

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/01
Controlled Test

General Comments

On the whole the response to this paper was very positive with a range of interpretations for many of the questions. The majority of candidates selected the open ended starting points with over two thirds of the responses coming from **Section A**. The most popular questions were **Question 1**, 'Entrances', **Question 2**, 'Identity', **Question 4**, 'Weathered' and **Question 6**, 'Contained'. Preparation, presentation of work and the selection and use of media was very good from most Centres. Outcomes were produced using a variety of media including pencil, paint, pastel, collage, ink, etching, silkscreen, textile, batik, photography, computer imaging and video, all predominately 2D.

Starting points in **Section B** received less than one third of responses. The most popular questions were **Question 7**, 'Different Types of Cactus and Succulents', **Question 9**, 'A Person Dressed For a Night Out' and **Question 8**, 'An Open Door Reveals the Contents of a Cupboard'.

Section C was the least popular section with fewer submissions. **Question 12**, 'Logo for Broad Horizons' and **Question 14**, 'Design for a Repeat Pattern' attracted the most submissions.

Some Centres worked purely in photography, with excellent presentation of their work on A1 folded boards which showed the journey from initial starting points to final outcomes. Where Centres choose to submit all of the work from candidates on a CD, it is imperative that print outs of the final piece from each candidate is included.

The most successful responses displayed some very inventive and personal interpretations of the starting points with strengths in their observation of the subject and in the range and development of ideas. Preparation time was used positively and effectively to produce thorough research, investigation and depth of analysis, with good and appropriate contextual referencing. Materials were skilfully employed reflecting sensitivity, expression and sophistication. Preparatory studies showed an involvement and commitment to the subject matter as well as a personal journey. Responses at this level came from all three sections but were weighted towards **Section A**.

In the medium range submissions indicated less recording and observation from first-hand sources, and the origin of the sources was sometimes unclear. There was less evidence of depth in the critical analysis of topics, with investigations, observations and recording processes not being as well developed. Ideas were explored, though these could be repetitive and lacked the understanding of development seen at the higher levels.

At the lower levels candidates would have benefited from spending more time researching their chosen question, often submitting insufficient preparatory work resulting in a limited development of ideas and personal engagement. Consequently they were unable to produce a substantial and informed response. For many of the candidates at this level the rendering of materials was less developed and often limited in the exploration of media. There was more reliance on secondary sources and imagination for starting points, and this led to disparate and sometimes unrelated research work with random images and unfulfilled ideas. Candidates' understanding of formal elements and their application was generally weak.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1 Entrances

Candidates at higher levels showed an excellent ability to experiment with paint and colour mixing to achieve a variety of tones. Candidates were able to use this skill in colour mixing and their understanding of shadows and contrasting highlights to accentuate the feeling of going through an entrance. There were also some very strong photographic submissions which relied on ambiguous depth and space.

Middle range candidates incorporated some first-hand recording and personal photographs supplemented with secondary imagery.

Weaker candidates would have benefited from exploring a range of viewpoints/angles and different entrances to improve the marks awarded for AO1. Some submissions included repetitive images showing little development. In several cases the painting skills demonstrated in the preparatory studies were inconsistent with those of the exam piece, which suggested an inability to successfully make informed judgements on media and methods of application.

Question 2 Identity

This was the most popular question and prompted some very successful submissions. Subject matter was varied with much work taking a historical and cultural direction in the country's identity in the form of maps, roots, customs and celebratory events.

By comparison, weaker submissions were not able to develop their ideas so fully and often relied on secondary sourced images as their inspiration. In some cases candidates started with some interesting and original ideas but were unable to fully develop them. Referring to the work of other photographers or artists for inspiration would have helped with the development process and produce a stronger outcome.

Question 3 Translucent

This was the least popular question. Subject matter included fish, squid, eyes, ice, glass and insect wings. The strongest work investigated the qualities of light, reflections and distortions with a high degree of sensitivity. At the upper level there was an imaginative photographic submission exploring the effect of glycerine on flowers. The outcomes were effective and showed good personal qualities. The work included a variety of photo shoots/ locations and styling of the still life and clearly documented the process of digitally manipulating and editing the photographs.

The work at the middle level could sometimes be obscure or vague with no clear direction or intention, and at times showed a confused journey in the preparatory studies that was unresolved. The handling of materials however demonstrated a good level of skill

Work at the lower level often attempted a conceptual interpretation resulting in contrived and fragmented resolutions. The more successful submissions at this level were the literal ideas, although the levels of technical skills and understanding of formal elements were poor.

Question 4 Weathered

This was a popular question with a wide variety of responses. Successful responses included a broad range of media, and candidates explored their chosen theme through a variety of processes looking at textural effects and surface qualities which in some cases produced abstracted outcomes. There were also some excellent photographic submissions which explored weathering effects on old cars, buildings and people, many with relevant references to established photographers.

There was also some good detailed drawing in the work submitted in the middle levels but it often lacked media experimentation or an understanding of composition, and limited personal development.

The work at the lower level was often imaginative with an over reliance on secondary sources and copying or tracing. Although there was some evidence of experimentation, it lacked content and direction, producing style over substance. Many candidates at this level did not understand relationships between images, or the importance of composition.

Question 5 Stark

Few candidates chose to answer this question. Bleak landscapes and thorny, spiky plants were used as references, all from primary observation, and the work was personal and thoughtful.

Many candidates did not include any drawings from direct observation or show any development of ideas. Responses were abstract and quirky and often inspired by cultural festivals, carnivals, masks and costumes which bore little relationship to the topic.

At the lower level, work contained fragmented imagery with little understanding of composition, and unresolved ideas leading to weak resolutions. There was a reliance on secondary imagery or examples of one page of preparatory work, which did not relate to the final exam piece at all. More drawing from direct observation, a wider collection of images and experimentation with media and making reference to the work of other artists would be beneficial to the development of ideas.

Question 6 Contained

This was a popular question and there were some inventive and individual responses ranging from abstract approaches to observational submissions and literal outcomes. Many candidates put objects into jars as a starting point, and at the upper level there were some very strong image manipulative skills seen. There were some powerful photographic submissions of figures where candidates had used directional lighting to enhance tonal contrast.

Some candidates had taken several photographs exploring the idea of contained emotions and stress. They experimented with photography and computer design software to merge the images together and then painted from them, using references to an artist to inspire their ideas. Strong submissions demonstrated good use of colour to emphasise different emotions and included a range of media tests such as clay, to depict a face screaming. The responses included contact sheets and detailed pencil drawings from first-hand studies of facial features showing a variety of emotions.

Middle level candidates often chose to approach this question as a straightforward still-life study. Others relied too much on secondary source imagery and experimented very little with composition or media to develop their ideas fully. Some had made creative links and interpretations of the word 'contained'. There was some continuity in the development of ideas and materials were handled with some degree of control in responses at this level.

Candidates at the lower level struggled to convey ideas of contained emotions and they found the rendering of figures challenging. The handling of materials was inconsistent often displaying technical weaknesses, and there was a lack of continuity in their recording and developmental skills.

Section B

Question 7 Different types of cactus and succulents

The responses to this starting point demonstrated a variety of approaches in terms of media, observation and personal interpretation. The majority of submissions were located at the mid to high levels with some very honest attempts at still life.

The work at the higher level showed an excellent understanding of perspective, ellipses, form, composition, tonal contrasts, lighting and colour mixing and application. Final outcomes were supported by preparatory studies that had thoroughly investigated the subject through observational drawing, colour, photography and research into established artists.

At the middle levels, candidates made good use of photography and also drew from observation from a range of view points, including very detailed close up studies of the surface of the plants. Understanding of form, texture and colour was good and candidates had used their own images to create personal and well thought out compositions. Some candidates worked on top of torn paper of different colours with charcoal, chalk and pastel. A range of media was often experimented with and outcomes showed good painting and drawing skills.

Candidates achieving lower levels took inspiration less from their own drawings and photographs and relied more on secondary sources. They would have benefited from spending more time sustaining their

observations through drawing and photography, experimenting with viewpoints and compositions and exploring ideas and media in order to fulfil all of the assessment objectives.

Question 8 Open door revealing contents of a cupboard containing cleaning products

Not a very popular question, although there were some very good photographic submissions which had explored lighting, tonal contrast and surface textures as well as viewpoints and composition.

Higher-level candidates produced well-observed drawings, which were clearly drawn from direct observation. They often demonstrated a good understanding of perspective and used of a range of media to explore the different textures and surface qualities of the various objects within the cupboard, such as shiny transparent plastic bottles and the rough textures of brushes. Some submissions included candidates' own photographs from which they had developed ideas. Some preparatory studies also explored the possibilities of different viewpoints and compositions.

Lower level work drew far less accurately, and did not understand perspective or tone and form. The candidates may have tried out a couple of different media but did not develop their work sufficiently; instead they often simply reproduced the same initial drawing in the exam, often not as successfully. There were inconsistencies in the observation and analysis of the subject and compositions were sometimes limited, lacking focus and detail.

Question 9 Person dressed for a night out

Not many candidates responded to this question. High-level submissions included some strong photographic work where candidates had taken care to set up and pose the model within a variety of contexts, and to experiment with lighting to create mood and atmosphere. There was also evidence of very strong painting skills. Candidates used a full range of tones and skilful brush work to successfully describe a highly polished floor, rich colours and subtle tones were used to describe the folds of silken fabric of the model's dress/clothing and the figure was drawn in a variety of poses that suggested waiting, for example sitting by a telephone in the hall, gazing out of a window or with a travel bag next to them. The preparatory work included drawings of the figure in a variety of different positions and from a range of viewpoints. There was an unusual drawing of a female figure decorated with a collage of real jewellery and textiles and the preparatory work contained some beautifully analysed drawings of hands and faces interpreted from the candidate's own photographs.

The middle level work demonstrated some research though recording and observation sometimes lacked informative detail but were complimented by a cohesive final piece.

Less successful candidates relied on drawing from secondary source material, which they experimented a little with and although the drawing was adequate, little was awarded for personal qualities or exploration and ideas development.

Question 10 View onto a balcony

Few candidates attempted this question even though the possibilities for research into other artists as a starting point were obvious. Candidates missed opportunities for contextual links such as references to Matisse and none of the Impressionists was mentioned in any of the preparatory work.

There were a small number of photographic submissions for this question which explored the strong contrasts between interiors and exteriors. A higher level submission also used the perspective of the balcony very effectively to take the eye into the distance.

The middle level work demonstrated some competence in the use of materials to communicate ideas but there was a limited amount of investigation and exploration of the topic leading to a repetition of images rather than a development of a range of ideas, which resulted in obvious and undeveloped final outcomes.

At the lower level the standard of drawing was very poor and the work demonstrated limited personal qualities. The preparatory studies showed no development of ideas and a poor understanding of perspective. There was no experimentation of media or of the images; these were copied straight from secondary sourced photographs in pencil and watercolour.

Question 11 Cool twilight was waning as boat reached mooring

There were a limited number of submissions for this question. High level submissions included evidence of very strong painting skills, initial drawings and photographs manipulated and experimented with, to develop ideas and generate a strong final piece in the final exam.

At the middle level it was unclear as to the origins of the subject matter, and how ideas were connected. Much of the imagery appeared to be from secondary sources or from the imagination. The better work contained some skilful drawings and paintings but compositions were fragmented and unresolved.

The weaker candidates submitted work where the drawing was of limited ability, from secondary sources and the preparatory studies included no development with media or experiments with different compositions.

Section C

Question 12 Logo for Broad Horizons

Work achieving at the higher levels showed excellent development of ideas and experimented with various alternatives of images and text. The preparatory studies considered a variety of colour-ways and different font styles, these were hand drawn and painted. The origin of the images used to create the logo was clearly evident and candidates had made relevant research into established companies and their designs. There was also some sophisticated use of digital imagery at this level.

Mid-level work did not include enough evidence of where the initial images came from that were used in the logo, although there was some exploration of lettering evident in the preparatory studies. Alternative ideas were not explored and many candidates stayed with their only idea.

The work at the lower level contained limited research and unfulfilled ideas and development due to a lack of curiosity and exploration. Consequently, the preparatory studies were thin leading to poor final outcomes.

Question 13 Design a cover for a brochure advertising Jungle Discovery

Many of the better submissions started with personal photographs of animals taken at zoos, and in some cases these were used for drawing and scanning. The better examples also included experiments with different fonts which were hand drawn and painted and presented in different scales. The major challenge that candidates faced was to relate the different pages of the brochure and create a unity, which only a few candidates managed to do.

The weaker candidates mainly resorted to copying images of wild animals from books or the Internet, and combining these images with unrelated fonts. In most cases, there was too little research and a lack of alternative ideas.

Question 14 Repeat pattern for wrapping paper

This was the most popular question in **Section C**. Work achieving the higher levels drew with some accuracy from direct observation. It was clear that some candidates had made the effort to visit a museum for this purpose and they also explored a variety of different repeat patterns before deciding on the final design.

Candidates at the low to middle range demonstrated insufficient initial research to lead to a successful and varied development of ideas. Designs tended to be similar and repetitive with unfulfilled explorations of pattern and layout, resulting in a disappointing outcome. However there was evidence of skill and control in the use of materials.

Lower levels were limited to simple repeat patterns, with little concept of the technical construction of repeat patterns, included little exploration of alternatives or of different colour ways. There was only some attempt to draw from direct observation, and the skill in execution demonstrated weaknesses.

Question 15 Design different uniforms/costumes for staff at Urban Shack

There were only a few submissions for this question.

Much of the work lacked depth of observation and contained limited research. Control in the rendering of materials was not strong and development of ideas reflected a lack of understanding of the problems involved. The main strength of the work was located in the preparatory studies which resulted in some basic and fairly obvious inconclusive outcomes.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/02
Coursework A

General comments

There were many approaches seen within this paper. The most successful entries featured a broad level of investigation where candidates had considered a few alternative ideas and experimented thoroughly with a range of media showing high levels of artistic technical skill and creativity. Candidates had produced first hand observational drawings and used these as a starting point for their projects. In many cases photography aided the creation of their images, which were then experimented with using materials and processes. Final pieces were well executed and demonstrated originality.

The trend for photography to be used as a first hand investigative tool continued to increase. In the best examples candidates had thoughtfully explored their subject matter, exploiting viewpoint, lighting conditions, depth of focus and composition in order to find images that were above the ordinary. Informed critical evaluations were essential to this process and were carried through to selective presentation of the best images in the candidate's submission.

Middle ability range entries mostly featured good drawings from secondary sources and a smaller range of material studies. Many others demonstrated an ability to intelligently investigate subject matter photographically but tended to 'accumulate information' rather than to explore aesthetic potentials. Final piece designs, although well executed, were a little more predictable. Some candidates produced a number of finished studies but the images had no relation to one another and had merely repeated the same image in different media, which although demonstrating good levels of technical competence lacked evidence of a cohesive development.

Some less successful work relied heavily on secondary sources with only a small amount of drawing or preparatory work. The experiments with media were limited and final pieces were not planned sufficiently. Some candidates presented very poor quality photographs that were out of focus, poorly composed and printed. Such unedited work added little to their knowledge of their subject matter and limited their level of achievement.

The general standard of presentation was good. Most candidates had taken care to present their work in a coherent and secure manner which helped the moderation process. Concise and pertinent annotations enhanced the best submissions. The poorest were mounted on thin sheets of paper which deteriorates with handling. Even if materials are limited work should be organised and neatly mounted in a logical way to show the progression and development of the work. Any annotation should be pertinent, succinct and legible.

Teacher assessments were varied. Many Centres demonstrated a good understanding of the assessment criteria and on the whole, candidates had been placed within the correct order of merit. There were also Centres which had marked too generously especially in the domains of Personal Qualities and Knowledge and Critical Understanding.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

This was the most popular area of study and candidates had chosen diverse subject matter from realistic portraiture to expressive landscapes. Some candidates worked using 3D relief to enhance their compositions.

Many of the painting entries were a selection of very well produced finished pieces that although demonstrating high levels of technical ability did not display a great deal of creativity or personal qualities.

Portraiture was a popular subject but success was very dependent on how many preparatory studies had been undertaken and whether or not the candidate understood the proportions of the face.

There were some beautiful examples of watercolour painting where the candidates had demonstrated a high level of control with this media. Some were quite expressive but the subject matter was restricted to landscape views and showed little creativity with ideas or experimentation. There were some landscapes focusing on architectural features which were very well observed. Still life was another popular choice and there were some lively compositions seen within this genre.

The best candidates had achieved a level of independence in their work and had developed sufficient confidence to take informed risks in order to find the best way to express their ideas. In all cases, sustained studies from first hand experience informed each stage of development. Also essential to the work of all of these candidates, was a personal engagement with the work of other artists that was substantial and examined how meanings were constructed through techniques rather than describing surface appearances. The resultant insights enabled individuals to experiment extensively and to find their own imagery and methods. Throughout the development process, critical evaluation of experiments informed the next steps towards outcomes that were discovered rather than preconceived.

Candidates in the middle range can be separated into two broad categories. In some Centres, the work tended to be prescriptive; often courses focused almost entirely on technique. Although skill levels in these Centres could be impressive, evidence of the development of individual candidate's interests and personal ideas was more limited. Some candidates had not researched the work of other artists at all. Others contained long biographical details downloaded from the internet which are of limited worth when carried out in isolation from practical work in this component.

Other candidates in the middle range had investigated ideas enthusiastically. Often there was substantial evidence of research of the work of other artists and, in some cases; this included a number of gallery visits. While the conceptual aspect of these candidates' work held considerable potential, this was not matched by sufficient experimentation with media and processes. These candidates might have benefitted from a period of more focused work in the later stages of their course which may enable higher levels of manipulative skills and aesthetic qualities to develop.

Candidates in the lower range presented very limited evidence of research and development of their work and skill levels were low. Some submissions amounted to no more than random copies from secondary sources; others consisted of little more than a final outcome.

Photography

Some excellent work was seen in this area of study. The majority was informed by an awareness of contemporary practice which usually included visits to galleries and exhibitions, and often also included contact with professional photographers, all of which encouraged engagement and determination, and which gave candidates a greater depth of understanding.

Most candidates worked to themes and produced a small number of well researched, technically strong, and aesthetically successful outcomes. It was pleasing to see that at this level traditional black and white processes are still being used.

There were a small number of weaker entries consisting of simple snaps of friends rather than considered compositions developed into a sustained project. Candidates had failed to organise photo shoots and think about lighting and composition. Many relied too heavily on digital software merely to alter an initial poor quality photograph with little consideration of the success of the original image.

Graphic Design

The majority of submissions used digital processes. The best submissions produced evidence of a deeper understanding of design principles. Most candidates also included hand drawn responses as well as their own photographs which had been scanned and manipulated.

A wide range of topics was seen, all well supported by research into contemporary practice. Intelligent analyses of existing works of design had informed candidates' investigations; imaginative exploration of themes and alternatives led to original and impressive outcomes with a very high standard of finish.

Less successful submissions were let down by a lack of design skills; poor hand drawn lettering or inappropriate computer fonts. Also the relationship between image and text had not been sufficiently considered. Some candidates had produced competent logos but the application of these on letterheads, business cards etc. lacked exploration.

Weaker entries also lacked thorough research. Supporting sheets consisted of images cut from magazines, newspapers, food labels, opened out cartons, usually far too many which created a scrap book effect. These are only useful when relevant, and then one well organised and mounted sheet is probably enough.

Textile and Fashion Design

There were some fashion design entries which were lively and imaginative. Candidates were explorative in their approach and some had used architectural forms as a basis for their very successful designs. Some candidates had been quite creative in their use of materials and had researched the work of other designers for inspiration.

Other Fashion submissions demonstrated less consideration of first hand sources and real exploration of media.

The best Textile submissions showed a splendid awareness of the potential of materials and construction, and an imaginative use of pattern and colour to produce highly sophisticated outcomes. Drawing was seen to be an essential part of the process. Collage, print and mixed media, free stitching and embroidery and other processes on a wide range of textured materials had been explored and used to develop original ideas for hangings, garments, soft sculptures and multi-media final pieces.

There were some printed fabric designs from photographic stencils. The candidates had all chosen individual themes and there was some evidence of starting points and the development of ideas. The designs showed understanding of the flow of repeats across the fabric, but there were few experiments, either with alternative designs or colours.

3D Design and Sculpture

Too few entries were seen to make any generalised comments.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/03
Coursework B

General comments

Projects for this paper were more sustained where candidates had developed their knowledge from paper 2 into well researched projects with a satisfying conclusion. Some projects were very ambitious resulting in impressive large scale paintings or installations.

Although generally competent, the standard of the work seen was very varied. At one extreme there was very ambitious and personal work that reflected intense and sustained investigations of ideas and methods. At the other extreme, there were some very poor and insubstantial submissions that reflected little more than a few hours work.

The standard of sketchbooks was equally varied. The best sketchbooks were very informative about the individual candidate's thinking, research and experimentation during the development of their projects. They were 'workbooks' that evolved contemporaneously with experimental work as well as final pieces and consequently captured the individual decision making and journey towards outcomes. Weaker sketchbooks contained some informative experimentation or research but were insubstantial. Unfortunately, there were quite a few of the weakest type of sketchbook. These contained very limited work, often no more than few half formed drawings that had little connection to other works. Generally this type of sketchbook confirmed evidence of the candidate's limited independence and critical understanding and were little more than token efforts.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

The best submissions grew out of a sustained period of research and experimentation with outcomes discovered through that process. Ideas were informed by the work of other artists but these had been investigated in sufficient depth for unexpected connections to be made and for the outcomes to become the candidate's own. Skills were investigated to a similar depth and had become fluent, reflecting the candidate's determination to find the best way to express their own ideas.

A significant number of the best candidates had worked in a multi-media environment and had combined materials within final outcomes. For example, expressive drawings in charcoal were combined with photography using digital means; acrylic painting on grounds made of 3D objects; drawings using paint, ink and pastels collaged into the final composition. In all cases, purposeful experimentation using a variety of media had evolved into focused studies which enabled candidates to refine their ideas into fully resolved outcomes.

Candidates in the middle range presented interesting personal ideas that were informed by their awareness of other artists' work; however, insufficient experimentation did not enable them to refine their skills. Consequently final outcomes were often disappointing in that potentials were not realised. Some candidates presented skilful series of first hand studies but connections with other artists' ideas about composition, subject matter and meaning remained unexplored.

Generally, submissions from the weakest candidates lacked a clear sense of direction or purpose. Some submissions consisted only of copies from unconnected secondary sources. Skills were variable but rarely demonstrated development through critical evaluations of the candidates' own work or the work of other artists.

Photography

Most of the entries had benefitted from a thorough grounding in their earlier coursework studies. Many had added to their skills base by closely combining their topic chosen for their Personal Study with their own research of themes for this component, and this had informed their own development. These candidates were intelligent enough to get the very best from such influences without slavish copying.

Other examples had produced accomplished work using digital technology and the journey each candidate had taken was clearly recorded and presented.

Graphic Design

Only a few entries were seen this year.

Some submissions demonstrated evidence of a logical progression of ideas seen within design sheets. It was good to see some skilful hand drawn lettering.

A few entries failed to adequately meet the criteria for this component. Design skills were very limited with images being downloaded from the Internet or “clip art”. Supporting sheets were mostly rough pencil sketches which could have been done in a matter of minutes.

Textile and Fashion Design

There were very few Fashion submissions, however they did show that starting points had been researched, and details included sewn, stitch, and embroidered techniques. Colour swatches were included and in some cases garments made. Cultural influences were a strong feature. Some batik was seen with good supporting studies and a refined use of technique.

Other submissions in this area had used photographic stencils to produce printed repeat designs onto fabric. There was evidence of starting points for these designs: fruit, flowers, and insects but the research and development lacked the depth and breadth needed for this component.

The designs were not so reduced as in previous years and the resulting fabrics were more successful. However there were few experiments with alternative colours and no real understanding of design for fabric.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/04
Personal Study

General comments

Successful outcomes demonstrated that candidates had explored interesting and engaging topics which were also relevant and appropriate to an Art and Design investigation.

The most advisable approach is to discuss with candidates which area of study during their course most interests and motivates them, then offer guidance on possible sources for first-hand investigation of existing works of historical or contemporary practice which are accessible in studios, galleries, exhibitions or at specific sites. The use of local sources can often foster the strongest interest and enthusiasm. In addition, comparisons can be made with relevant mainstream or international examples resourced from books or the internet, but these sources should not be the main focus. Once a decision has been made on the title, sources and intentions of the study, the OPF should be completed and sent to CIE for approval. This is a very useful way for candidates to initiate a dialogue with an examiner and the suitability of their chosen topic can be verified.

Some candidates may benefit from further guidance on the structure, sequence and presentation of the study once sufficient visual and written material has been accumulated. A variety of formats for presentation is possible, such as A3 or A4 sized booklets, larger boards with related two- or three-dimensional practical extensions, different systems of folding, pop-up, overlaying and revealing card structures, as well as studies organised on a CD (which should be accompanied by a printed version). Practical analysis of the works of artists and designers focused on through first-hand study should be encouraged as much as written comment and this also applies to relevant comparisons made with examples from secondary sources, such as books or the internet. Candidates should demonstrate that they are engaged in an Art and Design investigation, and therefore the layout and integration of text and image is an essential part of the way they organise and present their research.

Candidates should plan a visually rich presentation of the material well before the deadline for submission and aim for clarity of communication by making sure that all illustrations are correctly referenced.

COMMENTS ON VARIOUS LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

High level

Several excellent studies were seen which met all of the Assessment Objectives to the highest level. Such submissions were exceptionally well sustained, coherently structured, elegantly presented and highly personal in all practical and written analyses and evaluations. An encouraging number of candidates also achieved a level of excellence through carefully chosen topics which were clearly motivated by direct experience of the selected works of artists and designers, craftwork or architecture in relation to their main coursework interests. A very stimulating range of local practitioners' work and architectural sites were focused on to inform analyses, comparisons and critical understanding. Thorough planning of layout and presentation led to a variety of inventive formats. Whether produced through digital processes or handwritten, a concern for the structure, sequence and integration of the material with notations and headings offered a refined clarity of communication.

Mid-level

The majority of submissions demonstrated a good level of selection, organisation and presentation. There was clear evidence of personal commitment, interest and enthusiasm leading to articulate written descriptions and comments, but less concern to engage in practical analyses or comparisons. Digital processes were used well to organise and integrate visual and written material, but the studies could have been far deeper and more sustained if the context of the topic had been better understood. There were no doubts that first-hand familiarity with the works focused on had motivated a personal interest in the investigation, but there was also a tendency to place more emphasis on works of international renown which were only accessible from secondary sources. Better results were apparent when these examples were compared with the local first-hand research.

Low level

Studies at the lower level invariably showed a heavy reliance on secondary information from books or the internet and very uncertain sources for first-hand investigation. Surveys of media and processes were often seen to lack personal analysis or even simple references to the contexts, styles, themes and aesthetic qualities of particular works. A minimal amount of consideration was apparent in the structure, sequence and presentation of the material. Some submissions included no more than two or three illustrations which were poorly reproduced and given uncertain or inaccurate references. Covers, titles, introductions, conclusions and bibliographies were often neglected. Some studies were bolstered with irrelevant scrap-book materials, interviews and questionnaires which led nowhere, and included unselective biographies and regurgitated technical manuals. There was a sense that many of these submissions were the product of last-minute compilations, rather than a planned project in relation to specific intentions, in many cases were unknown as an OPF had not been included.