



MARKSCHEME

May 2012

ART HISTORY

Standard Level

Paper 1

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Paper 1 (*short answer question paper*)

Paper 1 carries [20 marks] altogether and there are 10 possible marks for each question. Candidates should answer **both** of the following questions in relation to **one** topic:

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.
2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

Ideally, questions 1 and 2 will be tackled separately, but candidates should not be penalised for answering both questions in one continuous piece of prose (unless, of course, one or both of the questions are not fully addressed). Some points are not so easily categorized into Question 1 or Question 2, and examiners should not be overly prescriptive about this.

Question 1 is marked according to markband descriptors relating to assessment objective 1, and question 2 is marked according to markband descriptors relating to assessment objective 2 (see Syllabus pp. 12–13).

The notes that follow the markbands are not exhaustive – indeed they may be too detailed – and are intended to be complemented by the examiner’s own knowledge and research. There are notes for each of the topics, which offer broad guidelines to indicate areas that may be expected in answers but, as always, flexibility is left to the discretion of the examiner: candidates should be credited for including other valid points. Contrariwise, answers deserving of the highest marks will not necessarily address all of the points contained in the notes.

Markbands for Paper 1 Question 1

Question 1 requires visual analysis and use of art historical terms relating to form, style and technique.

There are [10 marks] available:

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The answer falls below the standard described in markband 1.
1–2	Poor level of visual analysis and inaccurate use of art historical terms relating to form, style or technique in description of work.
3–4	Adequate attempt at visual analysis but inconsistencies in understanding and use of art historical terms relating to form, style or technique in description of work.
5–6	Good level of visual analysis and understanding and use of art historical language relating to form, style or technique in description of work.
7–8	High level of visual analysis and understanding and use of art historical language relating to form, style or technique in description of work.
9–10	Excellent visual analysis with very high level of understanding and use of art historical terms relating to form, style and technique in description of work.

Markbands for Paper 1 Question 2

Question 2 requires understanding and communication of the meaning of works of art and architecture within their historical, social, political or economic context, and evaluation of the impact of that context.

There are [10 marks] available:

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The answer falls below the standard described in markband 1.
1–2	Purely descriptive, narrative approach with no understanding of meaning and function of work in its historical, social, political or economic context.
3–4	Some attempt to define context of work and candidate moving away from purely descriptive approach towards an analysis of meaning and function, although analysis lacks depth and arguments are not backed up by adequate evidence.
5–6	Sound understanding of meaning and function of work within its historical, social, political or economic context, with a good standard of analysis.
7–8	High level of understanding and communication of the historical, social, political or economic context of art work, with good analysis of meaning and function within that context.
9–10	Excellent level of understanding and analysis of the meaning and function of the work, and clear and incisive communication of the historical, social, political or economic context.

Topic 1: The art and architecture of Ancient Greece

Dionysus (c. 438–432 BC). Figure from the east pediment of the Parthenon, The Acropolis, Athens. British Museum, London.

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.

Reclining nude figure in relaxed pose. Half-raised, leaning with elbow on draped support. Three quarters position with rotation of torso towards front. Right arm raised as if holding object. Knees raised in relaxed, splayed pose.

Originally part of complex pedimental sculptural composition, therefore to be seen in relation to other figures and in relation to the triangular shape of the pediment.

Sculpted in the round despite back not being visible.

Anatomical detail, Classical proportions, toned musculature, idealised facial features.

The pediment sculptures were designed to stand out against the wall behind them, and to be large enough to be distinguishable even from below: they were more than life size, to emphasize their superhuman attributes as gods.

Highly polished Pentelic marble. Possibly worked from wax or clay models.

Chiaroscuro effects of drapery carving. Traces of colour found, and originally figure would have contrasted with coloured painted background wall.

Weathering and damage and loss of hands and feet.

Classical style contrasts to stiff earlier styles. Generally attributed to Pheidias and his pupils.

2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

The figure is usually accepted as representing Dionysus, god of wine, although Ares, Theseus, Herakles and a “hero”, have also been put forward. He is depicted reclining in a pose appropriate for Dionysus as the god of wine and excess. The rock on which he leans is covered by a garment and animal (possibly panther) skin, which could be regarded as identifying him.

The “ideal” forms of the perfectly proportioned and toned musculature reflect Greek ideas about human physical perfection being a revelation of the divine.

It forms part of the sculptural decoration of the east pediment of the Parthenon and should be seen in relation to the narrative of the pediment and to the sculptural programme of the temple as a whole. The theme of the pediment is thought to have been the miraculous birth of the goddess Athena at dawn, born adult and fully formed, from the head of Zeus. The unified sculptural programme reflects Greek religious beliefs and culture, as well as celebrating Athenian civic pride and her victory over the Persians.

Figures from the centre of the pediment have not survived. Likely to have been Zeus, Hera and Athena herself, surrounded by the other Greek gods. The chariots of Helios (sun) and Selene (moon) occupied the two corners of the pediment, demonstrating the time-span of the event. The figure originally looked out towards the chariot of Helios, rising at daybreak.

Topic 2: Rome – Republic and Empire

Portrait of Terentius Neo and his Wife (“The Baker and his Wife”) (1st century AD). Fresco on plaster from the atrium of a house in Pompeii. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples.

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.

Double bust-length portraits of couple within frame which resembles a wooden panel. Plain, light coloured background. Static, frontal pose. Man’s gaze directed at viewer, woman’s gaze slightly diverted.

Each figure shown holding objects: stylus and diptych (writing tablet), and *rotulus* (scroll). Physiognomic features with individualized depiction of eyebrows, nose, lips *etc.* Large, stylised, almond-shaped eyes. Details of hair colour and style, and man’s beard. Contrasting complexions of sitters and evidence of wrinkles on man’s forehead.

Volume of figures: fall of light from left with shadow areas and highlights on, *e.g.* eyes and noses. Drapery and jewellery.

Technique and materials used in Roman wall painting: wall prepared with applications of lime and mortar, lime mixed with finely powdered marble. Colours applied a *fresco* (on fresh/damp plaster). Some colours applied later a *secco* (on dry plaster).

Contrast between broad application of paint for drapery, and detailed application for faces. Style is reminiscent of *veristic* carved portraits of Republican era and Fayum mummy portraits.

Detached and removed from original context of Pompeian house decorative scheme. Weathering and damage to plaster.

2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

The painting, originally in a house adjoining a bakery, is generally accepted to portray a baker, Terentius Neo, and his spouse, possibly a wedding portrait. The painting is positioned on the wall at the end of an *exedra* (or recess) readily visible to those working for the business, clients or other visitors.

Portraiture was greatly cultivated by the Romans with the aim of indicating (or enhancing) culture and social status. The gold pendant, pearl earrings and red cloak, all suggest affluence and the man’s toga is indicative of high social rank.

The appearance and accessories of the couple suggest an interest in reading and writing; he holds a papyrus scroll (*rotulus*) against his chin and his wife holds a stylus and an open diptych (a hinged, waxed writing tablet). However, a certain unease demonstrated in their posture could suggest a couple striving to demonstrate their improving social status; perhaps they are not, in fact, literate.

The portraits seem to present us with an individualised, “true” likeness, rather than being idealised. However, the lighter complexion of the woman possibly suggests ideals of feminine beauty and more “indoors” social life of women. It has been suggested that the man’s swarthy complexion and features are typical of the Samnite tribe. The unity of the portrayal suggests solidarity and perhaps equality. The woman’s hairstyle is typical of the Neronian period (56–68 AD).

Topic 3: The Middle Ages

Death of King Harold (“HAROLD REX INTERFECTUS EST”) (c. 1070). Detail from the “Bayeux Tapestry”. Embroidery. Musée de la Tapisserie, Bayeux.

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.

Scene depicted is section of much longer picture-chronicle which, in its entirety, is nearly 70 metres by 50.8 cms. Direction of movement from left to right with figures on left struck by arrows and horseman attacking figure lying on the ground.

Figures depicted level with picture plane, with no sense of depth or perspective.

Hint of rough ground is the only element of the setting in this particular scene.

Simple, stylised elongated figures. Very little individualisation. Two-dimensional profile view. However, figures are not scaled according to rank and the horse has fairly naturalistic proportions.

Contemporary details *e.g.* costume, armour, horse-trappings, *etc.*

There is emphasis on actions and, although stiff, the gestures are expressive.

Borders: repeated ornament with fantastic beasts, and smaller scale battlefield scenes. Mistakenly described as a tapestry (design woven into cloth); it is, in fact, an embroidered cloth. Wool yarn stitched on a coarse linen fabric. Limited colours.

Two methods of stitching used: outline or stem stitch for lettering and the outlines of figures; couching (convent/kloster stitch) or laid work for filling in figures. Style resembles English illustrated manuscripts.

Latin lettering fits around figures and provides commentary on action.

2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

This scene should be understood within the context of the whole work. The tapestry depicts events leading up to the conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy. The story is divided into approximately fifty scenes underneath Latin *tituli* (captions) which indicate the names of people and places, or comment on the events depicted. The text is in Latin, with occasional evidence of an English influence.

The scene in the image is accepted as depicting the death of King Harold at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. The figure struck in the eye with an arrow appears to be Harold, given that the words “*Harold Rex*” are sewn directly above his head. However, there is some doubt amongst historians that Harold actually died this way; it is unlikely that the king would have been on foot armed with a spear.

The tapestry was probably commissioned for the nave of Bayeux Cathedral by its bishop, Odo, half-brother of William of Normandy, in around 1080. Thus the events depicted had taken place within living memory, and therefore the work provides a valuable historical record. It seems to present a particularly pro-Norman point of view of the events. The tapestry may have been embroidered, probably by women, in England, as the English were famed at the time for tapestry and stitchwork.

The narrative structure is similar to that of epic songs (*chansons de geste*) and poetry of the time.

Topic 4: Romanesque and Gothic art and architecture

La Sainte-Chapelle, Paris (1240s). Interior and ground-plan.

N.B. Candidates should discuss both images.

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.

Upper level of La Sainte-Chapelle, Paris. High French gothic architecture of the *rayonnant* style.

Interior view of nave towards apse, unified single space (absence of transept).

Walls composed almost entirely of glass (apart from a low dado zone).

Proportions and articulation of architectural elements. Emphasis on verticality, with shafts of piers reaching up height of building and branching out into polychrome rib vault. Materials: masonry, carved details, glass, painted surfaces, gold.

Division of simple ground-plan in oblong bays leading to apse/choir which is a seven-sectioned hemicycle. Interplay of light and dark for dramatic effect.

Relationship between interior and ground-plan: proportions of load-bearing piers/buttresses. Porch section.

Composition of windows and visual effects of stained glass and “bar tracery”.

Statues of the Apostles mounted above dado level between the windows.

Stylistic influences of earlier French Gothic cathedrals. Possible comparison to highly decorated, bejewelled reliquaries.

2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

The architecture and decoration should be seen within the context of Medieval religious beliefs, and the power of Church and monarchy in France at the time. The building provided an awe-inspiring vision, in absolute contrast to daily life. The architecture symbolically reaches to Heaven. The stained glass illuminates physically and spiritually.

Commissioned by King Louis IX to house supposed relics of the Crucifixion, including the crown of thorns, one of the most important relics in medieval Christendom, and fragments of the Holy Cross.

The church has two levels: the lower chapel dedicated to parish services, whilst the relics were kept on the upper level.

The use of stained glass and sculptural programmes for “teaching”: the nave windows illustrate a cycle of scenes from the Old Testament, the apse windows illustrate New Testament scenes. The final window in the western wall is dedicated to the story of the holy relics, their miraculous properties and their acquisition by King Louis IX.

The chapel was built inside the then Royal Palace on the Isle de la Cité in Paris, so emphasizing the close relationship between the Holy Relics and the monarchy. The building was designed to serve both religious and political ambitions of the King.

Topic 5: The art of the Renaissance

Piero della Francesca, The Baptism of Christ (1450s). Tempera on panel. National Gallery, London.

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.

Balanced geometrical composition: in the foreground the central frontal figure of Christ is flanked by John the Baptist, whose position is balanced by the tree. Three angels grouped on the left. Middle ground dynamic nude figure with other gesturing figures in the distance. Poised hand gestures of main figures. Winding river leads across a flat landscape to hills in background.

Strong symmetry around central axis of foreshortened Dove, John's hand pouring water over Christ's head which is silhouetted against sky and his hands raised in prayer.

Understanding of anatomy, facial types.

Naturalistic details of setting: variety of vegetation, cloud formations, hills and reflection in water. Spatial setting with use of linear perspective to rationalise diminution of figures, and use of chiaroscuro to depict volume of drapery. Subtle depiction of diffused light with virtually no shadows, gives the painting a luminous quality and a deceptive simplicity.

Effects of egg tempera technique. Move away from use of gold leaf for background; emphasis on artist's skill in composition, colour, understanding of nature and the human form. Influence of Alberti's theoretical works, earlier Renaissance artists *e.g.* monumental style of Masaccio, and Piero's own interest in mathematics and optics.

2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

The pivotal importance of the Baptism within the context of Christianity meant that this theme has a rich tradition in art. Piero draws on that tradition and the Gospel sources, but some elements in the work are new, either because of his own artistic interpretation or the volition of his patrons.

The panel depicts Christ's baptism by John the Baptist, with the dove of the Holy Ghost present above Christ's head. To complete the Holy Trinity, God the Father may have been originally represented in a roundel above this panel.

Traditional use of gold in the background was disappearing in mid-to late 15th century, because of the rising cost of gold, a distaste for opulence and to emphasise the veracity of the scene. The value of a work was now related to the artist's skill and reputation.

This panel was the central section of a polyptych, an altarpiece apparently commissioned for the chapel of Saint John the Baptist in the Camaldolese (Benedictine) abbey, now a cathedral, of Piero's home town of Borgo Sansepolcro, in Tuscany. This is probably the town painted to the left of Christ.

Figures gesturing in the background may be Orthodox clerics present at the Council of Florence (1439), whose aim was the unification of the Western and Eastern Churches, and whom Piero may have witnessed at the time.

Topic 6: The Baroque Age – Art and architecture of 17th-century Europe

Diego Velázquez, *The Family of Philip IV (“Las Meninas”)* (c. 1656). Oil on canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.

This huge canvas, some ten feet high, presents a lively, momentary “snapshot” of a group portrait, within a large, realistically proportioned chamber in the Royal Palace. Sitters are grouped in lower half of the work. In the foreground the *infanta* is surrounded by her ladies in waiting (the *meninas*), two dwarves, and a mastiff. The left side of the painting is dominated by part of the back of a huge canvas, which Velázquez portrays himself in the process of painting. The viewer’s eye is drawn back into the box-like space to figures at other points in the background. There is variety in the poses and the figures are depicted with varying degrees of focus. The mirror on the back wall appears to reflect the King and Queen, who are the subject of the canvas being painted; we see presumably what they see. (Possible influence of van Eyck’s “*Arnolfini Portrait*” of 1434, which includes a mirror reflecting sitters/viewers). The masterly depiction of the fall of light and shade, from three sources and directions, enhances the sumptuous textures and surfaces of fabric and fur.

Early influences of Venetian oil techniques are developed here with Velázquez’s subtle brush strokes and thinly applied paint creating nuanced effects. Some details appear as daubs and blobs of colour. In contrast to the usual stiffness of regal portraits, the painting records the informal background to an official sitting, with the artist portraying himself at work. The servants are an integral part of the scene and are treated with sensitivity.

2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

Las Meninas is a portrait of the *infanta* Margarita (1651–73), daughter of Philip IV (1605–65) in a hall of Madrid’s Alcázar Palace and surrounded by her entourage presumably brought in to entertain the little girl as she is prepared to be painted.

In 1623 Velázquez had entered the service of the young king Philip IV of Spain, and his subsequent artistic production was almost totally commissioned by Philip. The original title of the painting was “*The Family of Philip IV*”. Most of the figures have been identified from the Spanish Court (the *infanta*’s chaperone is conversing behind her with a bodyguard; the figure in the doorway is the Queen’s Chamberlain, Don José Nieto).

The painting can be read as an examination of the role of the artist in society: “a painting about painting”: a hotly debated topic in Spain at the time. In a reference to the ennobled Rubens, two paintings are visible on the back wall of the room which depict, in the style of Rubens, divine participation in the arts. Velázquez himself is seen wearing the badges of a court official (his keys and belt): within two years, he was himself admitted to the Spanish noble order of S Iago (St James). It also plays with notions of reality and illusion; the viewer’s eye is drawn into the depths of the picture, but also to the space where the King and Queen must be standing to be painted, and where the viewer, too, is positioned.

Topic 7: “The Age of Reason” to “Romanticism”

François Boucher, *Diana leaving her Bath* (1742). Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.

The painting depicts two female nudes, goddess Diana and her attendant, seated under a steep bank on a sumptuous drapery. They sit by a stream in a wooded landscape setting. Characteristic of the French rococo period, the scene is one of artificial, but elegant, naivety.

The sensuality of the nude female body is highlighted with the dynamic, entwined poses revealing voluptuous legs, arms, breasts. The naturalistic figures are studied from life.

The figures are oblivious of the viewer, adding to a voyeuristic intent.

The painting is subtly nuanced, with the light falling on the figures, and the deep blue of the drapery contrasting with the fresh, pearly tints of the women’s skin and the subtle, lush, greeny-blue idealized landscape. The blue is again picked out in the attendant’s headband. Their idealised faces are softened by being cast in slight shadow. The flowing draperies behind Diana, creating a strong diagonal cascade, add to the languorous atmosphere.

Rich, luminous quality of oil technique. The scene comprises a range of different textures: silk, flesh, wispy leaves, feathers and fur of the dead animals, vigorous roots and the strands of water rushes.

The scene is strewn with paraphernalia of the hunt: a quiver with arrows, and a bow with dead fowl and game. The hunting dogs, illuminated with dappled light, are depicted in a most realistic lively and physical manner.

The light and sensual *erotic-galante* style contrasts with Classical-inspired rules of Academic painting. Boucher was influenced by the earlier work of Watteau.

2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

The painting depicts the goddess Diana, the main figure, who has just been bathing after hunting, in company with a female attendant, presumed to be a nymph.

The mythological subject matter allows the painter to emphasize the sensuality of the nude female body, and the picture may have been intended for the *boudoir*.

The scene is reminiscent of popular pastoral plays of the day, depicting a fantasy vision of the countryside totally devoid of the realities of toil, deprivation or dirt. This is essentially a light and frivolous painting.

The goddess Diana was a popular subject in 18th-century French painting. The golden crescent in her hair illustrates her connection with the moon, and the bow and quiver, the hunting dogs, and the recently killed game identify her. She is not depicted as the independent, athletic huntress of mythology, but more as an ideal of femininity. The voluptuousness of the scene adds to its voyeuristic function. The contrast between the perfection of the female bodies and the visceral depictions of the killed game and the panting dogs adds to this quality.

The light-hearted *erotic-galante* style of painting was fashionable in the court circles of the Marquise de Pompadour, the mistress of Louis XV.

Topic 8: Experiments in 19th-and 20th-century art

James Whistler, *Symphony in White, No. 2: The Little White Girl* (1864). Oil on canvas. Tate Collection, London.

1. Describe the formal aspects of this work and comment on the style, techniques and materials employed.

A woman, holding a fan and dressed in white, stands in three-quarter pose leaning against a fireplace surmounted by a mirror and two vases. The figure is almost level with the picture plane and fills the height of the left-hand half of the canvas. Her arm is outstretched horizontally across mantelpiece, with a ring prominently displayed on her finger.

The work has a fluid, melancholy and dreamy quality. The woman seems thoughtful; her face is turned away from the artist and the viewer, adding to the sense of distance. The woman's face is depicted twice; her expression is revealed by the reflection in the mirror, although she is not looking at herself. A seascape is also dimly visible behind the reflection.

The white dress contrasts with the dark shadows of her hair and the fireplace. Delicate flower blossoms break up the bold geometric forms of the fireplace.

The artist uses a loose application of oil paint. There is a contrast in the light, circular way the sleeves are painted to the vertical strokes of the rest of the dress.

Whistler was influenced by French Impressionism (especially Courbet, Manet, Degas) but was less concerned with the effects of light and colour than with the composition of delicate patterns. Aesthetics and mood are paramount; the painter is interested in the effect created by the tonal, spatial and decorative aspects of his work.

Objects such as the fan, the pink blossom and the vase on the mantelpiece, could be cited as demonstrating the influence of the prevailing interest in *Japonisme*: Whistler was an avid collector of woodblock colour prints, *Ukiyo-e*.

2. Analyse the meaning and function of the work in its original context.

Although originally entitled "The Little White Girl" the subject appears more as a mature young woman. Indeed, she is Whistler's mistress and subject of several of his paintings, Joanna Heffernan. The painting with its title seems to play down traditional physical and psychological elements of portraiture, and focuses instead on the interaction of the forms.

A previous painting *Symphony in White, No 1* (there was also a *Symphony in White No. 3*), also of Joanna Heffernan, depicted her in a more direct pose.

There is a comparison with music, hence *Symphony in White*; other Whistler paintings were named with allusions to music, e.g. his *Nocturne* series, and versions of *Harmony In Grey And Green*, emphasizing his interest in the correlation between expression in the visual arts and in music. He described his paintings as "harmonies" or "arrangements" or symphonies of chromatic tones, neither laden with hidden symbolism or meaning nor mere representations of the natural world. Indeed, he propounded "art for art's sake".

The woman wears a ring on her ring finger, but was not married to Whistler. His style contrasted with that of the pre-Raphaelites, but despite criticism, notably from Ruskin, by the 1880s Whistler had achieved success internationally and particularly in London.