

ART AND DESIGN: FINE ART

Paper 9830/01-03

Project

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General Comments

This year Pre-U Art and Design saw another increase in the number of Centres and candidates. There were more endorsements offered by Centres, including Centres offering four different areas and fully utilising the options of endorsement routes. 9830 Fine Art is still the most popular route and centres are confidently matching candidates to an endorsement appropriate to their ambition and expertise.

Some evidence of good practice was noted where Centres had started the candidates on a clearly identified personal journey; possibly post GCSE, so that time had been spent during the summer vacation visiting galleries or just simply keeping a visual diary; sketchbooks were annotated with critical, factual and evaluative comments as opposed to superficial and descriptive annotation. There was clear evidence of meaningful engagement with visual language in response to Centre set stimuli and the candidates demonstrated a fluency of personal expression.

It was clear that many Centres had spent considerable time and effort exhibiting work in a clear and helpful manner, to the benefit of the candidate and the ease of moderation. Coloured labels and rank order were used effectively and helped identification of work for moderating and for marking. Some Centres had not managed the time effectively over the two year period and there was a feeling that

the candidates needed a little more time towards the end to complete their investigations. In most cases there was evidence of well-structured and inspired delivery. This should provide a secure foundation of knowledge and experience across a range of materials and processes, enabling candidates to achieve a degree of understanding which will inform and enrich their own practice.

All Centres made great efforts to turn Component 3 into an effective and well-mounted exhibition which is vital to this course and its aims.



Component 1: Portfolio

Evidence of good practice seen at Centres included a well-structured programme for the first year based around tutor led workshops. Taught structures and guidance provided ensured candidates moved beyond a basic appreciation of visual qualities and similarities, in order to achieve a degree of understanding which informed and enriched their own practice. Whilst an outcome(s) is not a prerequisite for this component, an appropriate degree of management and structure will maximise learning opportunities, especially when candidates are required to reflect upon their journey and practice in a meaningful and easily identifiable form, such as a work journal or video diary.

Many Centres ensured that this component provided a diagnostic challenge, affording plenty of experimental and explorative opportunity, too many overlooked opportunities to support this work with a meaningful understanding of related artists. It should not be assumed that candidates know how to identify or analyse suitable works of art.

In the strongest submissions, technical skills, experimentation and observational drawing were the main focus to begin with. It was clear that all candidates used the skills they had learned at the beginning of the course to then develop ideas. The candidates at all levels had taken

ownership of the portfolio unit and their own emerging style and interests were allowed to be developed as the course progressed. Relevant artists were researched and analysed which enabled the candidates to develop their conceptual understanding. Where photography had been used it was pertinent and relevant. The sketchbooks were full of ideas and direct observation which evidenced the creative journey and were integral to the development of the candidates work.

Successful elements of Component 1:

- the work had been edited for the final exhibition
- strong contextual links which fed into other components
- observational drawing skills developed throughout the portfolio
- the portfolio had been edited and showed a clear journey with an appropriate range of materials and techniques explored
- where photography was used it was as a tool to record ideas
- centres presented component 1 outcomes separately from the rest of the work.

Some candidates worked with great determination and produced masses of experimental drawing and painting. Selection was an essential part of the submission and there was clear and inventive progress in the portfolio, which was outstanding. This followed on into the Project which showed maturity and visual understanding of high quality. All work was beautifully mounted and displayed, demonstrating exactly what Pre-U Art and Design allows a hard-working candidate to accomplish.





Component 2: Evaluative study

Many Centres capitalised upon the opportunity that the component provides to strengthen a candidate's overall position, by ensuring that a well-structured and closely tutored approach supported the emergence of excellent written work. In many cases a well-honed rationale was matched by extensive research and the emergence of an appropriately academic and discursive text. Candidates benefitted greatly where the choice of subject matter was related to their work in component 3, creating a dialogue which supported and informed the work of both components. Practical work is not a requirement of component 2 and, this year, most Centres heeded this advice to the benefit and focus of the written work. Despite issues with the Outline Proposal Forms this year, Centres should continue to submit the Candidate proposals for feedback from an examiner before they begin working and make full use of this dialogue.

Centres must ensure that academic conventions are followed, providing footnotes and a bibliography in keeping with the need for academic rigour of this component. The word-count should be adhered to closely. Less successful evaluative studies were dominated by biographical detail and a lack of depth in analysis and research. This was hampered sometimes by a very general choice of subject matter. More successful submissions demonstrated that Candidates had clearly enjoyed delving into in-depth research and had been at pains to visit live work and galleries to inform their research. The academic demands were well met and some very thorough individual research ensued.

Successful elements of component 2:

- clear thinking about the theme or title for research
- many good ideas, some relating to themes started in the Portfolio and others of a more independent nature
- theme had grown out of component 1 and informed component 3
- good use of the word count, careful editing and refining of ideas within the allowance.

Overall the evaluative studies were very personal and had evolved from a theme or seed of an idea studied in component 1 which informed and evolved into component 3. The evaluative study was approached as an academic essay which was written to a high standard, and the themes chosen had allowed for individuals to demonstrate their own strengths and individuality. Work produced for component 3 should be an integral part of the course and the candidates had been fortunate to include information gained from gallery visits and trips abroad. In the stronger submissions candidates demonstrated that they had all engaged in their own research and visits/artists interviews which were documented in an appropriate creatively presented sketchbook of supporting work.



Component 3: Project

Candidates had selected starting points from the question paper relevant to their own interests and these were used to launch an in-depth and highly ambitious body of work. Evidence of generating a range of ideas then selecting and refining one or two for further development was clear. The work displayed showed some very purposeful ideas and in places some maturing, well developed outcomes.

Some candidates still relied on a very schematic creative process which owed a good deal to both the imagination and experimental approaches but did not always manifest itself as fully realised exhibition work. It is possible that a more refined selection process might help to focus aims and development for these candidates.

Responses were appropriately diverse and inventive, ensuring that candidates pursued personal strengths and interests, often with a spirit of genuine inquiry and excitement. The provision of a concise statement of intent would aid understanding and the assessment of individual candidates and would be a good practice tool for future submissions.

It was clear in many Centres that ideas and techniques which had originally formulated in component 1 were then developed further. Some candidates relished the opportunity for independent and creative study whereas others found it difficult to sustain the level of independent inquiry required for this component. Rigorous observational drawing skills greatly enhanced the development of the work in this component. Much of this work was underpinned by the exploration of the work of others and, at its best, not only informed the candidate's practice, but raised the level of ambition and risk-taking.

Overall candidates reached very positive resolutions and the exhibition showcased the strengths of each candidate. Strong ideas and good use of selected media and processes was seen in many of the submissions. Some candidates however, were unable to bridge the gap from the more general nature of the Portfolio to the precision and in depth demands of the Project.

Successful elements of component 3:

- succinct statement of intent
- confident observational drawing skills

- investigation underpinned by the exploration of the work of others and relevant contextual understanding
- ability to bridge the gap from Portfolio to Project showing personal development over the two year process.

Generally the project was an excellent body of work and it was obvious by the ambitious and dynamic work that the candidates produced that they had enjoyed the course and clearly benefited from the structure of the two years using the time well.

Administration

The use of coloured labels saved time when identifying components and matching candidate numbers. Care should be taken to use the correct syllabus code on all records. For components 1 and 2, rank order should be displayed and for component 3, where work may be displayed in a range of rooms or venues, a map and instructions should be provided where relevant. Piles of work on the floor make the moderation/examination process difficult and if portfolios cannot be displayed on tables then a table and chair should be set up for the moderator/examiner to use as a courtesy.

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