ART AND DESIGN

> **Paper 0400/01**
> **Broad-Based Assignment**

General comments

The standard of presentation was generally very good. It was apparent that care had been taken and most work was well labelled. However, some candidates and Centres had not been sufficiently selective in the inclusion of material for their submissions. This was particularly the case in the presentation of excessive layering; pockets and flip mechanisms which tended to overload and complicate the presentation of the work. Creative editing would have benefited these candidates and aided clearer communication of achievement.

There were various approaches to the presentation of the work. Some centres submitted an inconsistent selection of large heavy boards and mixed media canvases in their preparatory work. Photographic evidence may have been a more appropriate method of illustrating the work in this instance. Other Centres submitted scripts on many irregular sheets of different sizes, which prevented clarity of continuity. As a contrast to this, other Centres had uniformity to their presentation style, with the consistent use of black mount board to give a professional finish and demonstrate clear candidate achievement.

There were many lively and personal submissions that explored an array of media and developed individual ideas from a wide range of starting points. Several film/video submissions demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of technology which was supported by more traditional preparatory work and this enhanced the candidates' submission of work overall. Photography was employed by most candidates and in some cases the level of expertise was excellent. A wide range of different materials and techniques was seen throughout; for example, paint collage, charcoal, biro, pencil and coloured pencil, ceramics, photography, lino and etching, printed fabric, sculpture, film and video. There was an increase in the number of candidates focusing on a fashion-led response to the paper. These submissions showed a good grasp of design processes.

The work at the higher mark level contained evidence of the gathering of research from a variety of source material. At this level, resources were personal, demonstrating the independence of the candidate and consequently led to good examples of development with concluded outcomes. This was in contrast to the candidates with less initiative and individuality who appeared content to work from resources which had clearly been provided by the Centre and, as a result, the work was repetitive and lacked personal input. At this level, the inclusion of contextual referencing contained active and appropriate connections to relevant artists which were used successfully to inform expressive ideas and opinions, allowing candidates to present personal intentions. The stronger and more successful work also demonstrated evidence of the manipulation of an appropriate range of media through which to positively express their theme. The submissions at this level tended to be more creative, playful and experimental with the chosen media demonstrating creative risk taking during the earlier stages of the development of the work. This demonstrated maturity and confidence and was especially so with those candidates exploring the use of digital media and related software packages such as Autodesk Mudbox and the animation package Blender. Along with painting and related media and digital manipulation, there was also evidence of printmaking and photography, and candidates could be successful in choosing the most appropriate materials and techniques for use in their final outcomes.

The work in the middle level, despite demonstrating individuality and personal engagement in the selection and exploration of their sources and the use of a range of media, demonstrated technical inconsistencies in the recording skills and in the manipulation of materials, to express ideas and record observations. However, the work demonstrated much commitment and many understood the need to record from direct observation to explore their chosen theme. The work fulfilled each assessment objective to varying degrees. In the better work at this level, final outcomes tended to develop from the exploration of ideas and images, good planning and a skilful handling of materials and techniques. In the less successful work, the preparatory work was not always successfully fulfilled in the final outcome. The choice of scale and media had not always been sufficiently considered within the supporting work. A lack of practice of these elements during this stage

meant that the final outcome did not always mirror the promise evident in the preparatory work, resulting in some examination pieces losing the detail and surface qualities apparent in the earlier works.

The submissions at the lower mark range often demonstrated limited research skills from either primary or secondary resources. Consequently, the work lacked the possible range and variety of initial ideas required to form the basis of a cohesive body of work. There was little evidence of recording skills and some candidates had not submitted any research or preparatory work at all, only the examination piece. This prevented them from achieving the full range of marks across each of the assessment objectives. Other submissions at this level lacked the exploration of observational drawing to formulate initial ideas. The work tended to lack personal commitment and would have benefited from being more sustained. Any contextual referencing tended to be superficial and bore little or tenuous relevance to the path pursued. A basic selection of media was often demonstrated, restricting the exploration of materials and limiting the opportunities to be awarded marks for the selection and control of media and processes. The work did not allow for a successful outcome due to a lack of exploration of ideas, media and techniques before embarking on the final examination piece. As a result, final responses were inconsistent and in cohesive, and had not moved forward from the initial stages of the work.

Several final pieces of work for the examination were unfinished, due to time constraints or simply a lack of enthusiasm after the preparatory studies had been developed. Time management for many candidates could be improved so that examination final pieces could be better timed.

Responses to all the questions were quite varied and imaginative, and it seems the questions all gave a strong starting point and a plethora of open-ended possibilities.

Questions 3, 5 and **9** were the most popular, and **Questions 4** and **10** were the least popular.

Comments on specific questions

1   Some eggs in a carton with another cracked into a dish, alongside a glass bowl containing flour together with a packet of flour. Other appropriate items may be included.

Submissions for this question were executed very literally with only a few attempting a conceptual or abstract response. Rarely were artists referenced, although some had referenced Cubism.

Stronger candidates showed proficient exploration of different ellipses, angles and viewpoints. Often the most successful responses were those which really experimented with many different compositions. Some used cook books or weighing scales to make the still life more original, while others included backgrounds of kitchens or placed the subject in an outdoor setting. On a few occasions, the preparatory work was competent or very good but the examination piece was disappointing. This was often due to unsuccessful attempts at scaling up an image. Some excellent work combining photography and sketching was a pleasure to see. Sensitive and delicate attempts had been made to record the egg yolk and albumen through water colour, and the subtleties created through delicate tones and colours from the creases and folds within the packets of flour were also sensitively observed. Some very realistic effects had been achieved and candidates had also managed to capture the transparent qualities of glass baking bowls and jugs, complete with flour and liquid.

In mid-level submissions, the representation of forms demonstrated care and control. However, some work tended to demonstrate an inconsistent rendering and an inappropriate selection of media to capture the sensitivities within the forms. Candidates could sometimes be heavy-handed while using their dark pencils which resulted in unsympathetic dark outlines and shading. This tended to flatten the subtle forms within the objects. There was less exploration of alternative compositions at this level, along with a lack of spatial awareness of the way the objects sat together within a three-dimensional space.

At the lower level, much of the work contained very few or no supporting studies. The work lacked personal commitment or exploration of objects, images and ideas. The standard of recording was weak and candidates often relied on copying and tracing images from the internet. Where recording from direct observation had occurred, there was little technical understanding of how to record form, or translate ellipses, or foreshortening, or perspective. The understanding of composition was also basic and demonstrated little knowledge of the organisation of space and grouping of forms together into a successful final outcome.

2 Running water

The first thing evident in the best of the submissions was the high level of observational skills alongside primary source photographs and studies. Further to this was an evident pleasure in the handling of mixed and alternative media. Various paths were suggested and developed or discarded as were a range of viewpoints and compositions.

Quite a few of these submissions took the idea of water running over a face or object. This brought other, more open-ended visual elements into play. Several candidates referred to Shakespeare's Ophelia in the painting by John Everett Millais. Just like Millais, candidates submerged clothed models in bath water to record the effect of running water on the face and clothes. This aided development, and outcomes were original and fully realised. Photography was used very creatively with several photo shoots being undertaken to record a wide range of locations, angles, viewpoints and lighting effects. Work was confident and there was a great deal of combining and mixing of techniques: ink, spray paint, oil pastel and crayon.

Mid-range submissions took advantage of unexpected viewpoints and splashing effects and were often researched from first-hand sources in homes or schools, showing developments from studies of taps, showers, swimming pools, baths, garden ponds and the sea. There were several paintings of imaginative landscapes including a stream or waterfall that did not fully explore all possibilities of the question.

In the lower mark ranges, submissions were often limited to found photographs of the sea or river or of the art-room sink with the tap on and some water running down the waste. These were frequently undeveloped beyond a few copied or traced images produced in other media. Few of these submissions made reference to other practitioners, but some referred to certain art movements that seemed inappropriate and unexplored.

There were a small number of fashion responses to this question – with varying levels of success.

3 Worn out

Candidates were attracted to this question by the very wide range of possible outcomes, enabling them to explore subject matter ranging from portraiture, still life, abstraction, landscape and derelict buildings.

At the higher levels, many students presented psychological interpretations that employed facial expression to communicate weary and distressed states of mind. Proportions were represented correctly and the surface quality of faces was often rendered in detail using both pencil and paint. Many candidates concentrated on portraits and figure studies of older relatives and grandparents, often depicting the youngest member of the family as well, to show the contrast in colour and texture of skin. In some cases, interviews with these relatives informed the development of the outcome, exploring political histories and family memories.

Photographic submissions at this level also made excellent use of the local environment, recording the condition of dilapidated buildings and old cars in detail. A few candidates studied changes in their country's architecture, technology or urban development.

Candidates at the middle level had also used a variety of first-hand material and were able to draw inspiration from some accessible sources such as worn out toys, clothing, rusted objects, old bags, etc. Photography had also been used to research which enabled them to produce a body of research. Quite often candidates had copied from their photographs to produce drawings, which lacked the vitality of a drawing from direct study. As with the higher level, there was evidence of some personal engagement, as was evident in subjects such as the ageing of the skin in members of the family. A more literal interpretation was apparent, where studies were purely observations of facial expressions and surface qualities, sensitively rendered through media. The work demonstrated less of an understanding of form and structure with inconsistent and sometimes clumsy technical skills. The candidates did not always appear to be aware of the potential in their preparatory work which was indicated by their less than effective decision making during the development of ideas, which sometimes resulted in a disappointing final outcome.

Lower level submissions tended to focus on one or two objects which were shown to have obvious signs of wear and tear – a sofa with a rip in one arm, for example. There was little in the way of investigation of the qualities that would be present with such worn surfaces, and the final piece was more often than not almost exactly the same as the preparatory work. The best of these lower level submissions began to look a little more closely at the objects they had chosen, but there was without exception a lack of thorough observation. There were generally no references to other artists' work or research ranging beyond the immediate subject at hand.

4   A figure, wearing shorts, sits cross-legged on a patterned cushion

This was one of the least popular choices.

At the higher level, candidates had considered composition carefully with some using furniture and curtains to frame the main subject and introduce interesting patterns across the image. Proportions were accurate and a few had considered foreshortening. There were a couple of candidates who used the question to bring some more abstract elements into their final piece. These pieces relied on a strong pattern within the composition to focus the eye. The majority of candidates had used paint and coloured pencils; however, the use of print was an interesting medium for one outcome. Preparatory work often explored a variety of different models and settings before focusing on one for the final examination. This allowed for more consideration of the chosen background and, as a result, the final composition was often successful. The work of other artists was researched to inform the candidates' own development and understanding of the human form.

As in work at the higher level, candidates in the middle level had also used drawing, painting and photography to record their figures. However, at this level there was more reliance on copying from the candidate's own photographs rather than from direct observation from life. The recording at this level tended to lack the depth of observation, with less of an understanding of form and proportion, but various viewpoints had been observed and most figures were represented in a seated position on either patterned cushions or on a sofa and sometimes in the classroom. Some referred to the work of other artists but were not able to translate their understanding so successfully into their own work.

In the lower mark ranges, poor drawing and observational skills made this a very hard subject for study. Often students photographed their model and then drew directly from this image, but lacked the skills to develop the work into a meaningful outcome. Candidates made good attempts at the figure but struggled with the technicalities of the human form. There was less experimentation and any backgrounds were often clumsy and rushed.

5   Dismantled

This question produced some exciting and inventive procedures and experimentation.

One Centre photographed deconstructed objects and froze them in ice – a wonderfully rich and visual submission made all the more effective through large scale photography.

Another Centre used this question as a Textile Fashion approach where they deconstructed the school uniform and explored a relevant design; another, in the upper ranges, developed interesting puppet ideas.

In the best work, candidates used the idea of deconstruction with a wide variety of subjects, from the human body to political comment on the deconstruction of human lives and living conditions, old buildings and in many cases technology such as game consuls, phones and computers. Outcomes were seen in a wide variety of media including photography, print and paint. Good use was made of artists' references over a wide number of practitioners, and references were careful and relevant. Cubism and Futurism were used to great effect and mirrors/puzzles/fractals were tackled well and maturely by some candidates. Some manga and graphic/fashion work featured at the top end.

In mid-level entries, flowers pulled apart and arranged flat were seen rendered in photography and paint. Also Hockney joiners were a means and outcome for some candidates in this range. One of the more unusual submissions at this level was an animation of a figure being pulled apart. While the animation itself showed quite a delicate touch and a good sense of movement, there was an unfortunate lack of any references, research or development. Most submissions in the mid-range were not always fully resolved from initial ideas, and, disappointingly, candidates often lacked the confidence to make well developed studies into final pieces, relying instead on copying a photograph.

In the lower mark ranges, students tended to respond to the question in a literal way and a random variety of objects were recorded from primary and secondary sources, reproduced as a final piece, with little personal input or experiment in design. However, a few candidates interpreted the question metaphorically by commenting on the effects of conflicting ideologies on people and communities in war-torn countries. Unfortunately, an overreliance on secondary sources and simplistic montaging of imagery let down otherwise thought provoking artworks.

6   Old rope and weathered piece of wood

This question attracted the very best of still life and observed work. The best candidates found the opportunity to explore the theme creatively and there was much evidence of drawing techniques. There was a good deal of excellent painting and colour work, pen and ink, and mixed media. Many candidates worked into their studies and created complex surface textures. A few candidates explored rope in an imaginative way and this reflected care in the preparatory stage and in the need for development of ideas.

There were examples where many candidates all adopted a very similar approach, which was disappointing. Their work was skilled but very repetitive. It showed excellent use of observational skills working from life, from a variety of their own photographs and experimenting with a range of viewpoints, close-ups, string, ropes and knots. Media were utilised well and a sophisticated use of colour and light resulted in some impressive work. It was disappointing; however, that it was virtually all the same.

Mid-level candidates also found interesting stimuli which they had collected and documented through their own photography. These candidates sometimes tended to lack consideration of the context in which their pieces of rope, etc., were placed, such as background, table or surfaces, which left their 3D forms floating. There were genuine attempts to explore surface texture and use media creatively, such as layering mixtures of colour, textural surfaces with mark making, tone and detail. Materials used included drawing and painting media and some printmaking in the form of etching and dry point.

The least successful work at this level demonstrated some literal responses, and there was repetition in the use of imagery, leading to weaker development. However, photography was used effectively to record form, texture and structure, though these images were copied laboriously with heavy oil pastel and pencil. Where there was a tendency to repeat imagery, the final conclusion often remained unresolved.

In the lower mark ranges, candidates did not explore the possibilities that the starting point presented and merely repeated the same arrangement in a variety of media. Many also used found images from websites to enhance their development studies to little effect, resulting in 'scrapbook' collections of little merit. These candidates would have benefited from more thorough research into work by other artists to help them generate more ambitious ideas.

7   Trash or treasure

Many candidates, especially at the lower levels, seemed confused as to what constitutes either trash or treasure and as a result there were some fairly inexplicable submissions. Some candidates focused on the treasure aspect of the question, producing detailed enlargements of diamonds studied from direct observation. This approach was taken as an opportunity by some candidates to develop their own jewellery designs.

The most successful outcomes for this question were from candidates who explored old objects v. new objects with refined use of media, extreme attention for detail and skilled recording. They observed contrast well and chose appropriate media to represent this contrast. There were also studies of cultural differences, sometimes of a personal nature within a particular country, sometimes on a global front commenting on the values of people's lives. Some candidates chose treasured possessions and compared them across cultures.

Some of the work in the middle mark range was sustained and ideas were personal and creative. Primary research had been gathered by an effective use of photography and these images were used appropriately to develop ideas. There were more literal interpretations at this level which included ideas based on objects, fabrics, papers, etc., torn and scattered and set within an interior or still life arrangement. There were observational studies of old toys which had once been loved and now were worn out and discarded into the trash bin. Candidates had set up scenarios which had been documented either through drawing, painting or photography. There was some reliance on photographs, and results could be predictable and demonstrated in cohesive recording skills. However, there was evidence of exploration and the manipulation of alternative media to varying degrees of success and most submissions were aesthetically accomplished.

At the lower level, candidates had attempted to record from observation, using their own poor quality photographs, but their very limited technical skills in their recording, along with the lack of sustained preparatory work and manipulation of images, inhibited the development of ideas. Other candidates at the lower level demonstrated a reliance on secondary sources and tended to copy this imagery using basic media, which demonstrated an uneven control of materials. The final responses to this starting point at this level were unclear, incoherent and unfulfilled.

8   At the traffic lights

This was one of the least popular questions.

There were many opportunities for exploring outdoor busy urban environments within the locality at all times of the day or night, and this question provided the starting point for much observational work, exploring city and town scenes. Photography was the prominent medium used in response to this question. The work at the higher and middle levels made very good use of photography and presented high quality prints which demonstrated evidence of the manipulation of digital programmes which had been used to enhance some very personal research. Some candidates had revisited the same scene during many times of the day and night and had gathered a body of research which incorporated different effects, such as shutter speeds, exposures, the use of timers to capture different lighting, etc. Some candidates demonstrated much enthusiasm in overlapping images and transparent shapes to create Cubist and Futurist styled compositions, and there was much reference to the photo montages of Hockney. Quite a high proportion of outcomes were fashion based submissions. What was interesting was that these pieces generally took the traffic lights as a starting point and did not feel too restrained by the terms of the question when it came to development. This allowed the candidates to explore other light displays, alternative sources for systematised signalling and a range of differing colours.

Less successful submissions failed to explore the subject in sufficient depth. Many used photographs taken from one viewpoint at one junction and copied or traced the images, resulting in little more than a 'colouring-in' exercise. Where a second image was involved, it was generally a found image and added little to the research process. At this level, compositions did not show an understanding of perspective.

9   Flowers in a garden or public park

Many candidates used the opportunity to investigate this colourful stimulus to explore the wealth of colours and patterns available. Research was straightforward and primary sources were accessible. The approaches were mainly observational through drawing and painting and photography. Some photography entries revealed competent choice of subject matter and showed a variety of research and development resulting in some impressive examination work. More evidence of contact sheets and experimentation with filters/technical exploration would have improved these entries. Some textile work appeared in this question with a handful of candidates looking directly at artists stitching into paper to good effect. Some other interesting outcomes included fashion design and wallpaper design.

The most successful submissions were able to show some very sensitive studies from direct observation, showing flowers seen against a background of parkland with trees. Some of the most successful compositions were centred around flowering trees with high viewpoints looking down on figures on park benches. Some candidates in the mid-mark range explored the layering of the landscape, developing compositions showing extreme foregrounds, middle distance and distance. The flowers in these compositions did not always play a dominant role in the final outcome.

In the middle ranges, work often started with some very good first-hand studies of flowers or park borders from photographs, but development and research were variable in quality and quantity. Many artists were explored, with Monet and Impressionists being popular. Sometimes impressionistic attempts at painting were unresolved, perhaps because of poor time management.

Low level submissions focused primarily on simple representations of flowers that were frequently taken from magazines and traced or copied. These candidates had failed to consider the context in which the flowers could be seen. The materials used were very limited – usually heavy lead pencil and crayon. The observation, particularly of colour, was very weak and the final piece was generally a slightly scaled up version of the preparatory work. There was little or no evidence of research or artist references.

10   Play on words

This question attracted many graphical and illustrative responses. Submissions made some use of digital software to develop graphic design responses. These showed some imagination, but were often too derivative of examples of graphic design that had been researched from secondary sources. Other candidates explored a range of interpretations, which were developed from studying puns, similes, metaphors and idioms.

Some of the more successful candidates explored facial expressions as the model mouthed words, and this provided an opportunity for the candidate to study portraiture in movement as the person spoke. Some extraordinary studies of mouths and tongues appeared in an attempt by candidates to portray 'words'.

The majority of candidates took a fairly basic approach to the question and often depicted words as visually portraying the qualities they evoked at a textual level. The materials chosen to do this were generally not very suitable and were usually limited to pencil, felt tip and crayon. Given the wealth of reference available, it was disappointing not to see more in the way of source material. The preparatory work mostly consisted of several words treated in the above mentioned way. If the candidates had taken the opportunity to explore the qualities that the words themselves evoked more fully, more marks would certainly have been available to them.

ART AND DESIGN

| Paper 0400/02 |
| Design-Based Assignment |

General comments

The question paper allowed for a wide range of graphics genres, allowing candidates to choose a topic which they could respond to personally.

Marks were awarded across the whole mark range, with some strong work seen. However, in some cases it was difficult to see how the whole of the preparatory time had been used. The best work fulfilled all five assessment objectives to a high standard, and these submissions were well researched with candidates using first hand observation as a starting point and developing their ideas using a range of media.

In general, the quality of the research had improved at all levels this session. There was much less reliance on imagery taken from the internet and more first-hand drawing and examples of candidates' own photography. This varied according to the level of the work, with the higher submissions showing a greater aptitude for innovative and unusual gathering of information supported at times with some relevant contextual references into established graphic designers works or cultural research.

Most of the work was well presented the candidates' work well, although there were still submissions that had sheets containing every little sketch and media experiment, however poor or irrelevant. Mostly submissions were well presented with work shown in a reasonable order. A few were on ragged, non-matching sheets of paper of different sizes. Extraneous, unnecessary material was still included by some Centres however.

The presentation of much of the work was very good and showed a mature understanding of the processes needed to fulfill the design brief and to achieve the best results. Many candidates showed an ability to edit their work and only submit their most relevant pieces.

Informative annotation was only found at the higher level. There is still a tendency at the lower and middle levels to describe the media used rather than the ideas shown and the reasoning behind the decision making.

The media and processes seen were, as usual, mostly paint and pencil, markers and pastels for sketching, with the best examples using paint. Some ceramics was seen as class exercises and printmaking too. There were also attempts at collage and textiles. Only a few 3D and photographic submissions were seen. Candidates' own photography was seen quite frequently in the supporting work and there was less computer manipulation this session.

There were many examples of page fillers – colour wheel exercises, bands of colour themes and copious notes about materials and colours used, as well as unnecessary notes about artists lives that bore no relevance to the work submitted.

Experiments with media were carried out by nearly all the candidates, but almost always as class exercises, showing ideas in collage, printmaking – lino, monoprint, etching, etc. Some were really applicable and interesting but were then ignored. Textures and colour were also explored but as an extra and not applied to the designs. There were some expert examples of painting and drawing, a few excellent digital outcomes, and photos of some unusual 3D work.

In the lower mark bands annotation still consisted of detailed descriptions of the media used. Research information on artists was sometimes included without explanation, and then never referred to again.

Some candidates relied too much on internet images; consequently, a true understanding of form, structure, tone, texture and colour was not developed, and this lack of understanding was continued into the final work.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was not chosen by many candidates. The best works had made extensive first hand studies of clothes from which designs were developed. Examples of creative digital manipulation as well as collage, drawing, painting, photography and printmaking were seen at the higher range. Experimentation with media had informed the outcomes and was supported by thorough research into type styles and logo development. There were a lot of alternative font designs including some block printing and collage. Some work was inventive and clearly designed with a good understanding of design processes.

Submissions in the lower and middle levels indicated little in-depth research or ideas development and the drawing, painting and presentation skills were sometimes of a poor standard. There was often little understanding of how to use research creatively for advertising or typography. Most submissions focused on clothes design.

Although there were some well-drawn studies, most of the photographs were taken of ordinary garments hanging in wardrobes or flat on hangers, on the floor and on figures. There was little innovative drawing of discarded or piled up clothes. Many submissions did not fully understand the question and did not make the connection between their designs and the word 'Wardrobe'. It was mostly used as a vehicle for designing unrelated fashion garments. Even though there were a few well-observed drawings of piles/draped/folded clothes, a very limited number of these studies were actually translated or transformed into a design.

Most popular were scenes on catwalks, in shops with dressed mannequins and shop windows where 'Wardrobe' was added as the name of the shop, often as an afterthought, or just in handwriting but not a developed part of the design. Even though many candidates presented a range of fonts in their research, some were hand rendered but many were just printed out.

Sometimes drawings were used to adapt the type and change the look of the characters in the word 'Wardrobe', and a couple of submissions used their reference of hanging clothes to design unusual and applicable draped dresses.

Digital manipulation was occasionally used to scan hand rendered lettering in Photoshop and drop it onto shop frontage design, in perspective, for the store name. In general, much of the artwork was an ordinary store window.

Generally many candidates missed the opportunity to research their ideas in depth or develop the designs thoroughly.

Question 2

Research for trees and flowers was seen in abundance, drawings and printouts. Often this was not local, as required in the brief, but from round the world and from the internet or in some cases, their holiday photographs. Strong candidates studied their localities with more detailed drawings and photos in their supporting work. Unfortunately not many candidates used this research when designing their houses.

'A house for young people' was only given consideration either by the better candidates. At the top a few very well thought out submissions were seen with excellent drawing skills, which detailed play constructions – ropes, walkways and ladders and these showed the uses that children could make of them. Good perspective was evident in the best submissions. However, most designs were rather mundane and not at all innovative, merely placing a garden shed in the branches of a tree.

Question 3

This question was second in popularity and gave candidates excellent opportunities for obtaining first-hand reference of shoes, either drawing or photography but less for millipedes. References for these were taken from the internet - the same images appeared time and time again. Some candidates interpreted 'millipedes' as 'insects', and beetles, butterflies and caterpillars were sometimes used as substitutes. These images were often just added to a shoe or placed in the corner of the artwork. Many weaker candidates did not make the 'millipede' an integral part of their designs. The secondary research photos were quite often developed into drawings but then forgotten about and not used as an important factor when designing the shoes. Then

little drawings, sometimes smiling millipede cartoons, were sometimes included as small pictorial logos or just as a decoration around the shoes. The drawings were often quite predictable and lacking in technical skill.

The quality of studies of shoes varied greatly from the exceedingly well observed to a bare outline. Some highly finished paintings and drawings were seen too.

The type, if used, was given various degrees of consideration. Some designs in the lower mark bands either added lettering as a quick afterthought or missed out the company title altogether, although very occasionally more emphasis would be placed on designing the type than the shoes. As with 'Wardrobe' many candidates focused on the fashion element and designed or copied fashion shoes. Creative typeface designs were in the minority.

Question 4

This was the most popular question, and many candidates were successful in terms of primary research and observational drawing. The title of this question invited candidates to produce drawings, paintings and their own photographs of fruit and vegetables. All candidates understood this requirement though some were not always very original with their choices –many apples were seen – but many showed the ability to recreate texture, form and tone in their well-observed artwork. Some more adventurous candidates invented different still life setups to photograph and paid attention to lighting and focal length. Shots of markets and shops were sometimes produced although these were rarely used in the final designs. There were also examples of collage and printmaking in the supporting work.

This question was seen by many candidates as a chance to produce one finished painting of a still life of fruit and/or vegetables, yet the words were often poorly handwritten as an afterthought or scrappily painted. Composition and design were rarely considered in the lower mark bands and decorative borders proliferated.

'Grow' was the most frequently explored of the three words with landscapes of fields or baskets of picked produce. There were some well observed examples of 'botanical drawing' – for example, a plant with its roots exposed, but this was not developed into a final outcome.

'Cook' and 'Eat' were less explored. A knife, cutting board or pan was often the only concession to Cooking that was added and Eat was barely considered.

The design aspect of this question was barely tackled by the lower band candidates with the Healthy Eating Campaign totally ignored. Amongst stronger answers, there were some intelligent attempts to write strap lines for the campaign.

Question 5

This was not a popular choice. Although a text based question, many candidates chose to use it as a stimulus for creating jewellery designs or designs for perfume bottles.

The quotation elicited quite different responses from candidates. In lower level work, trees and landscape illustrations were popular, as well as graveyards with skeletons and skulls which advertised horror movies. These were produced from the candidates' imagination and had no developmental work or experiments to support the ideas. At this level the type was hand rendered without any reference to existing typefaces.

Question 6

This was a fairly popular question but the range of objects utilised to generate ideas was limited.

Stronger examples were seen using textiles, fashion designs, graphics and some 3D work. Many candidates had referenced the work of other designers and artists.

However, most research consisted of some drawings and own photographs, but mostly found photos of pieces of electrical equipment mentioned in the brief – bulbs, wires, batteries and some circuit boards. If there were first-hand drawings they were mostly of a poor quality. There were some strong pieces from candidates who developed ideas using light bulbs and imagined a scene inside.

The title 'Electric' was used a couple of times on posters for exhibitions, but the type was not well rendered and was not often added as an integral part of the designs.

Question 7
This was a fairly popular question. The subject matter meant that evidence of first hand studies was more apparent, and this led to some better quality work at the higher level.

The best candidates had considered the relationships between shapes and elements within their designs to make an effective repeat pattern. Very strong studies of pots and pans were used to develop ideas. Some evidence of digital manipulation used with confidence was seen, and artists and cultural references were also used. Some interesting collage work was submitted but candidates did not always fully utilise the potential seen within the work. Very good painting and colour mixing skills were evident at this level.

There was little real research or idea development at the lower level. Research was sometimes primary reference consisting either of poorly made drawings or second-hand images from the internet.

Lots of pots and pans were seen for this question. The more able candidates painstakingly set up their still lives, and produced artwork that was well observed and painted in great detail. On occasion the same set up of pans was used by all those who were answering this question in a centre.

Generally, the patterns took second place, particularly at the lower end of the marks. Small bands of unimaginative line drawings of pots, spoons, knives etc. were often added around the rim of each pot, seemingly as an afterthought. There was little idea development of other design possibilities.

Most candidates gave this question more thought and produced individual ideas to a better standard of finish. However, there was often no research into repeat surface patterns, even when 2 or 3 submissions had tablecloth or wallpaper designs with repeats as their final outcomes.

Question 8

This was the least popular question with few submissions divided between 2D and 3D.

Some candidates used the idea of flight as a starting point, making paper airplanes to generate ideas which they largely failed to do. Instead the preparatory studies consisted of different types of folded paper airplanes with no real intent or direction towards a final outcome.

Question 9 This was a popular question with work across most of the range.

Generally, the standard of research and ideas development was very good for this question. Some exceptional drawings and photos of local buildings were seen in the higher mark bands. Several ideas were explored in some depth, using interpretations of chosen buildings to create some innovative designs.

Weaker candidates paid less attention to the quality and quantity collected thus limiting the potential for ideas development.

Many candidates however, designed traditional outfits and decorated the borders of the material with shapes taken from arched doorways, pillars etc. The final paintings of entertainers were mostly of a very high quality. Some of the research and idea development was seen at first glance to be very accurate and exceedingly well drawn. However, on closer inspection, it was noted that the candidates in one Centre had painted on top of photocopies of others' work.

ART AND DESIGN

> **Paper 0400/03**
> **Critical and Historical Assignment**

General comments

Candidates presented a broad range of topics across the whole range of attainment levels. The majority of these were found to be within the middle bands of assessment.

Topics explored included some creative connections; such as paintings influenced by music, the links between Egyptian culture to contemporary film and pop videos, etc.

Some processes associated with print making, hand built ceramic forms and casting elements of sculptural forms were investigated, making many well considered links with relevant practitioners.

A focus on a technique usually resulted in an outcome with little evidence of the development of ideas. However, many candidates were seen to demonstrate the ability to discuss and explore the development of ideas with a high level of personal analysis.

There were some good examples of popular topics such as comics and street art where candidates had been encouraged to draw links with a variety of practising artists.

More candidates took on the challenge of exploring site specific sculpture which involved the use of some very good photography for the recording of this essential first-hand experience, and produced vital personal observations.

Painting, architecture, graphics, photography, illustration, animation, ceramics, textiles and digital art were the other subject areas seen.

A wide range of presentation methods were in evidence including sketchbooks of various sizes, folders, files and boxes containing sheets of card mounted with photographs, drawings and text. More CD's and memory sticks had been submitted, usually with supporting hard copy as should always be the case.

The levels of achievement were usually reflected by the quality of first-hand research and experience gained by the candidate. Visits to artist studios, exhibitions in museums and Galleries, meetings and interviews with the chosen artists and designers and practical experience in workshops, all contributed significantly to the assignments at the higher levels of attainment.

More candidates were seen to be taking a 'materials-based' approach with the strongest of these producing some excellent and imaginative responses, clearly informed and inspired by thoroughly engaged research and experience gained from well selected first-hand sources.

Such examples had become directly involved with the processes being explored by their chosen artists. Many candidates were clearly inspired by the practical engagement, supervised by their chosen practitioners, and demonstrated a high level of understanding and initiative.

Valuable links were established with the students own work which were supported by the excellent quality of language to be found in the form of text and annotations. This demonstrated the high level of understanding and awareness for the subject being explored.

A few weaker submissions consisted of a practical outcome in the form of a painting or collage. However, they were not related to the attached text and were more like pieces of coursework.

These submissions and others found to be at the lower levels of attainment had clearly used the internet and various web sites for their research, with no evidence of any first-hand sources.

Such candidates would have benefitted from the completion of an outline proposal form (OPF) which helps to identify and approves suitable first-hand sources for investigation, as well as giving general guidance with the planning of the assignment. The initial selection of suitable artists and/or designers is vital for the successful planning of the project.

Some exciting thematic approaches were seen which involved the well-considered selection of artists linked by the processes used to produce the work.

A few very strong digital presentations made excellent use of photography to record sculptural and architectural first-hand experiences as well as producing some imaginative visual comparisons of sculptural and architectural details. The supporting text was often intelligently written and served to clarify the intentions and resulting outcomes of the explorations. These submissions were often presented in very well designed book format.

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 inventively inter-woven with the candidates own visual studies, often photographs, drawings or small paintings, which serve to contribute a more personal approach.

Weaker candidates often included evidence of a first-hand visit in the form of photographs and entry tickets to exhibitions, etc. without going on to provide any personal observations or critical judgements, helping to develop ideas and the quality of analysis required to achieve the higher levels of attainment.

The quality and structure of the language used (both visual and written) indicates the level of understanding and awareness that the candidate has reached. Submissions at the highest levels of achievement demonstrated some excellent and outstanding presentations with candidates revealing their understanding of the topic through the media; this included their own developments in photography, drawing and painting, etc.

The level of engagement with media and recording visits sometimes went beyond the level of expectations and candidates were seen to include very well informed personal evaluations of their topics. This was presented as both a written format and/or as material based visual responses. Such examples demonstrated high levels of individual engagement, visual awareness combined with some perceptive critical thinking and reflection.

ART AND DESIGN

General comments

Painting and Related Media was by far the most popular Area of Study followed by Photography. Very few submissions were seen for Graphic Design or Fashion and Textile Design, and even fewer for 3D Design and Sculpture.

In most Centres candidates had identified individual themes for their work. A wide range of topics were seen, with portraiture/self-portraits the most popular. Other favourite subjects were still life and natural forms, with skulls and skeletons popular in the lower mark ranges. Many mid and lower range submissions had tried to document their 'emotions'. These ideas, particularly angst, sadness and loneliness are very difficult to portray visually, often culminating in some strange and inconclusive responses. This subject area may perhaps be instigated by the teacher, in order to add insight into a 'personal response'. Some Centres had given the candidates a common starting point such as 'Street Life', and the candidates had then worked individually to develop a body of work from this idea. Many had worked from primary sources to some extent and many had included photography as a method of gathering first hand research.

Although the themes naturally varied greatly, the strongest submissions always had first-hand observational studies at their core. The strongest work showed genuine exploration of their chosen subject by creating a range of visual research that had been enhanced by their study of a relevant artist. Experimentation with media, composition, colour, texture, light and perspective was evident not only in its recording (which often included photography) but also through the progression and development into the final outcome. At this level, a personal engagement and, perhaps more importantly, a sense of enjoyment could be clearly seen.

Mid-range responses often lacked the coherence of an entirely developed theme. Unrelated supporting work was often included which did not aid the comprehension of the candidate's line of thought. Typically, candidates relied upon second hand imagery and less confidence was apparent in the experimentation with media.

Lower level submissions lacked an understanding of the visual elements and often the final piece was merely an arrangement of static images repeated from the preparatory studies with little consideration of composition.

The presentation of the coursework was generally acceptable and there were several submissions, mostly at the top of the mark range, which presented their work sequentially and intelligently, demonstrating their thoughts and idea development. However, a large number of the mid and lower candidates' supporting sheets were a mixture of research, ideas and experiments with little thought about sequence. Relevant, intelligent notation was mostly only seen in the work of those who attained the higher marks. Written notes in the middle and lower ranges were sometimes scrappy and of a personal nature with unrelated thoughts and facts about their media. Candidates at this level were more likely to describe the media used rather than explain why they had chosen their particular responses.

There were still a number of candidates who 'bulked out' their supporting work with unrelated class exercises – colour wheels, colour mixing samples and even work from projects carried out in previous years, some of which did not even apply to their chosen themes. The candidates' notes, included with them, seemed to imply that they were trying to demonstrate their previously learned technical talents with a range of media, rather than showing the development of these in this project. Where this occurred with all the candidates, as it did in several Centres, it was obvious that it was suggested by the teacher to show 'experimentation with media' when the project work was on the 'thin side'.

The standard of teacher assessments was very poor. The majority of Centres required adjustments of minus 20 marks or considerably more. Assessment should always be based on evidence within the candidates'

work; many teachers had ignored this fundamental principle, resulting in substantial inaccuracies. Apart from an unrealistic inflation of assessments, the tendency of teachers to mark candidates at the same level in all five Assessment Objectives, irrespective of the evidence, was a particularly common cause of inaccuracy.

In Centres where candidates were taught in sets by different teachers, it was apparent that internal moderation was not always carried out with sufficient rigour to ensure a consistent order of merit. This was a particular problem in Centres that offer different areas of study. For example, it is the teacher's r responsibility to ensure that marks awarded in Photography are consistent with those awarded in Textiles and Painting and Related Media before the selected sample containing a mixture of the different disciplines is submitted for moderation.

Comments on areas of study

Painting and Related Media

This was by far the most popular area of study and candidates had tackled a wide range of themes, but portraiture was a very popular choice for many candidates. Much of the work was personal and demonstrated clearly an enjoyment of the creative process.

A small number of excellent painting submissions were seen. These candidates had selected their own themes and informed their work by returning to first -hand studies throughout their projects. Candidates had become fluent in the use of their chosen media due to sustained and focused experimentation. The work demonstrated a depth of cultural understanding that enabled candidates to evaluate and improve their ideas during the development process and to successfully communicate their intentions in fully realised outcomes.

Whilst the exploration of ideas and experimentation with media in the middle mark range often showed potential, it was apparent that a significant number of candidates had allocated insufficient time to ensure that their final outcomes were fully realised. In some cases, the final outcome was surprisingly unfinished. The later processes of the refinement of skills and composition are essential stages in the development of the candidates' work. These processes demonstrate the candidates' ability to make higher level aesthetic judgements about their own work and realise their intentions.

The standard of research of the work of other artists was very varied. The best candidates formed personal opinions and responses that were informed by a depth of research. These candidates explored meanings, techniques and the work's original context which made a significant impact on the development of their own ideas. Candidates in the middle range included reproductions of the work of other artists, but tended to confine themselves to repeating biographical information or received opinions rather than developing personal responses. Some candidates simply wrote about the work and did not respond through practical means; consequently, the claimed artist references were not apparent in the candidates' own work. Weaker candidates did not research the work of other artists at all which severely restricted their ability to make critical judgements about their own work as it developed.

The supporting studies of some candidates in the lower middle range consisted of many schematic, annotated pencil drawings. Often this work demonstrated the seed of thoughtful and imaginative ideas that were informed by a cultural awareness. However, these candidates did not go on to investigate their ideas in depth through experimentation with media in order to develop appropriate skills. Consequently, the final outcomes of these candidates were often very limited in comparison to the potential shown in their initial ideas.

Weaker candidates tended to have experience of a very small range of media and processes. Evidence of experimentation was limited and skills remained undeveloped. This work tended to be reliant on formulaic or mechanical techniques rather than the candidates' own direct observation.

Weaker submissions tended to lack a clear focus or purpose and amounted to little more than small collections of random drawings and paintings. It was surprising how little work was submitted by some candidates.

Printmaking

There was very little evidence of printmaking as a focus for study, but those who chose to explore this media produced some successful and aesthetically pleasing results. There was much printmaking apparent in the exploration of ideas within the supporting studies. Candidates had experimented with linocuts, mono printing,

basic relief printing, dry point etching and also some screen printing. In some of the work, the candidates had translated their drawings into prints and sometimes incorporated other media such as collage or paint, mostly to good effect. However, the quality varied depending on the success of the original drawing. Prints had also been used to construct the final outcome. In general, much of the print making apparent in the submissions tended to be fairly basic one-colour printing and was sometimes executed over the surfaces of other media. There were also some examples of reduction printing which had been produced to a higher standard.

Photography

Photography was used as a means of recording ideas, experiments and work in progress. Stronger candidates also orchestrated photo shoots to incorporate their ideas, applying face paints, specific clothing or adopting related poses to their work.

Photography was also seen as a main area of study. The most successful submissions understood technically how to use a camera and considered lighting, focus, depth of field, and angles, etc. This was combined with knowledge of the visual elements to explore colour, texture and tone in their outcomes. The best of these were where candidates had identified an individual pathway from which to concentrate their research. In some work multiple exposures had been explored, based on the theme of figures/skulls and flowers. The projects were well researched, with a range of alternative experimental compositions. The use of colour was good and textured paper including cyanotypes had been used. There was much evidence of personal engagement and the demonstration of media knowledge, which led to aesthetically pleasing final outcomes. In some submissions, both darkroom and digital photography had been explored, demonstrating a depth of understanding of the media used. Where the work was annotated, the candidates at this level had taken the opportunity to highlight their ability to use the relevant terminology to explain the processes and to demonstrate their understanding of techniques. Candidates had also included a variety of viewpoints, angles, locations and lighting arrangements in their photo shoots and had explored a range of ideas. The better examples of work also illustrated the reference to the works of other relevant photographers as a source of inspiration, which had clearly informed the development of their ideas.

In work at the middle of the mark range, candidates made satisfactory use of digital manipulation such as experimenting with double exposure, integrating images and merging images together through altering the opacity of layers. However, they demonstrated less of an ability to fully explore their subject matter. Technical inconsistencies could also hinder the development of ideas. Photo shoots were sometimes limited and often consisted of the recording from only one subject. There was a lack of depth in the exploration of the media and less awareness of basic elements such as composition, lighting, viewpoints and contrast, which hindered the candidates' opportunity to achieve marks at the higher level. Reference to the works of other photographers was sometimes superficial with candidates tending to demonstrate less of an understanding of the concepts or technical qualities behind the images of their chosen artist. Annotations tended to be more descriptive with less analytical thought.

Weaker submissions lacked the ability to select successful images for development and demonstrated less understanding of composition, which was apparent through their attempts to crop images. They were unable to develop their work fully through the different ways of presenting an image, or by combining different techniques. There was little evidence of critical thinking or analysis to demonstrate understanding of their work and written content tended to be descriptive. There was a heavy reliance on the use of filters, and colour adjustments in Photoshop were used in an attempt to develop their own photographs into successful images.

Fashion and Textile Design

A few candidates responded using batik or screen printing techniques onto fabric. They mostly relied upon pattern making and decorative elements.

The strongest submissions used fabric worked upon with stitching and embroidery creating rich, textural pieces. These final outcomes were also supported by experiments and research in the preparatory stages.

Work in the mid-range used fabric printing as an additional supplement to their studies. Some candidates showed their printed fabric *in situ* which indicated a level of critical thinking and personal engagement to be commended.

Other candidates had explored ideas for both fashion and costume design. A stronger example of work was that which was based on costume designs for a warrior elf. The costume had been designed through well executed fashion drawings from good initial research. The costume had been constructed from fabric and

polystyrene which had been effectively painted to give the illusion of metal. The work reflected good attention to detail and the final result was effective and fit for purpose.

Other submissions at the higher level demonstrated an imaginative use of materials through collage to illustrate fashion ideas. Themes included *Alice in Wonderland*, Buildings and *Snow White*. The projects were well researched and creatively designed. Garments were constructed and photographed appropriately with suitable consideration to the hair and make-up. This clearly demonstrated the candidates' understanding of the importance of 'staging' their designs to communicate an idea.

Other fashion submissions illustrated the response to the theme of flowers and fruit. A range of ideas were creatively expressed developing from thoughtful initial photographs and drawings. Final pieces consisted of effective fashion drawings where ideas and themes had been clearly conveyed into original and individual designs.

Work at the lower level used fashion drawings and garment construction as a theme but showed little understanding of the skills required to carry this off convincingly. Commonly, these submissions relied upon internet imagery or photocopies.

Graphic design

There were only a few Graphic design outcomes seen this session.

Three extremely well produced books were written and illustrated using digital programs to develop their layouts and images. One was beautifully presented as a complete comic and the other two were excellently written and illustrated stories. These candidates had developed very personal themes with a high level of imagination and creativity and an in-depth knowledge of graphics and digital manipulation.

Another example of digital manipulation was one that produced morphed images from photos of nature into human forms. Although inventive, the research and developmental work was rather on the limited side, but the technical skills were rewarded well.

In the middle level, some candidates were able to demonstrate much technical skill in transcribing images, but they were heavily reliant on secondary sources, so the imagery used was not their own. Candidates merely produced compositions from existing imagery and painted them carefully to complete packaging or logo designs. This demonstrated good technical skill, but did not provide the opportunity for the candidates to make creative or personal responses. Another idea at this level demonstrated the production of an album cover in response to the theme of 'Contained'. This featured boxes containing squashed faces. Another example was the production of a poster for a yoga studio. In general, there was insufficient recording from direct observation to support the ideas. Consequently, the work lacked depth and conclusions tended to be unresolved.

Submissions in the lower level relied very heavily on images sourced from the internet. Text tended to be produced from existing typefaces and then arranged in a variety of combinations. Some of the work also demonstrated a lack of understanding of the design process and technical ability was limited. Where the work was hand produced, the painting skills were often poor, and although the computer generated work demonstrated some knowledge of the programme used, this was not explored or developed in sufficient depth. Sometimes it was difficult to distinguish the candidates' own work from the information taken from the internet, as often there was no inclusion of annotation to document the journey.

3D Design and Sculpture

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

The most successful submissions within this category showed a logical progression from initial studies and research into experimentation with materials, through to the final outcome. A candidate working at the higher level actually produced 'mock-up' sculptures similar to what was created for the final outcome. These were presented as photographs and clearly showed the development process and the ability to select the elements that had worked well and omit those that were less successful.

Outstanding ceramics had been submitted through the presentation of a series of excellent photographs which were sharp and clearly illustrated form, colour and surface texture. Candidates had manipulated a range of media in their supporting studies, which included drawings and pen and ink studies, to create a very exciting body of research. This research concluded in individual and excellently constructed contemporary

ceramic sculptures. One candidate had researched the theme of 'rituals' and had sculpted a series of small clay bags to represent the plastic bags that contain street food. The candidates at this level were clearly personally engaged with their work which went beyond their course of study.

Another example of exciting work was one which had been influenced by the subject of 'light'. Research was thorough with evidence of good aesthetic judgements. One candidate had worked from a frozen leaf to form a light installation. This had been illustrated *in situ*, via digital manipulation. Another candidate had taken photographs of flower heads that they had then printed onto 3D cubes containing LEDs. Both submissions were very well executed, individual in idea and professionally presented.

A submission was seen of an architectural model made from card and balsa wood that related to a design project in which the candidate had used computer software to design both the interior and exterior of an imagined building. Although the ideas were inventive and a personal connection could be perceived, the software was heavily used without the benefit of enough first-hand research to enhance it. Also the level of skill in the actual making of the sculpture lacked the necessary attributes. Here, time spent practising model making would have been far more effective than repeating the processes available through the software.

At the lower level, relief and collages were seen. Although some demonstrated a sense of colour and composition, they generally lacked research and the exploration of ideas.