



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
June 2011**

History of Art

HART1

(Specification 2250)

Unit 1: Visual Analysis and Interpretation

Report on the Examination

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HART1

General comments

Some students wrote out the questions or prefaced their answers with an introductory paragraph or sentence. While such examination techniques can be of assistance, they are also time-consuming and might possibly cause some answers to be rushed. Such strategies are possibly of more use in HART 2, 3 and 4 where optional questions are available.

It was also found that some students were anxious to include facts learned about techniques rather than address their comments to the photographs in front of them. Overall spelling and grammar was of a reasonable standard. However, handwriting was frequently illegible.

Students are reminded of the absolute necessity to read the questions carefully and to be certain of whether they are being asked to analyse, discuss or describe and to ensure that they understand which elements the question is focused on.

Painting

Question 1

Stanley Spencer, *The Glen, Port Glasgow*, 1952 (oil on canvas).

Describe the figures and their setting in this painting and analyse how the artist has created a sense of movement.

There was a tendency to give lengthy and detailed descriptions about each figure often at the expense of commenting on the setting. Some students recognised the setting as being urban and more able students noted that there were two separate scenes set at different levels. Most students described the walls and bridge as being brick whereas the grey colour suggested that they are constructed out of stone. The cropped view was seldom mentioned and few observed that the figures seemed to be entering and leaving the frame. Most students were able to discuss how movement through the figures had been created but often repeated information already provided when describing the figures somersaulting over the rail. Some of the less able students speculated about the identity and motivations of figures in the scene, which was not required by the question.

Sculpture

Question 2

Nicola Pisano, *The Adoration of the Magi*, detail from the pulpit. 1259-60 (marble).

Analyse the depiction of the scene in this sculpture and discuss the ways in which the sculptor used the material and techniques.

The majority of students described the scene rather than analysing it. Some of the less able students were unable to identify the baby and often referred to the baby Jesus as being 'the Magi'. The panel was seldom described as being carved in high relief or the observation was made that the effects were achieved through undercutting. Less successful students did not relate their discussion on technique to how and where it was applied in this panel.

Architecture

Question 3

Denys Lasdun and Partners, *Royal National Theatre*, 1967-76 (reinforced concrete and glass).

Describe the appearance of the building and comment on how the architects have exploited the characteristics of the materials in this building.

There was some very good descriptive analysis carried out on this building that covered most of the points in the mark scheme. The use of correct terminology, however, was generally lacking. Most students stated that the building was designed with a horizontal emphasis and referred to the layering effect. The more successful answers included some reference to the effects of the cantilevers and the properties of reinforced concrete and its tensile strength. There were quite a few students who openly stated their dislike for modern architecture and offered unsubstantiated judgements and speculation. Being the last question however, it was evident that quite a few rushed their answers and were unable to give the issues adequate thought perhaps because they lost time writing the questions.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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