

# Examiners' Report Summer 2009

GCE

## Edexcel GCE Art and Design O Level (7020)

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# CONTENTS

	Page
Section A: General Comments	4
Section B: Individual Papers	4
1. Main Paper 1	4
1.1 Section I: Human Figure	4
1.2 Section II: Still Life and Natural Forms	4
1.3 Section III: Composition	5
2. Main Paper 2	5
2.1 Graphic Design	5
3. Subsidiary Paper 3	6
4. Conclusion	6
5. Statistics	

## **SECTION A: GENERAL COMMENTS**

The overall total entries remained the same. Several new Centres chose this Examination, which cancelled out the few others who did not enter this year. The Examiners were very pleased to find far fewer candidates achieving the lower grades. The total entry was generally of a higher standard with the majority of candidates being well prepared and demonstrating an understanding of the exam requirements.

Throughout all sections of the three papers there was no discernable difference in the standards achieved.

Candidates who read the suggestions and studied the work of various artists and designers gained an understanding of the artistic process. The preparatory studies of these candidates revealed an involvement with different materials, an exploratory approach and original ways of interpreting their chosen theme. Candidates who failed to follow the suggestions produced weaker unresearched preparatory sheets and as a consequence were awarded lower grades. In too many cases there was minimal preparatory studies or sometimes none at all. This work suggested no real involvement with the chosen subjects or perhaps a lack of awareness and less guidance by those preparing the candidates.

## **SECTION B: INDIVIDUAL PAPERS**

### **1- MAIN PAPER 1**

#### **1.1- Section I: Human Figure**

There was a good response to both the short pose and the long pose with neither causing the candidate too much difficulty. Superintendents should be aware of positioning some candidates near the feet of a reclining figure and creating a difficult situation with acute foreshortening, this should be avoided.

#### **1.2- Section II: Still Life and Natural Forms**

This is always a popular Section and the levels of competence were also wide ranging as was the selection of ideas. The more able candidates produced images of musical instruments that showed an understanding of work by Braque and Picasso. Such work combined a level of observation and bold innovative composition. The candidates who failed to research the ideas of other artists often produced flat unimaginative arrangements with poor colour selection. The response with Flags and Banners was similar. Stronger candidates showed an awareness of the abstract qualities created by bold colours and large graphic design shapes while the weaker ones failed to respond to these qualities.

Many candidates were fascinated by the work of M.C. Escher and produced a wide range of interesting variations based upon chosen shiny reflective surfaces.

The Flotsam and Jetsam idea failed to produce standards as high as the other Sections. There were several dull, lifeless studies where candidates did not reveal any fascination with the chosen items.

### **1.3- Section III: Composition**

As before it was the candidates, who had conducted personal research into the work of other artists, who gained the higher grades. Work based upon 'Artists and Models' often demonstrated the value of gaining an awareness of artistic styles and movements. The better candidates identified the relationship between the individual creating the image and the person being observed. The theme based upon expressionism produced stunning and vibrant examples where candidates had enjoyed the feeling of exuberance engendered by their research into colour.

'The Workers' produced a range of interpretations based upon well observed local practices and surroundings. Much of this work demonstrated an awareness of how artists have a long tradition of studying human activities.

The standards achieved in response to the 'Abstract Composition' were wide ranging. Many weaker candidates simply chose to create a bright pattern of shapes loosely related to birds or insects. This work showed little understanding of camouflage and no research of any particular artists.

## **2- MAIN PAPER 2**

### **2.1- Graphic Design**

The number of candidates selecting this Paper as their main area of study has gradually fallen each year. The Examiners feel that this no doubt is due to the lack of specialist trained staff able to teach such a course of study.

There was a single candidate entered for printmaking and very few for Calligraphy and Lettering. The standard of work for Calligraphy was good with a reasonable understanding of page arrangement combined with decorative images. The few submissions for Lettering lacked any real involvement or understanding of the processes required when producing a graphic design solution. The Book Jackets, however, were more inventive and creative. No candidates chose Packaging and there were fewer Posters submitted this year. Although the Posters seen were colourful and eye catching and fulfilled the brief.

### 3- SUBSIDIARY PAPER 3

The Examiners never fail to be impressed by the standards achieved by well taught candidates in a paper of only half the duration of the Main. It should be pointed out that it is not a requirement that the work be in A2 size. Many candidates wisely choose to work on a smaller scale enabling them to complete their submission satisfactorily. All candidates are reminded that preparatory work for this Paper is of the same importance as that of the Main and failure to submit any studies will lead to a loss of marks.

### 4- CONCLUSION

Superintendents and candidates who read and follow the instructions are more able to fulfil the requirements of this examination. The six weeks available to read the papers, research artists and produce a range of ideas are crucial to achieving a satisfactory outcome in both Papers. The preparatory studies enable each candidate to demonstrate the direction of their research and their range of ideas. Anyone who submits little or no preparatory studies undermines their chance of a reasonable grade.

It must also be emphasised that A2 is the maximum size for all sheets to be examined. Double mounting numerous studies on heavy sheets of card is a poor use of time and resources and may be counter productive. Marks are awarded for the selection of ideas and their quality, not the volume of work and presentation. Candidates should be mindful of this when submitting work to be examined.

## 5- STATISTICS

### Paper 01

	A	B	C	D	E	U
Upper	100	74	62	51	46	38
Lower	75	63	52	47	39	

### Paper 02

	A	B	C	D	E	U
Upper	100	70	59	48	43	38
Lower	71	60	49	44	39	

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