



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Art and Design (Graphic Design)

Controlled Test 3203/T

Report on the Examination

2007 examination – June series

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GCSE Art and Design (Graphic Design) 3203

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The question paper was received favourably and there was positive feedback from centres. It was felt that the diversity in the questions reflected the subject specification well, and allowed candidates from across the ability range to respond with confidence. Questions 1 to 6 were similar in style and content to those on offer to candidates as Coursework units. Question 7 was more attractive to those who prefer an open brief.

In general, candidates used the four week preparation period productively, understanding the importance of the link between investigation and outcome. Some low attaining candidates suffered, however, by submitting very little evidence of an understanding of context, or submitted support work that bore little relevance to the development of their own ideas. Digital recording and image manipulation was integral to many responses for all questions and at all levels, both as support material and in the production of the final piece.

Question 1 Points of View

This proved to be a popular question and was well answered by candidates of all abilities. Those who attempted it showed good understanding of contemporary magazine cover design. Appropriate references were plentiful and informed intentions effectively. The question afforded candidates opportunities to draw and photograph from first-hand experience, and to show their knowledge of the arts, sport and politics. There were some good examples of found images and of candidates' own photographs being developed into caricatures, and of candidates taking a political stance on issues that interested them. There were two aspects to the question, and the most successful outcomes resulted from time spent developing and refining both the masthead design, experimenting with type and spacing, and the layout of the cover design, and synthesising both elements into a sophisticated, visually appealing outcome.

Question 2 Classical Art

Some of the best responses to this question came from candidates who found examples of first-hand source material on which to base their ideas – caryatids, mosaics and architectural details were all used to good effect. There were successful designs for the soap packaging, some of which included cut-out windows that revealed soaps shaped like classical columns or statues. A wide variety of black and white images was produced, using both traditional materials and new media, from controlled use of dots to create tone to more impulsive looser work, in response to the illustration for *Minerva Crafts*.

Question 3 You are what you eat!

The artist Giuseppe Arcimboldo was the starting point and stimulus for many candidates who attempted this popular question, and much of the evidence for assessment objectives 1 and 2 was directly influenced by his work. Some clearly enjoyed cutting and arranging food and food packaging to create abstract patterns, figurative imagery and lettering, all accomplished with varying degrees of success. Others, interestingly, were inspired by Tracey Emin's textile pieces to look at issues such as obesity or anorexia and produced warnings of the consequences rather than celebrations of the subject. The least able were not always successful in further refining or modifying their initial ideas, and some lost the connections with the work of others.

Question 4 Constructivism

This question invoked some excellent and well-researched responses, and with limited opportunities for first-hand recording in assessment objective 1, the strengths were evidenced in assessment objectives 2 and 3. Some of the most able candidates showed real understanding of the style and essential characteristics of Constructivism and the work of its main proponents, and were able to translate these into contemporary situations. There were some good examples of the application of ideas in the form of posters, uniforms, stationery and t-shirts as final outcomes.

Question 5 Billboard Design

Few candidates successfully developed the link between the distinctive 1930s poster style and their own experiments into image stylisation, as suggested by the brief. Many concentrated either on the posterisation technique, which resulted in some limited, derivative outcomes, or on producing a series of image stylisations. However, there were some powerful interpretations by candidates who had moved into close-up photography and who had synthesised words and images successfully. There was extensive use of ICT, both in the initial experimentation and in the resolutions, where some candidates had placed their designs onto existing billboards through image manipulation in a skilful and effective manner.

Question 6 Exhibition Centrepiece

This question allowed candidates to produce responses in two or three dimensions and there were examples of both. Outcomes were variable and many low ability candidates enjoyed researching and developing ideas from rhinoceros imagery (the *Rhino* in the product name) to the detriment of gaining an understanding of the exhibition context. The best submissions were those that gave an indication of the centrepiece's scale and surroundings.

Question 7 Recycling

The open nature of this question was not popular with candidates whose units of Coursework were outcome led, usually with a brief and specification. However, the issues concerning recycling were attractive to many and all three starting points were developed successfully.

- (a) There were many designs, some worthy, some less imaginative, based around existing recycling logos. Few candidates took a broader view by looking at other symbols and logos in a wider context as part of their investigations.
- (b) It was encouraging to see examples of animation, although in some cases candidates' enthusiasm for ICT and technique overtook aesthetic considerations, to the detriment of assessment objectives 1 and 2.
- (c) Again, many candidates began by studying existing recycling logos and used these as part of more complex designs, often incorporating them with parts of bicycles.

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