ART AND DESIGN

| Paper 9704/01 |
| Controlled Test |

General comments

Section A with open-ended starting points was by far the most popular section with **Question 3** *Flowing*, proving to be the most popular question overall. This was followed by **Question 1** *Mirror Image*, **Question 5** *Underneath* and then **Question 2** *In safe hands*.

Question 7 *Empty bottles in and around a cardboard box*, **Question 8** *Fruit salad* were the most popular questions from the specific starting points offered in **Section B**. Fewer candidates attempted specific design briefs from **Section C** with **Question 12** *Albatross* and **Question 13** *Music matters* being the most popular in that section.

All questions afforded candidates plenty of opportunities for initial development from first hand sources. Questions in **Section A** provided the stimulus for many effective and original ideas as well as some strong observational studies, also evident in responses to questions from **Section B**. The majority of the best work was in **Section A** and **Section B**. At the top of the mark range there were some submissions that demonstrated exceptional responses to themes substantiated by mature understanding in direct observation and traditional painting techniques. In Painting and Photography entries for **Section A,** many candidates chose to deal with subjects that involved study of the human figure. There were only a few candidates who submitted work for **Question 9** *A figure knitting or sharpening a pencil,* with variable results.

Many candidates pursuing Graphic Design solutions preferred to opt for the open-ended starting points from **Section A** rather than the specific design briefs provided in **Section C**. Graphics submissions seen responding to **Section A,** questions were often personal and effective; sometimes with excellent and mature outcomes. Although there were some examples of submissions from **Section C** that achieved marks at the higher end of the mark range, the majority of work here fell into the middle and lower ranges.

Most submissions were Painting and Related Media, with the whole mark range from *exceptional* to *very poor* being represented. There were substantial entries in photography and a significant amount of graphics seen. A few responses in ceramics and textiles were seen but these usually fell into the lower mark ranges.

The best submissions resulted from personal responses to experiences with the creative journey being substantiated by first-hand observation, this was indicative in the most imaginative work that went beyond the purely representational.

Photography submissions generally lacked visual preparation or developmental work and were accompanied by written essays explaining processes and technical information which were largely irrelevant to personal developments. Preparatory studies were often presented on discs that amounted to a selection of the candidates' own photographs which were mixed up with inspirational works by others, rather than showing any clear direction informed by established practitioners. Specific links needed to be established and achievement levels would have benefitted from the inclusion of contact sheets of images, a set of mounted supporting prints and information about the choice of final image.

Here the best work demonstrated some strong ideas subjected to effective digital manipulation, but mid and lower marked submissions lacked formative developmental work, story boards, evaluations and editing. Large numbers of images appeared as random selections with some work rather formulaic in process and lacking personal qualities. The weakest work did not amount to more than sets of a few 'snap-shots' linked loosely to a topic rather than any artistic concerns.

There were examples of exceptional preparation seen in the painting submissions, indicating that candidates understood the importance of thorough preparatory work. Unfortunately some candidates were not always able to replicate the levels required to maintain qualities in the final examination piece. Preparatory and supporting studies ranged from mature and sophisticated to scant and barely apparent.

The highest marked candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of formal elements, which were reflected in innovative ideas throughout the preparatory studies. Some of the better candidates had added annotations to their studies which were insightful and supported the visual images.

Preparation in the mid-range submissions showed some observational drawing and experimentation with media. Nevertheless, there was evidence of work resulting from the copying of photographs that were not the candidate's own, either from magazines or downloaded images. In the middle and lower ranges, candidates were over reliant on selected single images and thereby restricting any opportunities for personal development, depth of investigation and experimentation in relation to viewpoint, lighting effects or composition. Some submissions reflected a solitary idea which was simply repeated over and over again through a range of media. The outcome weakened as a result of the loss of spontaneity. Too often the final examination piece was merely copied from one of the preparatory pieces resulting in a less successful outcome.

Candidates who achieved lower marks clearly had found difficulties in developing their ideas and had resorted to copying secondary images, all of which indicated a lack of understanding of formal elements and the importance of preparatory studies. Supporting work appeared hurried and betrayed both a lack of involvement and poor handling of media. The weakest candidates lacked a sense of direction or purpose.

Many candidates, particularly in the mid and lower ranges, provided no evidence of research into other artists. Here the importance and relevance of appropriate influences did not appear to be appreciated. Even when contextual references to other practitioners' works were included these were sometimes irrelevant to the candidates' concerns and appeared arbitrary. Appropriate and relevant references would have informed candidates' work and suggested further or fresh directions in developments.

Generally, work was well presented. Some Centres need to ensure that the final examination piece is placed on top of the submission as a whole and identified clearly. The examination piece and sheets of preparatory work should be securely fixed together at the top left-hand corner of each sheet. It would be appreciated if all Centres could ensure that candidates indicate the question attempted on all the labels provided. This information is particularly helpful when assessing more esoteric and very personal submissions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1   *Mirror Image*

This proved to be a very popular question with work seen across the entire mark range. Candidates developed effective direct observational studies and sound analyses. Predictably the human figure seen in relation to a mirror was a predominant choice. Work demonstrated good personal qualities as well as considered approaches to viewpoints and composition.

The best work was both personal and informed with strong ideas and very thorough preparatory work, often displaying good analysis of colour with excellent painterly qualities. Drawing from direct observation augmented by personal photographs for reference as well as links with established artists enabled sound evaluations.

Other topics included still life, twins and reflections in broken mirrors. Photography explored surreal aspects of figures in front of reflections that were effectively manipulated through *Photoshop.* Painting and photography submissions explored distortion with some very personal contrasting self-portraits that dealt with the perception of ageing and weight issues. The influence of Magritte in showing figures with different images being reflected in a mirror was referenced by some candidates and combined with computer aided means.

Distortions were explored in the middle and lower ranges. However, here there was less attention to observational drawing and lower marked work relied on secondary images from magazines or downloaded images.

Question 2   *In safe hands*

This also proved to be a popular choice with candidates where care and safety were the predominant theme. In the upper mark range candidates explored relationships between nature and mother earth with natural forms of fruit, human female figures and children as well as animal variants. Political comment was also apparent here. The mid-range work was typified by competent representations of hands albeit rather literal.

Photography submissions were littered with well-known downloaded images of cupped-hands, filled with earth and seedlings. These proved very popular and were not only used as supporting studies but also as a source for direct copying with little variation.

Graphic Design solutions explored topics such as anti-bullying in the form of poster designs. Painterly outcomes depicted family groups, although a lack of understanding of the human figure led to weaker outcomes in these cases. There were some rather weak ceramic interpretations seen also.

Question 3   *Flowing*

This question was by far the most popular question and it resulted in a wide range of interpretations and processes and covered the full mark range. Approaches ranged from realist to abstract with painting and drawing, fashion, ceramics, film and photography submissions all seen. The very best work demonstrated excellent understanding, analysis from direct observation and sound and effective ideas, particularly in painting. Wave and ripple patterns were taken into abstraction and accompanied by relevant references and there were instances of accomplished use of transparent water colour technique. Other high achieving submissions included paintings of the human figure within a photo-realist painting technique and some outstanding photographic outcomes. Waterfalls, fountains and long hair all provided interesting starting points.

Relationships between people were shown through linked figures using flowing lines. Expressionist and Art Nouveau references often provided necessary stimulus. Lower level work betrayed a lack of understanding of composition and relationships between colour and shape. Fashion entries comprised dresses where flowing was merely indicated as a characteristic of the actual garment. In photography, semi-abstract images of inks 'floating' in water were more effective when seen poured over forms, such as ice cubes in order to highlight structures.

Question 4   *Concentration*

Predictably a strong figurative content was seen in the upper mark range with outstanding manipulative skills, understanding of form and space and the treatment of composition around themes such as figures reading, smoking and playing board games such as chess. This was a challenging question which nevertheless proved very popular. Where candidates used opaque painting techniques in the supporting studies, the results were often very successful. Although in the final pieces, candidates often opted for transparent water colour which was often overworked.

Mid-range figurative work made promising attempts with proportion, but the reliance on secondary imagery limited development. It was good to see that ceramic work at this level proved to be satisfactory. Lower achieving work was poor in analysis and appeared rushed, including fashion responses that lacked adequate research and application.

Question 5   *Underneath*

Some effective imaginative work was seen in response to this question. Low viewpoints were taken full advantage of here, such as views under the bed and under water. Other subjects included layers of clothing, ghosts, and the person beneath the 'hoodie', under bonnets (hoods) of cars, skeletons, veils and umbrellas and so on. Concepts relating to layers of personality and the inner self were also considered.

Candidates for photography found plenty to explore with this theme, including underneath the surface of landscape to human or theatrical skin layers. Upper and mid-range work concerned itself with swimmers under water with figures treated cleverly from low or high viewpoints in a photo-realist painting style. In the middle and lower ranges, the visual treatment of the 'social under-class' such as beggars and drug addicts suffered problems with the organisation of the compositions and proportions of forms. The latter problem was noticeable in some ceramic pieces as well.

Question 6   *Gathering*

Obvious solutions here were family groups such as weddings and funerals but also included effective painterly representation of the gathering of tribes and clans. In the lower mark ranges, groups of animals or people playing games relied on secondary resource material. Some excellent and unusual pieces included photography entries using CAD. There were also alternative still life arrangements in both painting and photography. Some submissions suffered because each form was treated separately rather than as a whole, unified by light and shade.

Section B

Question 7   *Empty bottles in and around a cardboard box*

Some excellent painterly responses dealing with colour and surface qualities were seen here, all of which demonstrated an effective understanding of forms represented in space. Paint, pastel and photography provided the main means of exploration with some outstanding resolutions. Compositions were carefully considered although work in the middle and lower ranges betrayed a lack of understanding in terms of the use of perspective with resulting faults seen particularly in the representation of space on the upturned box. Some effective additional use of collage was noted in some of the paintings. Drawing was not very strong in the lower work.

At the upper levels, close-up cropped views bordered on a more abstracted approach while in other excellent pieces, dramatic lighting across bottles, for example, created strong chiaroscuro effects. Accomplished opaque and transparent painting methods were apparent.

Question 8   *Fruit salad*

Here was another opportunity for the successful analytical study of a still life group. Candidates obviously enjoyed representing fruit although the treatment of form was variable and also, predictably, with the ellipses related to the glass bowl proving too difficult for many.

The very best paintings seen were often demonstrated by strong tonal contrasts as well as effective treatment of different surface qualities with photography being used effectively in the preparation as a means of exploring the visual potential of the subject matter. However, the final painted compositions worked best when they were directly seen from the still life group itself as opposed to photographs.

Middle and lower level work showed difficulties in conveying arrangements and resulted in poor compositions that reflected problems with relationships between form, space and understanding of surfaces. There were cases where a more decorative approach to colour and surface resulted in satisfactory resolutions. Other work included repeat pattern design and video submissions.

Question 9   *Figure engaged in knitting or sharpening a pencil*

This question was not particularly popular but appeared sporadically across the mark range. There were a few accomplished pieces in paint and pastel of figures and of aged hands knitting which paid careful attention to form, tone and colour.

Work seen lower down the mark range was often poorly observed, with candidates not fully experimenting with the viewpoint or position of the figure. All too often the final outcome was simply a copy of a photograph. Where photography was used as the medium, the work was generally good with a thorough level of research into alternate poses and different lighting effects. However the interpretations here tended to be rather literal with little development of ideas.

Question 10   *Rooftops and buildings, etc.*

Candidates generally took a literal bird's eye view of the subject matter. Middle range work showed some appreciation of light across surfaces with work lower down the mark range incurring problems with the depiction of depth, and the use of perspective limited developments. Candidates often resorted to separate studies of different views and selected one to use for the final piece, usually this was not so well executed.

Some contextual references could have benefitted levels of understanding and execution.

Question 11   *Interpret the whole or any part of an extract*

Very few submissions were received and those that were seen ranged from the very good to adequate. Effective imaginative melancholy compositions of the waiting room were seen with considered treatment of arrangements of figures in space, light and silhouettes. Some compositions lacked unity.

Section C

Question 12   *Albatross, logo etc.*

This was a popular choice of question within **Section C** and work submitted covered the entire mark range. There were examples of mature and outstanding submissions with exceptional understanding of design processes. Here, observational drawing was combined with candidates' own photographs with a broad range of ideas being explored before researching logos and the integration of typefaces with images. Computer imaged designs were combined with hand rendering. Designs for complete deck uniforms from different angles were also seen.

Middle level work showed some understanding of design processes. Here hand rendered studies lacked precision and careful observation while digital manipulation elements were more impressive. Submissions lacked ideas and invention and very few candidates annotated their ideas adequately. A reliance on secondary resources and clip art was apparent.

Although candidates were able to show their designs overlaid on photographic images they did not provide evidence of how the final design was developed. Final logos were presented with no evidence of exploration of different typefaces, and concerns with integration of letter form and imagery were neglected. Having designed the 'A' for the main sail, sometimes candidates left the letter A off the design for the hull, i.e. ('albatross').

The weakest work was characterised by very limited and elementary preparation that attempted to merely answer the question.

Question 13   *Music matters – book cover*

There were several responses to this option and work was seen from across the ability range. Higher marked candidates had successfully integrated and manipulated their own paintings and drawings within computer programmes for final designs and had explored different arrangements and experimented with a variety of fonts.

Middle range work tended to settle on the development of the colour schemes and combinations of musical instruments and dancing figures in a single design. Designs of figures, clothing and instruments were competently handled and integrated with lettering. Very lively observational figure studies in pencil were also seen.

Some candidates produced hand rendered copies from their own work on computer but with no further development of ideas. In other examples effective painting was evident although let down by lack of research into typography which tended to be seen as secondary to pictorial elements. Instruments from various cultures were used. Often candidates had problems in unifying elements in final designs. There was little evidence that candidates had studied book jacket covers in any depth. Some candidates appeared to confuse positions of front and back covers in their layouts.

In the lower mark range the computer was often used to present easily achievable outcomes and work at this level had little or no evidence of exploration or development of an idea or experiments with different fonts. In the weakest work candidates resorted to bubble lettering.

Question 14   *Repeat pattern for wrapping paper and motif for carrier bag: Transport Museum.*

Only a few scripts were received for this option. Candidates struggled to develop any original images and had little appreciation of the purpose or construction of a repeat pattern grid. Candidates had not paid sufficient attention to drawing from transport imagery and the potential for development. Instead there was a reliance on second hand images from magazines with diagrammatic studies and just a few quick line drawings made before work was commenced on final designs. Experimentation with repeat/half drop/overlapping designs and colour, was lacking.

Most work remained in the lower ranges. Only occasionally a design from a specific source resulted in a competent outcome.

Question 15   *Theatre costumes, Conflict and Harmony.*

Again, only a few submissions were received for this option. Submissions appeared across the mark range from *Very Good* to *Very Poor*.

At the higher level preparatory work demonstrated a sound understanding of fashion drawing combined with effective ideas, thoughtful use of colour and texture and cloth swatches. Work book developments were thorough and the figures were seen from various angles showing clearly how the garments would fit the body shapes.

At the lower levels there was again a lack of insight into the design process and very few candidates started their studies by drawing from direct observation. Here drawings of figures were weak and remained as flat outlines filled in with the candidates' thin, first ideas which in many cases were carried through to the examination piece. Some candidates mistakenly thought that it was a requirement for the costumes to be made and the time taken to do this was at the expense of thorough preparatory design work.

Candidates need to realise that drawing is the best starting point and that a range of ideas/colour ways should be explored before making a selection and choice for the final examination designs.

ART AND DESIGN

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Paper 9704/02
Coursework
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Key message

The best work was exploratory, experimental, full of originality and showed very good levels of technical competence within the chosen specialist areas of study.

General comments

The most common area of study continues to be Painting and Related Media. Photography was the next most popular, followed by Graphic Design. Smaller numbers were entered for 3D Design, Sculpture, Ceramics, Fashion and Textiles.

Although approaches varied enormously, the most successful Centres had a clear understanding of the syllabus content as well as the Assessment Objectives. There was evidence that courses were well structured and the work submitted for assessment encompassed all of the Assessment Objectives, so candidates' achievement levels could be appropriately rewarded.

In the best work, candidates had clearly been encouraged to work from direct observation. There was evidence of detailed analyses from natural and man-made forms and still life arrangements. Candidates had visited interesting locations within their immediate environment where they had collected information through drawing and photography. Many had chosen to work from the figure and had used family, friends or themselves as sources of first hand study. Some of the very best had begun to explore abstract or emotional concepts or to develop work of a more non-representational quality.

The importance of studying the work of other artists and cultures had also been emphasised in many Centres. Visits to museums and galleries had been arranged so that candidates could begin to value different styles and working methods at first hand.

In weaker submissions the work was much narrower, both in ideas and exploration. An emphasis had been placed on producing finished pieces with little evidence of a range of ideas or research, experimentation or development. This was particularly common within the areas of Photography and Graphic Design.

Too much work at this level was reliant on secondary source material, where an emphasis had been placed on the technical skills of copying from such material. Where references to the work of other artists or historical sources were used, they had come solely from books or downloaded indiscriminately from the Internet. Slavish copying of such work, or long biographical notes, did little to inform personal exploration or development.

Standards of presentation of work were varied. The best submissions were carefully edited, and mounted sheets had been arranged in a logical sequence. Final outcomes were supported with clear evidence of the depth and range of research, experimentation and development. Sometimes this was supplemented with photographs of work in progress or relevant written notes. In such cases it was clear how the Centres had used the Assessment Objectives and mark scheme in arriving at their marks.

Unfortunately there were many instances when this good practice was not followed. Folders were submitted with many pieces of unmounted work in no logical order. It was difficult to distinguish between finished work and relevant supporting studies. In many cases only a few pieces of unrelated finished works were submitted with little evidence that candidates had pursued a specialist course of study to any great depth. It should be clear to Centres that in such cases these candidates have not met all of the Assessment Objectives and their levels of achievement must fall within the lower mark ranges.

Comments on areas of study

Painting and Related Media

Submissions were very varied and covered the full ability range. A variety of approaches was seen: figurative, abstract and pattern making, landscape and urban scenes, as well as studies from man-made and natural forms.

Painting media predominated, but drawing, oil pastel and coloured pencil studies were also popular. There were a lot of mixed media approaches including some collage work and photographic work which had been over drawn or painted. Printmaking processes were also used, both as an end result and in combination with other techniques.

The best submissions were highly experimental and candidates had explored several ideas in a variety of media before selecting one or more to develop further. The best work had evidence of working from first hand sources even when the development had led to abstract outcomes. When the work of others or cultural references had been used they had informed the development of candidates' personal ideas.

Mid range entries lacked a consistency in the development of ideas, editing and experimenting with media and processes. Folders suffered from inadequate research and investigation. The use of colour was rather literal, and even when they had referenced the work of other artists they were unable to analyse how colour had been used as a means of personal expression, or to create mood and atmosphere. At this level of achievement there was too much copying from secondary sources and whilst the work may have had strong technical skills, it was lacking in originality or the development of personal qualities.

The weakest submissions generally consisted of a few unrelated studies of copied images. There was no first hand information, research or development towards personal conclusions. In some cases only one project had been submitted and there was little evidence that these candidates had followed any course of specialist study at Advanced Level.

Photography

Some excellent work was submitted in this area of study, encompassing ambitious themes. Some were issue based, some had a narrative element, and others used their own environment or figure work. Final prints were technically proficient and demonstrated excellent aesthetic awareness. Supporting work provided evidence of extensive exploration of chosen themes and the development of ideas, often referring to the work of other photographers.

Black and white processing continues to be popular but there is an increasing use of colour work featuring computer manipulation and digitally produced prints, some being submitted on CDs. In such cases care needs to be taken to identify which images are the candidate's own and where and under what conditions they were taken. There should still be evidence of exploration and experimentation and the development of personal ideas. It is all too easy to rely solely on the manipulative skills required for Photoshop. A high level of professional finish can be used to try to mask weak ideas. There were many examples where this digital approach had been used but the journey a candidate had made was unclear. The submissions were lacking in a range of alternative approaches such as distortion, deconstruction, the overlay of images, changes of scale, colour, addition of textures, or development beyond the figurative into more abstract compositions.

Other less successful traditional photography demonstrated competent technical skills but again lacked a range of processes, techniques or alternative ideas. The work was more often the result of a single visit to a particular site.

A few examples of video and video animation were seen. The best animation used a very simple concept which had been well planned and documented as a story-board. Images and backgrounds created by the candidate were used with the addition of a suitable musical background.

There was some much weaker work with no printouts or story-boards to provide evidence of research or exploration. The required technical skills were beyond the candidate's level of ability.

Graphic Design

Designs for restaurants, shops, logos, letterheads, posters, packaging, CD and DVD covers were seen.

The best submissions were outstanding. While contemporary IT processes were used in the majority of cases, there was evidence of well taught understanding of the principals of design, largely through hand drawn examples. Candidates had included their own first hand research drawings and photographs. Ideas had been explored, selected, refined and developed through computer manipulation and other media with final outcomes being a fusion of these methods. A wide range of colours and effects had been explored. Care had been taken with the choice of font and its relationship with image. All work was clearly presented on well organised design sheets which included printouts of the computer screens to show the changes made. There was clear evidence of the decision making and problem solving processes.

Weaker submissions provided very little evidence of starting points. The research was very often scrapbook sheets of commercially available examples found in magazines etc. Designs, especially for CD and DVD covers, became over-complicated and fussy with too many different fonts. Very few had experimented with different colour-ways and looked at the work of international graphic designers, either historical or contemporary.

3D Design, Sculpture, Ceramics

Very few sculpture submissions were seen. Most were highly competent, demonstrating excellent technical control and very personal ideas.

Some of the very best were 3D installations based on seed pods, deconstructed Christmas decorations, ageing and decay. These entries were well documented with drawings, studies and annotated photographs; with evidence of the exploration of alternative ideas.

Other large, clay modelled forms of screws and screw drivers had been placed in a number of different situations using Photoshop.

All candidates submitting sculptures included very good photographs of their work, and sometimes of the work in progress.

Some very weak ceramic work was submitted. Coiled and slab built pots were immature and lacking in experience of this medium. They were submitted without any additional supporting work.

Fashion Design

A few very good submissions were seen with evidence of first hand research from natural forms which were developed into original garment designs. Fabric swatches were included and the quality of the fashion drawings showed an influence of contemporary fashion illustration.

Unfortunately there were a number of other submissions which were more dressmaking exercises than fashion design. Whilst technical skills could be rewarded there was very little evidence of sources of inspiration or the development of the candidates' own ideas.

Other weak submissions were little more than a series of fashion drawings of poor quality which had been copied from secondary sources.

Textile Design

There were very few submissions for this area. There were some highly skilful batiks and silk paintings showing a good sense of design development based largely on local cultural references. Some tie and dye examples with inventive ideas were let down by a lack of colour exploration and poor aesthetic qualities.

ART AND DESIGN

Key comment

Candidates producing the most successful work had carefully selected their choice of subject or theme. Those using starting points that could be visited and revisited, such as their own environment, themselves or friends, or man-made and natural forms generally had much more to inform their ideas.

General comments

Most candidates understood the emphasis of this component and seemed engaged and enthusiastic. It was clear that they enjoyed the opportunity of developing work towards a finished outcome, and the best were ambitious both in scale and complexity of ideas. These candidates showed that they had gained confidence from the experience they had received in component two.

Large scale work was well documented with quality photographs and supporting notes where appropriate.

Contextual references were relevant and the influences of looking at how others had approached similar themes or used media could be clearly seen.

Mid level work was characterised by limited research and development of original ideas, even though very high levels of technical skills were evident. Too much emphasis was placed on producing a number of finished pieces rather than focusing upon an in-depth investigation of a chosen theme before then carrying an idea through to a conclusion.

There were a number of submissions which were similar to those entered for component two. Folders consisted of sheets of unrelated studies and class exercises, with much evidence of copying from secondary sources.

When sketchbooks are used properly they are a valuable tool for the candidate, as well as confirming the level of engagement and wider interest in the subject to the moderator. Drawings, observations, notes, experiments and reference material should be entered directly into the sketchbook and develop into a visual diary which documents the candidate's thinking and involvement throughout the course. Any studies which are relevant to the final coursework submission can be easily identified in some way.

Unfortunately evidence of this good practice was not common, and most sketchbooks were made up of studies cut from class work and stuck in, or a few very quick sketches which had little reference or meaning to any ideas presented in coursework folders. Some books were made up from sheets of earlier work simply stapled or bound together.

Comments on areas of study

Painting and Related Media

A wide variety of approaches were seen. The best demonstrated a fresh and highly personal approach, coupled with strong manipulative skills and aesthetic awareness. There were many excellent and inventive combinations of mixed media as well as some large scale paintings and drawings (submitted through good quality photographs). There were also some very impressive and powerful compositions expressing candidates' reactions to emotive issues, but the best of these still relied on first hand sources as their starting points. The influence of science fiction was seen in a few submissions, where a creative use of computer manipulation was used to arrive at new shapes and images. All submissions at this level contained evidence of evaluation of work in progress, and this could be rewarded within the assessment domain of Knowledge and Critical Understanding.

Mid level entries demonstrated competence, but in some cases supporting work revealed repetitive practice rather than in-depth research and development. There were also many examples where the potential seen in an exciting range of research and exploration had failed to influence the final outcomes. In some cases the finished pieces suffered from being in a medium not used within the supporting work. Many at this level had chosen topics of an abstract, emotive nature such as anger or human suffering. There were problems translating such ideas into visual imagery, more often resorting to a reliance on secondary sources for their information. They also lacked the skills to interpret and translate these into their own visual compositions.

Weak entries had very little supporting work, and when there was evidence of the start of some investigation, they failed to maintain or sustain this through to a final conclusion. Folders contained too much evidence of unrelated work which had been included as a filler when ideas had run out.

Photography

There were some outstanding examples from this area. Submissions were mature in concept, technically proficient in execution, with a refined sense of aesthetic. They had been informed by referencing the work of other established photographers. Local tribal decoration, images of streets, reflections in cars and machinery had been used as starting points. The quality of presentation was of an excellent standard.

Mid range entries had also made good use of visits to local archaeological sites or of still life subjects, but the range of ideas and photographic skills was more limited.

The weakest work was little more than snapshots with no evidence of proper investigation or creativity. Final prints were of very poor quality; a monotone grey, covered with hairs, stains and fingerprints.

Graphic Design

The strongest submissions had worked to clear design briefs and had considered how their final designs could be used in a number of related contexts such as logos, packages, posters, and web-page designs. Most candidates were able to take advantage of computer programmes to produce strong, personal and original designs demonstrating excellent contemporary Graphic Design aesthetic awareness. Stronger submissions also included high quality hand-drawn work in preparation for their designs. Several alternative ideas were usually explored.

There were many far less successful entries with little research and too much reliance on clip-art and copies from inferior magazine advertising. The relationship between text and image lacked thought, and there were few experiments with different colourways. These were very thin submissions rather than focused coursework projects.

3D Design, Sculpture

A few architectural designs were submitted in the very good and excellent mark range. They demonstrated a sound knowledge of this area of design, with good references to the work of established architects. Their designs were imaginative yet practical.

Single entries for interior design and jewellery design were received and details of their performance would have been included in individual Centre reports.

Very few sculpture submissions were received, but generally they demonstrated very good craft skills in realising quite individual and imaginative ideas. Good photographs of the finished pieces, as well as of work in progress, accompanied evidence of research and exploration.

Fashion Design

Some outstanding entries were received using insect and animal life, car features and historical and cultural sources for inspiration. The process of research, investigation and design development was documented in great depth and developed into inventive, creative designs for clothes, shoes and a range of accessories. Fabric swatches, trims etc. were beautifully presented on well laid out design sheets. Some had made up garments showing high levels of pattern cutting and needlework. A couple had even taken excellent fashion shots of the garments being modelled.

Weaker candidates produced lively, competent fashion drawings but lacked real research and sustained development of their own ideas.

Textile Design

Two embroidered wall hangings were seen and a few batiks. Details of individual performances have been given in Centre reports.

ART AND DESIGN

Key comment

The main aim of the Personal Study is to encourage candidates to focus on selected examples of existing works of art or design from established contemporary or historical practitioners, seen at first hand, by making critical judgements and personal evaluations.

General comments

The majority of Centres sent their candidates' OPFs (Outline Proposal Forms) to Cambridge for approval this session. When the provisos were adhered to and the advice implemented, this was a beneficial process. Where candidates disregarded the advice given, the ensuing lack of focus on clear intentions limited their abilities to meet the assessment criteria evenly.

Organisation and presentation of the study is important. While many studies presented in A4-sized files show a competent concern for layout and the integration of text and images, candidates who choose a larger format, making use of both sides of a page for double-page spreads, usually create the most exciting visual presentations. Such formats allow flexibility in layout, the opportunity for interesting juxtapositions, the inclusion of practical analyses and variations of size and media of illustrations, notations, titles, sub-headings, quotations and text. To be successful, however, planning and forethought are required, similar to the demands of the other components of the examination. Teachers should monitor the progress of candidates by offering clear guidance on the structure, sequence and focus of the studies. An introduction and a conclusion are obvious requirements, but it is also important for the investigation to remain relevant to intentions. A focus on a selection of examples for analysis and comparisons of their contexts, stylistic influences, themes and use of materials and processes should be encouraged. Analysis of works needs to probe beyond basic descriptions into the structures and relationships of visual elements. This concerns their composition or design and their use of form, space, shape, line, colour, tone, and surface qualities. Consequently, the inclusion of lengthy biographies, interviews, questionnaires and broad periods of Art History are not relevant unless used very selectively in direct relationship to the works selected for investigation. Practical analysis of the work through drawings, diagrams, paintings and photographs should be encouraged as much as written comment. It may even form the dominant part of the study, providing written notations are also used to identify and explain the visual material.

Comments on various levels of achievement

The most successful studies communicated a strong sense of involvement through personal enthusiasm and a commitment to sustain the investigation. The analysis of work was selective and controlled, offering clear evaluations in terms of cultural contexts, stylistic influences, aesthetic qualities and use of materials. Lively visual presentations resulted from thorough planning of the layout of a variety of illustrative material and its integration with text, headings and notations. Personal evaluations and critical judgements resulting from the investigation were sometimes firmly linked to the candidate's coursework experiences.

At the mid levels of achievement, studies were usually well sustained and focused. However, comments on chosen works tended to be dominated by descriptions of what the works depicted rather than their structures and use of visual elements. Practical studies also tended towards copies rather than selective analyses of particular aspects of composition, such as shape, line or colour. Critical judgements were expressed in terms of likes or dislikes with little evidence offered to support such opinions. Computer processes were often used well to present a competent level of integrated written and visual material, but there was less care taken in organising the layout in an interesting or visually exciting way for an Art and Design submission.

The studies received at the lower levels of achievement tended to lack a sense of direction, structure and focus. Much material irrelevant to the analysis of works, such as biographies, interviews and questionnaires was included to bolster the content. There was a heavy dependency on secondary sources, such as

European Art History copied from books or downloaded from the Internet. This was used very unselectively and often had no relevance to the intentions on the proposal form. Evaluations were vague and inconclusive and little concern was shown for the selection and organisation of visual elements in relation to written material. Some studies offered little more than technical manuals, travel brochures or catalogues of works without comment. A number of very poor or misguided submissions were also received. Some of these concerned areas of knowledge unconnected to Art and Design issues, such as marketing, farming, geography or popular music. Some simply presented a few pieces of coursework without comment or explanation. Others offered general summaries of world civilisations from prehistoric times to the present day. None of these approaches would have been approved if a proposal form had been sent to CIE. There were some candidates who had submitted viable proposals but did not produce the work, submitting instead two or three sheets of writing, unrelated to any particular works, or a file which consisted solely of sheets downloaded from the Internet.

For further advice, teachers should contact CIE to obtain the CD Rom: AS/A-level Art and Design Standards, or access the moderated online discussion group for Art and Design on the Teacher Support Site (http://teachers.cie.org.uk).