



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Design and Technology (Graphic Products)

3553

Short Course

Foundation Tier Written Paper

3553/F

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - June series

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General

- The paper was well received and the main topic was accessible to all candidates. A wide range of marks was evident for all papers.
- The change in order of questions did not present any problems. Candidates appeared to have benefited from a higher scoring initial question by scoring well and thus gaining confidence.
- It is regretted that many candidates did not fully justify or annotate their answers. Centres are reminded that when several marks are available, then to gain maximum more than superficial responses are expected especially if higher grades are anticipated.
- Centres are to be congratulated for entering candidates for the appropriate level. The attendance sheets showed few amendments.
- Centres generally prepared candidates well for the designing questions and the quality of such work continues to impress the examiners but subject specific knowledge remains a comparative weakness.

Short Course (3553/F)

This year's paper allowed the majority of candidates to access all questions. Blank pages were rare as a part of every sheet was usually attempted. Designing and rendering were acceptable, but specific subject knowledge was poor. The majority of marks were in the range 30 to 80 marks.

Question 1 – Environment and Evaluation

A well answered question with many candidates scoring over half marks.

- (a) The interpretation and analysis of the logo tended to be mainly descriptive.

Feature 1: The most candidates linked the red circle to regeneration of the forests but most ignored the colour of the arrows.

Feature 2: Trees and the environment were linked together and many candidates commented on the need to simplify the shape.

- (b) (i) The two ideas for a new logo were generally satisfactory. The quality of sketching was sufficient to illustrate the concept and single line drawing was common..
- (ii) The final presentation was usually well drawn, with simple block colouring..

Question 2 – Representing Data

This question was well answered by almost all candidates, with many gaining nearly full marks.

- (a) Many creditable efforts were noted. Accuracy was evident, although blunt pencils and black lining-in caused some marks to be lost.
- (b) A minority of candidates used variations of a bar chart rather than repeat the symbols. Most symbols were good copies of the given examples. Some students preferred freehand and so lost some marks.
- (c) The quality of colouring was usually good, with many examples of tonal control and block colouring. A small minority appeared to be ill-prepared for the paper and offered no colour whatsoever.

Question 3 – Typography

A popular question with many good scores.

- (a) (i), (ii) The candidates appeared to enjoy contributing to their examination although some took the opportunity to include their favourite band or CD title rather than stay focused on the school context.
- (b) Two different letter styles were submitted by most candidates. Single line lettering was common and very few used construction lines to show uniformity of shape. Pencil work and neatness were satisfactory.

Question 4 – Development of Ideas

Now an accepted part of any Written Paper; most candidates performed well with the design work but the evaluation proved a problem.

- (a) Many good ideas were noted but some candidates did not carry the music theme into their designs. Most sketch quality was adequate and images satisfactory.
- (b) Not all candidates took the opportunity to reiterate their chosen name and type of music in the boxes provided. These frequently tended to drift out of the context of the question.

The presentation drawing allowed the candidate to show colouring skills and design layout and many did this with some skill and care. Unfortunately some students did not apply the colour with sufficient care to gain most marks. Some attempts were little more than scribble. Single line lettering often reappeared here, even if correctly done on the previous question.

- (c) The evaluations were mainly descriptions of the final design and lacked reasoned comments.

Question 5 – Surface Development (Nets) and Dimensioning

A poorly answered question. Many candidates showed a lack of understanding of surface developments (nets), dimensioning and even the most basic of scales.

- (a) Most candidates could not visualise the CD holder layout from the figure provided. When attempted, surfaces were frequently omitted. The use of the key did produce some correct edges and folds. A sizable minority merely copied the given diagram while adding the opening cover at an oblique angle. Neatness and quality of line work were not always sufficient for full credit.
- (b) Most students correctly measured the given width and inserted the required distance, although very few followed the implied convention.
- (c) There were relatively few correct answers for what should have been a very easy mark.

Question 6 – Order of Making

This question was not well done. Many attempts were unsuccessful because of a poor understanding of the appropriate order in which making is done.

- (a)
 - (i) This part was popular with many genuine attempts. A common error was to cut out the shape before colouring.
 - (ii) 'Tools or Equipment' contained several correct items but many lacked the proper name. To obtain full marks more than a 'cutting knife' or 'crayons' was required.

If the order of making was wrong, marks could still be gained if the right tool was given by the appropriate stage.

- (b) When attempted many candidates scored. The quality of freehand illustrations and notes was usually satisfactory. Most candidates attempted to show Stage A with one diagram rather than with a set of sequential sketches. Notes ranged from labels to quite involved text. All were rewarded on merit.

Question 7 – Materials

- (a)
 - (i) Few candidates could correctly identify this method of measuring the thickness of board and paper. Some did deduce that 'm' referred to metre.
 - (ii) This question was directed at the physical properties of recycled board, but some candidates strayed into economics and environmental benefits of recycling in general; where possible some credit was allowed.
 - (iii) It was obvious that candidates were aware of the method of grading pencils, but most failed to get the whole sequence correct. If candidates managed to get any two or more grades in the correct order, some credit was given. A common error was to reverse the five grades by suggesting that 2B was the hardest and 2H the softest.
 - (iv) The term 'bleed' was familiar to candidates, who correctly defined it.

- (b) This was not a popular question. There were few successful attempts.

Marks were lost mainly because of inappropriate methods of attachment of the CD envelope to the magazine cover. Sketches did not show enough detail of fixing. Many candidates copied the given illustration or added labels directly to it. The desired method of attachment was by a named adhesive or tape but generic materials were common. Other solutions were considered and rewarded according to merit.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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