

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01
Broad-Based Assignment

General comments

The questions provided a broad range of opportunities for observation, personal interpretation and experimentation. It appears that the introduction of the new rubric has been positively received and has provided a positive influence on submissions for this series, with the majority of candidates showing a far clearer understanding of the difference between working from primary and secondary sources. Consequently far more first-hand studies were in evidence across the whole ability range resulting in more personal work which inevitably enhanced an understanding of the subject matter.

There were far fewer submissions that were totally reliant on images from secondary sources. Even the work from the very weakest candidates included some evidence of research from first hand, mostly through the inclusion of a few poor quality photographs or very weak sketches, but this could be rewarded with some marks in AO1 and AO5.

The best work demonstrated research from a variety of source material: using objects from their own homes; scenes from their local environment or visits to buildings or the landscape in their locality. Such approaches produced work which was personal and demonstrated an independent approach. This led to the most successful examples of development and fulfilled outcomes. Occasionally however, some Centres appeared to have few expectations of their candidates and had supplied them with resources to work from instead of encouraging candidates to research their own ideas. Whilst this often led to some worthy outcomes, these tended to be more remote from the candidate's own personal interests. Less successful work was characterised by a narrower range of research material such as single photograph of a subject rather than an in depth exploration using a number of photographs taken from different viewpoints.

There was a relatively high inclusion of contextual referencing in submissions. The stronger work contained successful and appropriate artist connections, which were linked to the development of the candidates' own ideas. This entailed not simply a slavish mimicking of the artist/s in question but a real understanding of the techniques, with an analysis of the emotional or philosophical issues involved. These candidates generally demonstrated a more sophisticated understanding in their personal thought processes, reflecting strength in conception and technical skill. Ideas and opinions were articulated with confidence through written annotations. The candidates who made active and relevant links with artists were more able on the whole, to develop expressive skills and present personal intentions.

Most Centres took full advantage of the preparatory time providing candidates with the opportunity to explore and develop their ideas into personal responses. These Centres encouraged candidates to plan their own ideas through different compositional arrangements in the form of thumbnail sketches, enabling them to draw together the alternative ideas from their subject matter. The strongest candidates planned alternative vantage points, focal points, lighting, colour and other compositional dynamics. Weaker submissions often relied on drawing from photographs and the preparatory studies were made up of repetitive images demonstrating limited exploration and development.

At the lower level, preparatory work was negligible, with many cut and paste photographs being poorly copied for final outcomes. All too often the first idea or image was in fact the only one explored. Inevitably those candidates who had not made adequate preparations for the examination were unable to develop their work into convincing results.

Some outstanding responses to the questions were seen from candidates who experimented with a wide range of media and techniques. Fabrics had been hand-dyed, photography used within mixed media pieces, garments made and animations created.

However, most work was produced via drawing, paint, pastel and some photography was seen together with a considerable amount of mixed media techniques. Some sculptural work was seen but in most cases, there was a marked lack of preparatory studies in the form of drawings or maquettes.

Good use of ICT provided realistic visualisations and made for interesting developments. A few Centres had made very significant use of ICT as a development tool.

There were a small number of film /video submissions seen and in most cases; the planning for the film was very weak with poorly constructed storyboards, shooting schedules and scripts. In some instances, such preparatory work was totally neglected. The use of photography to explore a range of location possibilities would show that a range of outcomes had been explored, prior to filming.

The standard of presentation was generally very good. Care had been taken and most work was well labelled. However, some Centres had not been selective in the inclusion of material for the submissions and candidate achievement was sometimes obscured. Centres should encourage editing of material to aid clearer communication of achievement. A few Centres submitted very complicated presentations with lots of unfolding sheets and pockets containing drawings or photographs, which was unhelpful in the examining process.

The interpretative type questions appeared to have been more popular with the candidates than the observational type starting points. It was interesting to note that there was a marked lack of ghoulish fantasy, violence, murder and disaster scenes produced due to the subjects offered this year. Some Centres and cultures emphasized pattern and decoration but still encouraged candidates to work from first hand sources. **Question 3**, Changing times was the most popular closely followed by **Questions 5, 7 and 8**. **Question 10**, was the least popular.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: A hairdryer, brush, mirror and towel

Hairdryers can present the draughtsman with quite complex problems and the best candidates tackled that complexity with skilled observation and technical competence. Many made use of the mirror to explore reflection and scale, one particular piece was almost hyper-real in the use of paint so that the sheen of the plastic hairdryer contrasted well with the softness of the towel. Candidates in the upper mark range recognised the compositional possibilities of the mirror which enabled them to include self-portraits or studies of the hairdresser. Subjective viewpoints were also attempted by ambitious candidates in the mid- and upper ranges, which showed the arms and hands of the person using the hair dryer or scissors.

Mid-level candidates, of which this question had the majority, showed less understanding of angles and form and the weakest candidates demonstrated poor technical skills in recording and using materials.

This starting point provided candidates with a readily accessible still-life set-up. For those candidates with less independence and imagination, it provided a suitable set up to work from in the examination room. However, where a whole class had used the same set-up, there was much repetition in the work of the submissions where candidates had not personalised their ideas. At this level of achievement there was frequently little supporting work and in some cases none at all. However, there was evidence of some first-hand study in some submissions. The compositional elements in this range were also very basic, demonstrating little understanding of the distribution and organisation of space and structures necessary to form a successful final form.

Question 2: Pipes and plumbing

Although a seemingly simple question regarding the subject matter there was some real excitement and imagination in the best work submitted for this question. Thorough preparation using a range of media and close first-hand observation resulted in some strong evocations of rusty pipes. Many candidates had got themselves into extraordinary locations, including their homes, to produce intriguing photographs as starting points for their explorations. Work in the higher range was imaginative either in the juxtaposition of imagery e.g. imposing pipes from derelict industrial sites onto a cityscape, using pipes, taps, nuts and bolts as musical notation or taking elements to produce strong compositions - a tonal linocut was particularly memorable. Strong paintings showed deft use of colour, composition and understanding of perspective.

There were a significant number of middle ability candidates using a lot of oil pastel and pencil renditions of the subject matter. Most work fell into the mid-range because of less individual exploration of composition and materials coming from fewer starting points. One of the principal differences between the ranges of work which was spread across the mid-range, was in the development of imagery from the source material. For example, the lesser able tended to be more obvious in the development of their ideas, whereas the more able candidates displayed a higher degree of interpretation and analysis. These candidates approached the subject from a more ironic or humorous angle, interpreting the pipework as areas of the body; the heart, intestines or other organs.

Most candidates in the lower mark ranges concentrated on small-scale domestic plumbing such as the pipe-work to be found under sinks and on outside walls. Composition and the development of ideas at this level were simple and illustrated a more literal representation of the pipework, which was often flat with little evidence of tone, form and space. The apparent weaknesses within these submissions were a lack of observational rigour combined with technical ability. Some submissions contained an over reliance of second hand imagery and a lack of personal commitment in the research leading to incoherent final outcomes.

Question 3: Changing times

This was the most popular question and the question which generated the most varied responses; ageing people, egg timers, landscapes, people holding photographs, rotting apples. An exciting variety of interpretations were seen from the effect of changing seasons (time of day) on landscapes, fading flowers, changing fashions in clothing and also technology, and most commonly human ageing, often a trio of portraits from childhood, maturity and old age.

Those achieving the highest marks included a variety and range of studies that explored the theme in depth and breadth and showed a command of integrating several images to show change. Painting was fluent and supported by well-presented and coherent supporting studies. There were some excellent submissions based on Buddhist temples where pattern, space, buildings and symbols flowed seamlessly into one another, there were also some excellent architectural studies and drawings.

Work that fell into the middle mark range often included thorough observational drawings, demonstrating good technical skills, of objects such as old and modern clocks, fashion and architecture, but preparatory studies lacked development and exploration of the creative arrangement and selection process. Candidates were less confident about how to use their studies in a final integrated composition; objects were placed side by side or in a slightly staggered arrangement, and there was a lack of understanding of form and space.

Clocks and in particular melting clocks with links to Surrealism, along with the idea of people ageing over time and ages within the various generations of the family were popular choices in the weaker submissions. Some interesting concepts were apparent, but weak artistic skill inhibited attainment. Other ideas were derived from contrasting and integrating different periods of architectural style, which were often clumsy in construction and in-cohesive. At this level there was less exploration of materials and evidence of much use of pencil to record and develop ideas, demonstrating less personal commitment, with an over reliance of secondary imagery. Once more there was very little supporting work, or at best preparatory work that mirrored an obvious final outcome.

Question 4: A figure holding a spade as if digging a hole

The few submissions for this question spanned a broad range of achievement.

The best submissions demonstrated good to excellent visual recording skills and some excelled in working with pencil and paint to render high quality responses. One piece in particular was of outstanding quality rendered in soft B pencils. Unfortunately, most were let down by a lack of development and experimentation. Another notable piece had attempted to show the process of digging using three sequential figures in an enclosed space whilst another in the mid-range of marks had a figure in woodland sensitively painted in watercolour.

Most candidates had preferred to stick to a limited range of materials but a few outcomes had benefitted from a more adventurous use of colour mediums, such as print making, photo montage and mixed media.

The proportion of the figure in submissions within the lower mark range were on the whole fairly accurate, but outcomes were let down by a lack of control and technical skill of the media chosen.

Question 5: Shade and shadow

The strongest submissions exploited the abstract qualities of positive and negative spaces found in strongly lit architectural environments and still life options. The shadows cast from selected still life objects, from buildings and from figures in the environment and also portraiture, provided exciting compositional ideas. The manipulation of photography was extensive at this level and demonstrated some personal and inventive ideas. There were also many strong examples of traditional approaches to the subject, in particular, observational studies that allowed candidates to explore their objects and forms from a variety of angles and viewpoints while forming images and compositions. At this level the final outcomes were well considered and creative, displaying evidence of an effective conclusion to the question.

Photography was a popular choice as a mode of investigation, and more ambitious candidates explored the idea of shadows from a range of different times of the day. One candidate had taken photographs of external stairs and developed these into an abstract and effective composition. In some cases, objects were arranged in groups or singly and lit with spotlights to give shadowed effects. Sometimes these were explored fully and resulted in proficient and expert rendering of subject matter in the final outcomes. An example of this was an imaginative outcome which had been informed by sensitive drawings of folded paper structures under extreme lighting.

At the lowest levels of achievement an obvious and very limited exploration of the topic was apparent, demonstrating much manipulation of pencil and monochrome painting. Candidates simply and literally interpreted their 'shades and shadow' in tonal terms and failed to see the creative possibilities for manipulating colour. There were many submissions focusing on still life as a source for studying shadow, with the selection of uninspiring objects forming lifeless or disordered compositions. Alongside the lack of exploration of media or ideas and the willingness to consider colour, was a simplistic or mistaken understanding of light source. However, some other work at this level demonstrated creative ideas with potential for development, but the candidates did not appear to have the technical skills to execute these ideas successfully and the final outcome could be incohesive.

Those candidates at the mid-level demonstrated an understanding of the basics of form and light sources and began exploring the more subtle aspects of shadow gradations. A more ordered approach to composition was seen alongside a more explorative attitude to media choices, and a greater engagement into arranging a successful final outcome was more apparent.

Question 6: In the workplace

Street markets, schools, kitchens, garages and workshops provided inspiration. Some stronger submissions were set in the candidates' own schools. Classrooms, the library, computer suites had all been drawn and acutely observed with assurance, colour and collage had been experimented with to produce strong compositions. The involvement and intensity behind this work was self-evident. Another memorable piece conveyed the hustle and bustle of a Chinese street market; the stall was full of tins and packages of food alongside the trader. It was honest and lively both in the use of colour and composition.

There was excellent use of lighting to add drama and interest to the subject, (spotlights, furnaces etc.). It appeared to attract those candidates that wished to give a very personal response and involved lots of accomplished gathering of information, usually relating to local situations of work places. This made for cultural and social commentary and thus personal reflection resulting in high marks being given within AO5. Some work fell short of development after the initial information had been gathered but others used it to inform well thought out compositions that not only showcased aesthetic skill but maintained the concepts origins.

Some very interesting photographic studies were seen which captured the dynamic aspects of heavy industry such as welding, assembly lines and detail studies of machinery covered in oil being dismantled.

Submissions at the mid- level were able to compose a creative response but had often just drawn from one or two rather safe sources, such as school work areas, and stuck to one design idea.

Typically, the work seen in the lower ranges could be characterised by thin supporting studies, lack of drawing skills and little understanding of how to research and develop ideas. The subject matter at this level tended to be the more obvious workshop environments providing the focus for observational research. These submissions contained many images of tools, hardware and figures involved with manual tasks, which were put together to produce very often an in-cohesive final outcome.

Question 7: A branch with blossom and leaves

This proved to be a very popular question with predictable but often very accomplished responses. The best pieces concentrated on direct observation and sensitive drawing. There were some rather clichéd responses but generally there was a directness and honesty about the drawing and painting.

There were several interesting interpretations which took the question in unusual and interesting directions. These showed a willingness to go beyond conventional interpretations and expectations. Several candidates in the upper mark range treated the branch as an extreme foreground in a full-blown view of a landscape. Wallpaper design was seen in the mid-mark range although the gathering aspect was neglected at the expense of an otherwise promising developmental stage. The most unusual was a mask design based on flowers, branches and leaves with a large birds face providing a focal point.

Mid-ability candidates recorded accurately from first hand observation and photographs with good technical skills in a variety of media making reference to works of others but tended to lack creative development leading to a personal response. There was much repetition of drawn and painted images, with little exploration or manipulation of alternative ideas and imagery, which could have provided more scope to further the work into more imaginative realisations of intentions. These submissions could be aesthetically accomplished, but lacked a strong sense of development or exploration.

Lower responses lacked compositional imagination and little experimentation beyond painting one or two branches and perhaps adding a simple print in an attempt to garner extra marks. The small amount of research was generally limited to photographs, which appeared to be a mixture of secondary sourced images and the candidate's own photographic images. Sometimes the collected source material was downloaded from the Internet, in the form of many multiple thumbnail size images. Hidden amongst these images was sometimes primary source material, in the form of the candidate's own photographs or studies, which were often very difficult to see within this type of presentation.

Question 8: Cover up

This was a very popular question with a wide range of responses. Many chose to use it to comment/describe Muslim women's dress and culture, others focused on the glamour or deceptiveness of make-up, fashion, veils, obesity, and use of masks, disguises, shadows and secrets. Packaging design, still life studies of partially covered objects, hidden emotions, facial make up, tattoos, clothing design, were also subjects tackled by candidates. Apart from the obvious physical covering of objects, some candidates painted or collaged over their artwork so that their imagery being covered was the main subject in response to the question. This approach demonstrated considerable courage on the part of the candidates.

The work at the higher levels demonstrated individuality in the development of ideas, techniques and outcomes. The investigation into the works of others was prominent at this level and images inspired by this exploration were often manipulated and developed to form powerful, creative and individual imagery. There was much confident and skilful manipulation of materials and the rendering of mark making which was appropriate to intention. Evidence was often apparent of the exploration of many alternative compositions, with the inclusion of the candidate's own photography, paintings and drawings from differing viewpoints and layouts of ideas, within the preparatory work, which led to some well-considered and dramatic final outcomes.

Imagination was still very evident in middle range submissions, although supporting work and lack of coherent compositions was often a problem; nevertheless there were some fascinating submissions. Some potentially strong pieces of work were let down by weak studies of heads/figures. Many relied on their own photographs to work from but had not considered lighting in setting up the photo so the resultant image was flat and had limited detailed information.

Although work at the lower level displayed some interesting ideas, preparatory studies did not fully explore or develop the skills necessary to express their ideas effectively. Often candidates at this level responded very literally to the question and stuck to one idea, which was then copied again for the final piece. There were some photographic submissions at this level all of which focused on the covering up or masking of the face, which was very simple and narcissistic in nature and demonstrated little development, alternative ideas, contextual research and experimentation. The created imagery tended to lack focus, balance or successful composition. The source material for this work was limited to multiple self-portraits – mostly using the same viewpoint, same exposure and same colour balance. This lack of development was the biggest factor which prevented this work from achieving a more successful final form.

Question 9: A collection of shells in a glass dish

Candidates who answered this question obviously enjoyed observation and colour. Some very sensitive pieces were submitted regardless of the scale of the shells or composition. Most had explored many alternative compositions, those in the higher mark range bringing out the contrasting surfaces of shells and glass, shadow and highlight. Several of the candidates displayed real painterly qualities and were able to respond to the complex shapes with flair and sensitivity. Generally there was a sound understanding of tone and an adventurous use of colour, often heightening the actual colour found in nature. A few candidates explored other definitions of 'shells' such as military shells, seeds and husks.

Work in the middle mark range was also thoughtful but lacked the drawing skills and compositional qualities of those in the higher range.

At the lower level some very basic and unimaginative submissions were presented without any supporting studies and as a result were unable to demonstrate any significant research, development or experimentation. Their compositions lacked depth and space, with little understanding of the relationships between their selected forms. There was little exploration of the surface of the objects, and the recording demonstrated weak technical skill with a poor ability to observe and record detail.

Question 10: Bowled over

Although not a popular question responses included cricketers, people reacting with shock and surprise and fruit and vegetables spilling out of a tipped over bowl.

One outstanding submission used the idea of being bowled over by exhibits of fine porcelain bowls. The photographic exploration in a china shop, together with an extremely proficient use of media, gave rise to a colourful and light-hearted highly personal response.

Submissions at the middle mark range were more predictable and worked predominantly from own photographs of figures embracing or falling over. These images were developed through an exploration of media, including painting and collage work, into well resolved outcomes.

In the lower range marks secondary source material was more evident in this question particularly where cricketers were concerned resulting in a reliance on rather chaotic collages.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/02
Design-Based Assignment

General Comments

The question paper made clear references to the importance of first-hand drawing, or drawing from primary observation and as a result, candidate responses were stronger than those seen previously. Most questions gave drawing references as starting points, and although the standard of drawing varied, this gave candidates a basis to develop their ideas, and in the higher level work, a greater understanding of the processes involved in creating a response to a design brief.

The questions were open-ended and this had a positive and negative impact on the work submitted. There was a broader range of responses and the best candidates were able to apply their imaginative and creative powers and developed some really strong work whereas some candidates struggled with this freedom and found it difficult to develop original ideas from their initial studies.

Some candidates at the higher levels made good references to other artists or cultures (e.g. **Question 3**: Water Droplets/David Hockney and **Question 2**: Brush Up/Pop Art). At the lower level some candidates copied a lengthy biography extracted from the Internet and too often irrelevant to the question. The importance of artist's research or other cultures is to link these to personal ideas.

Annotation and/or evaluation at the higher level discussed ideas, choices made, reasons for decisions, intentions and fitness for purpose as well as choices of materials. However at the lower levels it consisted of detailed descriptions of materials used or what the candidate had done which was clearly obvious and therefore irrelevant.

Submissions were seen across the whole mark range from Very Limited to Outstanding with the majority of the work done in conventional media such as pencil, pastel, paint, collage, print and a small number of photographic or digitally manipulated submissions.

Question 4, BotaniX was the most popular choice and **Question 8**, Computer Components and **Question 9**, Mineral Mine were the least popular.

The presentation of supporting work varied greatly in quantity and quality. Some candidates presented extra rough drawings/notes/photographs stapled in batches together without thought as to the quality or relevance of the work and in these cases some serious editing would have benefited the submissions. Some Centres sent work mounted on heavy card or hardboard making the marking process heavy and cumbersome. Many Centres however, made good efforts to present the candidates work.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1: A Bite to Eat

This was the second most popular question and there was a wide range of responses across the ability range. First-hand sources proved an unnecessary challenge for some, rather than realise that they did not need to look too far for their inspiration; they visited zoos and wildlife parks and took photos or drew directly from subject matter. Some of the best work seen, however, had taken inspiration from their own pets as starting points in their visual research, or studies of animal skulls and bones,

One enterprising candidate drew and photographed the open mouth of a Rottweiler and another had a pet fox, an iguana and a large bird to draw claws and jaws from.

Many candidates at the mid- to lower levels resorted to secondary images, either from books or the Internet, and this generated a plethora of roaring tigers, lions and bears plus numerous eagles, lizards, snakes and crocodiles, their mouths dripping with blood.

Some wonderful mature and descriptive, expressive painting was seen in the best work of animals fur, hair and skin, and teeth. This demonstrated a high level of skill and the ability to combine media to create a final outcome. Ideas development was thorough and well researched, often backed up by links to artists. Typography was considered as an integral part of the design and the aesthetic choices made were both well considered and of a good standard.

In the mid- to lower levels of achievement, images played the predominant role with typography coming a poor second. It was only in the upper range of the mid-level that the heading was given thought and attention. Too often 'A Bite to Eat' was casually hand written or painted around the image without much thought, planning or accuracy.

There was little research or ideas development at the lower levels, with some candidates making up their own animals with no reference to any first-hand sources whatsoever. All the imagery used was secondary sourced and final designs demonstrated low conceptual awareness and did not look at the work of other designers in order to support their own interpretations.

The favoured medium for the final outcomes was paint or coloured pencil, pencil was an inappropriate medium for colouring in large areas leading to problems with the finish. In one Centre all the candidates presented the same layout with one of two images, the only difference in the work being the ability to use paint and the standard of finish.

Poster designs were the most popular for promoting the TV documentary. Other outcomes seen included one innovative storyboard for an animation and many designs for TV, screen shaped stills, for promotions for 'later in the week'. The information varied greatly but showed a relevance to the brief.

Question 2: Brush Up

This was quite a popular choice and gave good opportunities for primary visual research, contextual research and art historical references. Many candidates at the highest level produced drawings of make-up and hair brushes in a range of media which were then used for the finished artwork. Other implements used were scissors, lipsticks, razors, perfume bottles and packages, boxes of make-up and hair straighteners. Candidates were able to synthesize information and produce professional looking work which had a fitness for purpose. Some candidates at this level researched make-up counters at department stores and took some good photographs.

In many of the middle to lower level submissions, much of the research was secondary, usually a selection of packages from make-up companies and photographs of brushes from the Internet. Different typefaces were researched by most candidates, but fonts for their final logo designs did not always show the best or most relevant choices.

It was clear that many candidates did not consider the part of the brief that stipulated the packaging was for the teenage market. Where this was considered some stylised graffiti and bright colours were seen. The package design itself was not explored sufficiently by many candidates and most packaging at the lower level was a standard rectangular shape. Only in very few submissions seen did candidates take the initiative and construct 3D packaging for their final outcomes.

Some computer programmes were used well for design development by a few candidates, but their ideas were not always followed through to the final stages on the computer, with the final outcomes completed in paint with limited success and finish.

Reference to the work of other artists or designers was well utilised by the more able candidates with Andy Warhol chosen for his bright colours and repeat images. Although many candidates at the lower levels included information about other artists they did not transfer the knowledge gained to their ideas.

Question 3: Dewdrops, Droplets and Puddles

This proved to be quite a popular question with a range of different responses that covered illustration, fine art and graphic design. This question was probably the most abstract and personal in its possible interpretation and attracted a range of approaches and outcomes including 3D constructions, textiles,

fashion, posters, logo design, package design, interior design and paintings. This brief certainly gave opportunities for individual and innovative thinking.

Due to the transient nature of water some candidates relied on photography for their research and final outcomes. Two of the best submissions seen were photographic, one for a DVD cover for a conservation video, the other a poster for flood victims aided by the Red Cross. This particular candidate took a series of photos of puddles and local high rise buildings and then through Photoshop, superimposed the buildings onto the water, reversing them to indicate reflections and using the resulting images to suggest a city being submerged by a flood. Pertinent copy was written and many ideas for layouts and type considered before finalising the work on computer.

Candidates in the mid-range demonstrated an ability to produce some unusual and inventive ideas based on designing sportswear, holiday advertising and book illustration. Photographs of water splashes, the sea and rivers were utilised. It was interesting to see that very few images of water related images came from the home - taps, sinks, baths, glasses and even fewer experiments with the qualities of water.

At the lower level most candidates first-hand drawings were limited to sketchy, hasty linear drawings and supplemented by small unusable poor quality printouts from the Internet. Consequently, with little references, ideas development was limited with repetition substituting new ideas. However, experiments with materials showed some interesting techniques such as marbling or linocuts, but this usually lacked development towards more sophisticated imagery.

Question 4: Botanic

This was the most popular question attracting nearly 1/3 of all the submissions with a mark range of 'Very Limited' to 'Excellent'. There was some improvement with regard to primary source drawing with candidates finding a number of different plants to study. Often, this was the strongest element in the submissions with the ideas development, compositions and final outcomes falling far behind the standard of the studies. Work seen at lower level was disappointing with the recording and observational drawing relying on Internet images to copy.

Many candidates did not understand what this question required them to do which was to 'design their own typeface.' A great number of existing typefaces and fonts were used by candidates and simply decorated with flowers and leaves with many of the results not fit for purpose, even though some of them were technically sound.

The best work had included studies of plants and developed these inventively into lettering, trying several alternative layouts and experimenting with composition before deciding on the final design. Some higher level candidates also arranged plants and flowers into the word and took photographs of the results, with some using digital manipulation to further enhance their designs. One of the best submissions was a very individual design using black and white drawings of 'the dark side of plants'. This candidate produced an idea based on very accurate drawings of fungi and their own carnivorous plants to construct the lettering. Many explorations with color and construction indicated an analytical and creative mind.

There were some innovative ideas seen in the mid-levels of achievement although technical ability in the structure of designs was weaker and ideas were not always followed through. One Centre submitted work that was almost identically produced in paint but lacked any personal individuality. However, three of these submissions were beautifully drawn and painted and achieved marks in the 'proficient' and 'competent' levels. It was surprising to note that few candidates made references to Art Nouveau, although one candidate researched Archimbaldo whose drawing techniques were then translated into more personal interpretations.

Question 5: Face to Face

Again, a popular choice for many candidates with some strong submissions. This question gave the opportunity for a wide range of responses that focused on the fashion industry and allowed candidates to look at location, set design, venue design, posters and fashion design.

There were many 2D drawings of fashion and catwalk designs, some posters, a 3D model of a catwalk, collages of dresses, a full size handmade outfit, and many fashion illustrations. Materials, techniques and their use and application varied greatly, from sketchy pencil, pen and painted designs to painted on and sewn textiles.

The reference for this question was easily accessible at first-hand, and candidates took full advantage of producing studies and photographs from oneself, family and friends. However, it was still surprising to see just how many images of faces were simply downloaded from the Internet, particularly in the lower mark band. At this level the design of clothes was popular, some without any reference to the question and some clothes adorned with facial features. Ideas development was limited and if the work of artists or designers was included, little connection was made to the candidates own work.

Work in the mid-range showed much more involved research with satisfactory references to the work of other artists and designers, including Surrealism. More thought was given to developing ideas but it was often seen that the more innovative and interesting ideas were not selected, and candidates tended to play safe with more ordinary ideas. Finish and presentation were not so developed at this level and handling of media was inconsistent.

In the higher mark band there was much more thought and innovation. Experimentation with different expressions of the human face with excellent primary drawings and paintings and many examples of personal photography were seen. The development and range of ideas was definitely more mature and creative. One candidate linked their ideas to Andy Warhol's repeat patterns whilst another related their fashion drawings to Mondrian's paintings. Also an excellent catwalk design using 3D images of facial features on a white block structure, drawn in black and white with subtle spot colour was simple but eye-catching.

Question 6: Nails, Screws, Buttons, Nuts and Bolts

This was not a popular question. Candidates had easy access to primary subject matter, but at the lower levels many produced preliminary drawings from secondary images or the Internet. These were poorly observed, sketchy and lacking in structural knowledge. The idea that the artwork should be for a 3D installation bypassed many of the candidates at this level. Linocuts and screen prints were used as a repetitive design for wall hangings but were of varying quality. A few advertising hoardings were also seen but when typography was added to drawings there was little ability in relating image to text in the creation of a cohesive design.

One of the better submissions was a wall hanging consisting of strings of buttons in a pattern, strung on fishing wire and attached to a wooden baton. Another was a series of free standing insects made from nuts, bolts and nails. These were then drawn to show them enlarged in a room setting.

The best submission at the upper level came from a candidate who understood the graphics process and produced an eye catching poster in which the images and type were well integrated and related. Technically sound with good use and application of colour and very well researched with some good examples of other designers work.

Question 7: Handmade

This was a reasonably popular question but no work was seen in the highest mark bands. There was plenty of scope for primary research, first-hand drawings and personal photographs and candidates at the mid-levels took advantage of this through visits to museums and craft shops as well as utilising some objects in the home.

There were many examples of posters to promote various exhibitions and some samples of handmade pieces to include within craft exhibitions. Knitting and crochet examples were popular but often they were not used in the final outcomes. There were also examples of photographic images of textiles showing close-ups of textures and decorative materials, mostly taken from the Internet.

At the lower level artwork for the posters was sometimes just made up from collected images without any evidence of planning or composition. There was limited use of technical ability and ideas development was seldom seen. Type was considered but little accuracy or technical ability was evident.

One collage of candidates' own textiles were sewn into a patchwork and presented as the final outcome and a complex clock design using mock leather was produced by another candidate as an example of an object to include in an exhibition.

The best work presented a series of well observed close up drawings of hands knitting. However, the recording of these images was of much better quality than the final artwork.

Question 8: Discarded Computer Components

This was the least popular question with marks ranging from 'Limited' to 'Excellent'. Candidates were confronted with clearly defined manufactured shapes and forms although no one explored the wiring aspects of the components which could have been a rich source of composition and design.

Despite the opportunity to draw from primary sources, candidates at the lower level resorted to copying images from the Internet. Their low marks were compounded by a lack of ideas and technical ability. There were some poorly designed logos with no thoughts of alternative designs, and candidates had not thought enough about context.

Mid-level submissions consisted of a flat collage of paper and card showing printouts of circuit boards, made into a 2D Egyptian head - no reason was given to the link with Egypt; and a 3D design of a futuristic head sculpture with good secondary source references to skulls and heads, but minimal first-hand drawing.

The better submissions consisted of a miniature city designed within a light bulb, made in 3D, and a design for a pair of headphones as a wall installation in a company's reception area.

Question 9: Mineral Mine

Few candidates submitted work for this question although work seen ranged from the 'Limited' to 'Excellent' mark range.

Different approaches to this question included several designs for fantasy environments in underground mines with dwarves and elves, particularly in the lower mark band. Ideas were based on imagination or copying second rate secondary images rather than primary observation. Consequently, personal ideas were limited along with technical ability.

In the middle band one candidate had used found images of crystals and rocks quite successfully to design chairs and tables for the interior of a shop, but generally ideas were rather mundane, using crystals to decorate walls.

The best work was an illustration of light shades based on 3D shapes of crystals, shown in place in a showroom with outstanding perspective. Excellent drawn and painted references of different crystals were used to develop ideas for a range of different products. These were gradually eliminated to focus on designs for lightshades. Many examples of artists and designers work were studied and some innovative ideas were developed based on their work, all of which could have been used for final outcomes. Ideas with folded paper, bent straws and wire enhanced the work. This submission was a great example of the way a question should be answered and indicated a thorough understanding of the design process.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/03

Critical and Historical Assignment

General Comments

The work seen covered a pleasing range of topics which included ceramics, glassware, sculpture, and painting. More assignments on architecture were seen this time, and the best of these used photography as a means of documenting visits, often creating very dynamic and powerful images that complimented the text.

At the higher levels of attainment, the presentation of the work was more personal and imaginative. An encouraging variety of formats was seen, from small to large sketchbooks, large mounted sheets of card, and small A4 files and folders.

Often links were made to the candidates own work, which was entirely appropriate when shown as an informed response to a Gallery visit or artist's studio. There were some assignments where this was clearly not the case as there was little or no evidence of any first hand research or experience of the work of other artists being gained. This practical and material based approach is entirely appropriate as long as the assignment does not consist solely of the candidates own work, which was the case with a few submissions.

A number of assignments would have benefited from the submission of an outline proposal form (OPF) to CIE for help and advice. OPFs assist candidates with the planning of their assignment as well as identifying suitable first hand sources for gaining vital research and experience of the chosen subject.

Levels of attainment were quite evenly spread across the whole range of marks, from 'A little evidence' right through the middle ranges up to a few candidates achieving the 'Outstanding' mark level. The strongest submissions always contained evidence of a first-hand source for research and/or experience of the subject matter. Evidence of some recording from a first-hand source, using either photography or drawing, or both, nearly always enhanced and informed the further development of the assignment.

In support of first-hand study, visits to Art Galleries, artists' studios, museums and buildings of architectural significance, all provided material for visual and written analysis. Many candidates had used the experience gained from a Gallery or museum visit as a promising starting point for the assignment. This was often enhanced by some good related photography and sometimes some sensitive and imaginative drawings. Submissions at the lower levels of attainment often relied heavily on the internet for their research, and lacked any discussion or analysis of images. Many candidates had conducted interviews with their chosen artists and these were beneficial when questions had been carefully planned to provide insights into how the artist or designer had developed the works being explored.

Work seen at the higher levels of achievement often developed a theme that related to their first hand visit to an artist, for example; discussions regarding the use of colour, the landscape or a particular process within ceramics, batik or stone carving, many of which led to some interesting cultural comparisons being made.

Some candidates selected specific techniques such as photography and printmaking. The very best of these explored the works of their artists with good written and visual analysis. Intelligent comparisons had enabled candidates to discuss the qualities found in the work through an analysis of shape, form, colour and texture. Some personal experiments with related materials had clearly been informed by this kind of exploration.

The presentation of the work is very important, and some imaginative methods which were most suitable for the selected material were seen at the higher levels of achievement.

Some extremely personal hand-made books were in evidence. Some were seen where the studies were in the form of customised A3 sketchbooks, each presented in a purpose made black box/folio. Many submissions were presented on large mounted sheets of card, the best of which had carefully mounted photographs/drawings combined with related blocks of text.

Hand written text was used by some candidates to add texture and visual interest to the presentation. At the higher levels of achievement, candidates had considered the presentation carefully and included a related variety of images.

IT was often used to show an understanding through the presentation, layering and contrasting of images, making some strong visual comparisons, combined with related text. The strongest of these submissions had used IT imaginatively combined with the candidates own visual studies, often photographs, creating a more personal approach.

The use of some excellent photography was seen by candidates with a focus on architectural forms, demonstrating the serious involvement and engagement with the subject. One particular outstanding architectural assignment demonstrated the perceptive use of carefully observed drawings to investigate the structure of some significant features of related buildings. A few 'outstanding' assignments were seen that focused on some sculpture and ceramic work. The candidates had become so engaged with exploring the related working methods, and had produced their own inventive material-based responses.

Work seen in the middle to lower achievement levels, indicated that candidates had often included their own research material gained from visits to studios and workshops but they had not put forward their own views on the artworks being created or of the architecture they had visited. Related discussions are vital to reach the higher levels of attainment, and should not only refer to the candidates own art work.

Candidates achieving the higher levels of attainment had all included personal appreciation gathered from direct contact from visits to artists, galleries, workshops. Interviews were usually first-hand but email was also used. The questions themselves help to reveal the level of understanding and knowledge of the candidate. Submissions at the higher levels often demonstrated a variety of approaches, with all the source material clearly listed.

The strongest assignments presented very personal explorations, involving visual awareness, critical thinking and reflection, resulting in a well-informed evaluation of the topic.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/04

Coursework Assignment

General Comments

The majority of candidates had followed a course of study in the area of Painting and Related Media, although there were a few individual submissions from other areas of study, the most popular being photography.

A wide range of responses were seen with evidence of imagination and the development of personal interests. The best work was the result of in depth research from first-hand study of chosen subjects. Still life, natural and manufactured forms were very popular as was work from the figure where candidates had used themselves, friends and family to work from. There were examples of studies made in the local landscape and those made around the candidates' homes, local environment or school.

There were examples where research into the work of other artists, designers or cultures had informed candidates own ideas. The best had been encouraged not just to copy the work of others but to analyse aspects of their subject matter or technique to inform their own work. However, there were still many examples of downloaded copies of written biographies, lengthy descriptions of technical processes and downloaded photographs of poor quality or of images that had no relationship to the candidate's theme, that could not be credited as having made any contribution to the candidate's own development.

The candidates in the middle mark range sometimes produced work of an inconsistent quality. Often the support work could be pleasing though sometimes the final outcome did not reflect the potential found in the supporting studies and remained unfulfilled or incohesive. This was often due to poor decision making, a lack of planning and development, or an ineffective use of time. In other submissions however, the final outcome was successful but the supporting work lacked the depth and scope required at this level, demonstrating repetition rather than development. There were some Centres where the candidates had produced a series of finished pieces taken from secondary imagery. Though this work demonstrated a high level of technical skill in the control of media, it lacked exploration, experimentation and development, with little evidence of a personal response.

The weakest submissions often presented insufficient supporting studies which demonstrated limited technical ability. The support work that was presented often displayed a heavy reliance on secondary sources, or a range of unrelated drawings and paintings, hindering the possibility of a personal development of ideas in support of a final response.

The general standard of presentation was good with final outcomes clearly labelled and supported with sheets of mounted studies. The best demonstrated an intelligent presentation of work in sequence of thought and idea development, however, many others often contained supporting sheets displaying a confusing mix of research, ideas and experiments displaying an unclear thought processes. Supporting work could often be supplemented with unrelated class exercises and work from previous projects which was disconnected to their chosen theme that did nothing to aid achievement. There are still too many submissions seen where candidates have spent too much time on needless embellishment of their supporting sheets, with painted borders and intricate title pages. Most would have benefitted by using this time to practice their basic drawing skills. Some Centres had provided excellent photographs of large work, displaying evidence of scale and achievement. This method of presentation would have benefitted the many candidates who submitted some very large canvases with heavy collaged pieces attached, some of which had become damaged and spoiled.

Centres continue to be very generous in their application of the assessment criteria. In order to reward marks for an 'adequate' achievement level and above there must be evidence of research from first hand sources, supported by research of the work of other relevant artists or historical/cultural sources which has informed the development of their own ideas. There should be evidence of the exploration of ideas through the manipulation of images and experimentation of media and processes. Candidates should show the planning for their final outcomes through different compositions, or colour schemes. Final work should show a clear

understanding of composition and design and of using the formal elements of art to convey their intentions. A range of media or processes needs to be explored before deciding on the most suitable to use in final pieces, and this should be used in a controlled way. There needs to be evidence of evaluation and analysis of work in progress and the presentation of the unit in a clear and logical sequence.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

Submissions covered a wide variety of ideas carried out in as wide a range of processes, often featuring some interesting combinations.

Subject matter was varied but the most successful always based their initial studies on first-hand observation.

The more-able candidates were able to generate a range of excellent visual research and develop their observational studies in many creative and individual ways, such as experimenting with media, colour, texture and composition. Some referred to the work of other artists to inform their ideas for development, and provided visual links to illustrate these connections. Some candidates had used their own photography to produce carefully observed studies and rich media experiments which were developed into original outcomes. These submissions were very personal and clearly the candidates had followed their own interests.

Candidates' own photography was a common feature in the best supporting work seen. Many had also scanned images and manipulated them to provide interesting colour variations or combinations of images. There were some especially successful examples when such work was then printed out and over worked with drawn and paint processes, or collaged into painted compositions.

Mid level responses appeared less confident as if the candidates were less committed. Generally submissions in the mid-range lacked a range of research. The reliance on secondary sources copied from magazines or downloaded from the internet limited the development of original ideas was typical in this achievement level.

Other less successful submissions were lacking in sufficient practice of basic drawing or painting skills. Many candidates had some interesting ideas and original concepts on quite personal and relevant issues but were unable to develop them into cohesive compositions. Images were lacking in form and structure and compositions were a pastiche of unrelated images with little consideration of background or a balanced design.

Photography

The use of photography as a method of recording initial ideas in addition to hand-drawn observational studies was popular and many candidates from across the higher to middle range of the ability levels had used this medium creatively in their supporting work. Candidates had dressed up models, painted their faces and set up photo shoots in unusual settings. Many were clearly using photography as a tool to document and develop their ideas.

As the chosen form of media for the whole coursework submission, the best photography work included several photo shoots that demonstrated the candidates' abilities to fully explore their selected subject from different angles, viewpoints and scale. It was pleasing to note that some Centres still encourage candidates to use traditional wet photography and darkroom processing. Other work was developed using a range of experimental techniques including the use of Photoshop and other digital image manipulation programmes. One candidate had successfully explored the idea of their identity by printing their photographs onto fabric and documenting through photography, a model wearing the fabric. The outcomes were successful and personal. The best work also referred to the work of other photographers and took inspiration from this research to further their own ideas.

The work in the lower mark levels featured a lack of technical understanding of the media and development of ideas with much repetition of similar images, or merely used effects without understanding or purpose. Within this level candidates appeared unable to demonstrate a creative response or a full understanding of the photographic possibilities. At this level there was very little or no reference to the works of other photographers, artists or designers.

Graphic Design

There were a range of projects submitted including packaging, posters, corporate/logo design, book/CD covers, drinks labels, and illustration.

The best work included research in the form of observational drawings from first-hand sources and a collection of the candidate's own photographs, from which to base their ideas. They had used a combination of their own artwork and computer graphics to create original designs. In these submissions there was evidence of extensive media testing to explore a range of background options for designs. A thorough exploration of colour ways and different compositions incorporating text and image was clearly presented. These candidates had clearly demonstrated a sound understanding of colour theory to inform their ideas and used this knowledge to help review and refine their work to a successful conclusion. The exploration of text contained a mixture of hand-drawn and computer-generated design and both demonstrated an understanding of the formation and positioning of lettering. At this level a greater understanding of design development was apparent and candidates displayed excellent technical skills and were able to make informed judgements of their own and others work.

In the less successful submissions it was clear that there was a lack of initial drawing and projects were heavily reliant on second-hand imagery, or on digital manipulation software.

Technical ability was limited and where the work was hand-produced, the painting skills were often limited. On the whole the computer-generated work demonstrated some knowledge of the programme used, but this was not explored or developed in any depth. The work was either under developed or incomplete. It was sometimes difficult to identify the candidates own work from the imagery that had been copied from the internet and in this situation, annotation would have been a useful method for communicating information.

Some submissions appeared to have come from very structured courses and all the work looked very similar and lacked individuality.

Textile and Fashion Design

There were few submissions where candidates had developed outcomes in a range of fabric processes such as batik and stencil printing. The best demonstrated high levels of technical skills across a range of materials and processes but the initial research and exploration of ideas was never of the same high standard. Some examples were heavily reliant on pattern making with little reference to anything observed.

There were some very detailed and sensitive studies using embroidery and stitching through paper and silk combined with traditional drawings and paintings. Some individual work was seen of painted and stitched linen portraits developed from photographs of friends into large appliqué works.

Fashion submissions at the higher level demonstrated evidence of some very well researched fashion development, that included a vast array of initial source material containing drawings and photographs all of which had been developed through media explorations such as fabric dyeing, samples of embroidery and fashion sketches. Research was developed into individual and carefully constructed handmade garments, executed to a high standard. Some demonstrated an excellent use of digital processes in order to explore a range of ideas and develop new outcomes.

Work in the middle range demonstrated some effective fashion drawing with evidence of good technical ability. However, the work was often repetitive rather than fully developed; this was usually due to insufficient research from which to draw ideas, leading to unresolved and disappointing final outcomes.

The work seen in the lower levels of achievement lacked research from direct observation and the depth of investigation required. Drawings from direct observation would have informed the initial development of designs greatly but there was also a proliferation and over reliance on fashion images from the internet, often with little or no information as to which designer was being illustrated or for what purpose. The technical skills demonstrated in the construction of designs were weak, deriving very often from the imagination and presented without care and control with no informative annotation. Other work at this level demonstrated the construction of a practical final outcome, but with little support of research or development.

Three-dimensional Studies

There were only a few submissions for this area of study.

Amongst the most successful was an excellent hat design submission incorporating a mixture of materials and was inspired by ideas from the candidate's studies from direct observation, and their own photographs. Studies and photographic recordings were made from a skeleton and dying flowers. Time lapse images were taken to study the process of disintegration and then developed into the manipulation of a range of 3D media into a conclusive final form.

Some ceramic work was seen; some well-crafted bowls demonstrating a good understanding of the use of glazes but unfortunately the majority of ceramic submissions were not of a good standard due to deficiencies in the supporting work not containing the relevant depth or scope for candidates to be inspired by, or to develop or plan for a successful and informed final outcome in this media.

Some mixed media work was seen using card, wire and a variety of other materials. Most demonstrated a good awareness of three dimensional space and had excellent technical skills, but presented little research or the creative exploration of ideas.

Printmaking

There was very little printmaking evident, but those who chose to explore this media produced some very successful results, demonstrating good technical skills and an excellent aesthetic and creative awareness.

Within the work of some submissions, the supporting studies and final outcome had been supported by experimentation with printmaking resulting in some interesting and successful examples of etching and linocuts. Some candidates produced some excellent reductive linocut prints within their work, but screen printing tended to be the main technique used for the final outcomes.

Another printmaking response had made observations of skylines which had been translated into lino prints within the supporting work. However, the final piece was less successful with the candidate making ineffective decisions when developing their ideas into a final form.

One Centre had encouraged the exploration of printmaking throughout the preparatory work with some well observed starting points developed into silk screen, lino or dry point prints demonstrating an understanding of colour and aesthetic qualities. This was a well structured course which enabled individual expression through good technical ability.