discrete piece of evidence which was needed to support the first strand of this task; this was particularly common at the lower mark bands. To support marks in this element of the task, candidates need to be outlining areas such as the appearance and functionality of the game.

There was some great creativity in the games created, where candidates had really engaged with the idea of collaborative and co-operative game play where the game could not be won unless both players worked together. There were some challenges in accessing and viewing work, to make sure all aspects are accessible; centres may also choose to supply evidence that the game functions, such as screen capture or brief video showing the game in action. Centres may also choose to supply the games in native software file formats so that the programming can be viewed during moderation.

#### Misconception



In this unit the component parts are not the elements of the game. Although assets for use within the game may contribute to the mark for the first part of Task 2, the game design document is the main component part.

### Task 3 – Planning and Reviewing digital games

Candidates generally performed more strongly in the second element of the first strand, where reflection about the final product and its suitability to the brief was the main focus. The first element of the strand which involved testing and checking with a focus on the technical properties of the final product was weaker, with limited understanding of what methods could be used to check and test, or what technical properties might refer to.

In the second strand most candidates were able to identify some potential improvements and developments, but the explanations for those recommendations were less well developed. Centres should make sure that the content of Topic Area 3 is covered in full before completing the assessment.



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