# ART AND DESIGN

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| **Paper 0400/01** |
| **Observational/Interpretative Assignment** |

### General comments

Submissions were received for all questions with a variety of approaches being used.

**Questions 8, 9, and 3** were the most popular. **Questions 2, 4, and 10** were the least popular.

The strongest work included studies from direct observation often using a variety of media to explore colour, texture, form and composition. Candidates were able to use their own photography to extend their visual references and this often helped them to explore an idea more fully. Supporting studies were well annotated and candidates were able to analyse their own work, making mature observations and decisions often referring to the work of other artists to enhance and develop their own technical skills. With an extensive exploration of media including collage, lino cut, paper cutting, silk painting, batik, pencil and coloured pencils as well as painting in acrylic and occasionally oil, pastel and charcoal, the strongest candidates refined and practised their technical skills and were able to demonstrate their full potential in the examination.

Middle-range work also showed plenty of first-hand experience and observation, but did not always focus enough on the visual development of their chosen theme in terms of exploring and developing their ideas, experimenting with media and processes and planning their final compositions. Outcomes often appeared to have been constructed during the examination instead of during the preparatory period. At times, the media chosen had not been previously explored and candidates lacked technical competence as a result. These were generally hard working candidates who seem to have sound observational and drawing skills but who needed to focus and spend more time on the development of ideas, in order to gain higher marks. Typically candidates in this group tended to submit three or four large finished pieces rather than a journey of studies and investigations.

Submissions in the 'satisfactory' level often lacked experimentation of media and instead of presenting a variety of visual images from a range of sources, demonstrated a steady and safe approach with the compositions, subject matter and use of media. Although the work often demonstrated some good technical ability, it often lacked depth and personal vision.

Weaker submissions often relied on secondary source material, usually cut out from magazines or lifted from the Internet. Ideas were not developed and the preparatory work was limited.

There were many more photographic submissions than seen in previous years. Candidates choosing photographic film as their media produced fewer photo shoots to explore the question, possibly due to the time and expense of film photography compared to digital photography. The submissions that had achieved the higher levels had included a variety of view points, angles, locations and lighting arrangements in their photo shoots. Most made reference to other Photographers' work but this did not always act to inform their own work. Written analysis of the work was, in the lower level submissions, purely biographical and the candidates did not demonstrate their own understanding or ideas regarding the work. Where candidates had engaged with the Photographers' work it was clear that it had acted as an inspiration for them to experiment with their own photography and develop their ideas and darkroom skills, such as with the use of coloured toners or scratching into the photograph.

Where candidates had chosen to use digital photography as their media they were able to demonstrate a more thorough and extensive recording of ideas. Many had responded imaginatively to a range of questions. Work at the higher level demonstrated the candidates' ability to successfully select and edit photographs in order to simplify the image and some made good use of Photoshop tools such as layering and filters to merge images and build some very effective outcomes. A range of ideas were explored which demonstrated very good personal evaluation and critical thinking.

There was some outstanding film work presented by a candidate in response to **Question 8**, Knotted. The candidate adopted for a Surrealist interpretation with strong-silhouetted forms, dramatic low-level viewpoints and closely cropped imagery. The use of very rapid editing resulted in a Russian-style montage, which created a very dramatic and sinister atmosphere. This was the best example of editing seen at this level.

When submitting film or video submissions it is important that post-production analysis is not confused with the experimentation and development, which is required for preparatory studies (Assessment Objective 2).

Problems occurred with some candidates who had submitted their preparatory works on DVDs. Whilst the majority of candidates had included their names and candidate numbers on these DVDs, others had simply included the disc with no written information on its surface. The names were shown electronically on some of the discs but there were instances where the electronic name was omitted which considerably delayed the examining process.

In the majority of cases the presentation and labelling of work was of a high standard.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1: A mirror, potted plant and a bowl of fruit

The strongest candidates showed excellent use of observational skills, experimenting with a range of fruit and plants against a mirror, and had developed some excellent and highly imaginative compositions demonstrating strong drawing skills. Preparatory studies included thorough exploration of the form and shape with a range of view points, experimentation on different ground/paper, allowing exploration of tone and colour through blending of oil pastel and dry paintwork. Some made connections to artists' work to inform their own ideas; Cezanne and the Dutch Old Masters being very popular.

Work in the mid-range submissions demonstrated good understanding of form but a less individual exploration of composition and materials. Some had produced good preparation work but did not necessarily select the strongest work to develop into their final examination piece. Many struggled with compositions that isolated separate objects with less understanding of form and space.

Candidates at the lower achievement level demonstrated less confidence in their ability to record, displaying a number of weaknesses in their technical skills while observing and translating visual information. These submissions had little research and hardly any experimentation with a variety of compositions.

### Question 2: A saw with sawn pieces of timber

This was one of the least popular questions but responses were seen from a wide ability range.

The best work was as a result of thorough preparation. Individual surface qualities were explored and contrasted imaginatively. One or two incorporated workshops or outdoor scenes, and the influence of Cubist artists could be seen in a few submissions.

A few Centres had used associated items to set up a still life which all candidates had then worked from. This approach tended to limit each candidate's individual creative decision making process especially while composing their own work. However, this method of working provided the less able candidates with an opportunity to make a focused study, while recording and researching but it was disappointing that this did not led to any further individual development.

Most of the submissions seen were in the mid-low range. Here, work relied on copying the same images in different media, and although accurate, it often lacked depth and was rather tentative. Some had attempted to develop their studies into a pattern of saws and cut logs of wood, but most of the work was limited in both preparatory studies and in the final piece.

### Question 3: An open jar of preserves with a knife

This was a very popular question showing a good range of interpretations. Most candidates adopted a still life approach, although there were one or two candidates who produced a number of study sheets. There were a few who adopted a more imaginative approach e.g. a jar of jam in a shop window with a view of the street behind. This question also allowed for local and cultural influences to be used when selecting the

contents of the jar. In the higher-level submissions there were some very individual interpretations of 'preserves' from preserved heads to preserved childhood toys.

Work seen at this level included some very sensitive observational drawings with convincing and accurate ellipses. The best submissions showed excellent use of their chosen media, usually paint, and often chose to present a different perspective such as a view from above or from the side of an oddly shaped jar. Candidates explored a variety of still life arrangements considering the background as well as the individual objects. At this level candidates produced research work which was highly developed through extensive first hand studies. The work included investigations of artist's work, often forming the basis of approach and exploration of materials. These candidates also extensively manipulated images and explored ideas and composition. The rendering of materials was highly accomplished and the subject encouraged these candidates to develop their high levels of skill.

The work in the mid-range often produced quietly composed still life compositions, lacking in experimentation of media, but competent and well painted. Work relied more on drawing ability and less on exciting and innovative compositions. Drawings showed some good technical skills but lacked the creative arrangement and selection process.

Less able candidates struggled with the technicalities of ellipses and demonstrated a limited understanding of space and form, although some were able to paint one single piece of the subject rather well.

Candidates in the lower mark range tended to concentrate on a single jar, which was often totally unrelated to the background with the knife seen in isolation.

### Question 4: A person seated in a high position, viewed from below

There were few submissions seen in response to this question, although those that did tended to demonstrate that they had prior experience of working from the figure.

Responses were notable for the use of primary investigation through observational drawing based on candidate's own photographs of friends or family. Imaginative use was made of stairwells, playground swings and branches of trees. The better submissions demonstrated understanding of foreshortening and the final outcome showed a good use of dramatic composition and angle.

The mid-range work showed an over reliance on photographs from limited viewpoints and little experimentation with materials. Despite research from direct observation, the recording was weak and perspective and proportion created problems for most candidates. In addition the exploration of ideas and materials was limited.

Some of the weaker submissions adopted a cartoon-like approach, or relied on imagination from weak preparatory work that had little information.

### Question 5: Street patterns

This was a very popular question, which showed a tremendous variety of responses from the most conceptual work to the most literal. Preparatory studies included use of different media, such as lino, batik, collage, photography and paint to explore cobblestones, brickwork, stone and cement. Many candidates looked at the street as a part of the bigger cityscape and employed street maps and street signs as backgrounds. Candidates who worked from their own photographs (often very wide ranging and technically competent) and observational drawings, rather than lifting images from second source material, were able to achieve higher marks. Some included very detailed pattern work with a clear link to their source. The best candidates composed their own expressive and individual final work from studying the nature of their local environment, recording the substance and also the evocative 'feel' of the street to produce a final work that encompassed different aspects of the street, e.g. movement (vehicular and pedestrian) and the contrast between man-made construction materials such as metal, stone and plastic. More able candidates successfully organised their ideas and studies into abstract patterns using different media to good effect.

Work seen in the mid-range had used a variety of methods to gather their research including their own photographs and the direction of their work was sometimes inspired and influenced by artist's examples and styles such as graffiti art and Banksy were popular sources. There was some continuity in the development of ideas, and materials were handled with some control, though the technical execution was sometimes weaker.

The lower level submissions relied mostly on secondary sources, with little or no recording from first hand. The handling of materials and recording was inconsistent and there was a limited development of composition and ideas and little or no evidence of critical analysis.

### Question 6: A view through a fence

Higher-level submissions made excellent links to current affairs and political events. Studies of other artists, such as Banksy, had successfully informed their own work. The best candidates had researched their ideas with direct observation studies relating to the 'view', such as landscape. They were able to demonstrate an exploration of the theme in a range of media to present abstract, conceptual, and imaginative final outcomes. One candidate interpreted this as 'trapped minds' and developed a very personal submission that explored autism resulting in justifiably high marks. Others took war zones or religious divides as their starting points.

Some incorporated research into artists with great understanding, for example using a limited palette to explore contemporary ways of colour use. Others combined media in effective ways, another using an underwater camera to research fishing nets.

There were several examples from candidates who used photography, to time the exact moment a figure or animal appeared in the negative spaces between the posts and balustrades. There was evidence that these candidates were aware of the photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson, which capture such candid 'Decisive Moments' in time. Going to church and figures in a public space were among the venues selected by candidates.

Mid-range candidates were able to compose a creative response but had little evidence of recording and only then from a limited source, this restricted what the candidate could visualise, perspective being a particular issue.

Lower level submissions demonstrated a lack of continuity in the recording, observational skills and analysis of ideas. The development of ideas was limited and candidates were content to just copy a photograph and produce repetitive outcomes. Snapshots of imagery were displayed, supplemented with images sourced directly from the internet and recording which demonstrated weak technical skills. Some simply painted the grid of a fence or wire on top of a painting of a landscape without integrating the two.

Candidates in this range would have benefited from spending more time compiling and developing their supporting studies work.

### Question 7: 'Sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me'

This was one of the least popular questions but responses were very good, particularly in the upper mark range with a bias towards expressionistic and conceptual interpretations.

The question elicited very strong emotional responses from across the mark range, which was based on personal or empathetic experiences. Bullying as a topic was wildly used as a starting point with a focus on the feelings of the victims.

Expressionistic techniques were very much in evidence, especially in the upper mark range, with works by artists such as Goya, Van Gogh and Munch being used to inform the candidates' own paintings.

Candidates' work at the higher level concentrated on showing a development of their ideas through process, using drawings and photographs from direct observation and personal experience to produce a creative response for their final examination piece. Understanding of design, pattern and colour was very strong and candidates made good use of a range of media including photography, paint and collage.

Mid-range candidates took inspiration from their own lives and relationships and less from their own drawings and photographs, relying more on secondary sources. Quite a few drew inspiration from the 'naming' aspect of the question with some colourful language and lettering covering the image of a face.

Lower level submissions relied heavily on secondary source imagery and struggled to realise their ideas.

### Question 8: Knotted

This was one of the most popular questions with some candidates treating the subject with an analytical and observational approach. However, often complex sophisticated ideas or symbolic meanings were explored.

A particularly imaginative interpretation explored mixed race through collage. Many demonstrated excellent observational skills, and a wide range of media was used. Good use of photography was in evidence.

The question provided opportunities for many interpretative approaches based on tensions in human relationships and social occasions such as weddings. Often outcomes showed an interesting development of ideas, although some candidates lacked the technical skills to effectively portray ideas, but original thinking was very much in evidence.

Interlocking patterns based on plaited hair was a popular interpretation across the mark range. Candidates in the lower range had great difficulty recording the changes of form and structure, as the plaits were interwoven. In the mid-mark range, candidates were able to represent such interwoven forms with confidence and accuracy but only in the upper mark range were candidates able to record the effect of light on the texture of hair. Candidates in the uppermost mark range successfully captured the tonal reversal of fine threads of hair, which appear to change when seen against contrasting backgrounds.

Candidates' work in the mid-range developed ideas through experimentation of materials and media but did not provide enough evidence of recording from direct observation; some relied on copies from secondary source images only.

Lower level submissions indicated a very literal response to the question and often stuck actual pieces of knotted thread to the development sheets, often without making any drawn studies.

**Question 9: Relaxing**

This question proved to be popular with those candidates who wished to represent the human figure. Figures were studied in hammocks, reclining sunbeds, sunbathing on beaches or swimming. Praiseworthy attempts at foreshortened view points were seen in the mid mark range, whilst candidates in the upper mark range tackled such a complex concept with considerable skill and confidence. Subjective viewpoints were often combined with foreshortened views of the candidates' legs when tackling self-portraiture.

There was a very wide range of other approaches adopted by candidates mainly in the mid to upper mark ranges with landscapes, still life studies, surreal imagery linking music and visual interpretations and candle lit settings at various venues.

The best work revealed strong recording from direct observation leading to the exploration of ideas and compositions using a range of materials A few imaginative interpretations were seen in which candidates had used digitally enhanced photographs to inform and develop final outcomes.

The candidates at the middle levels gathered research from first hand sources and recorded through their own photographs. Most candidates demonstrated involvement with the topic but with various levels of depth of investigation and rendering of materials. There were sometimes weaknesses in the technical skills with predictable outcomes.

Candidates at the lower levels demonstrated weak recording skills which limited their ability to develop ideas. Candidates were often over-reliant on a single photographic source which was simply copied with limited skill and understanding. In other lower level submissions the source of inspiration for the work was not always clear and resulted in a random collection of studies.

**Question 10: Bridges**

In the higher-level work, candidates produced some good observational studies of bridges and cables. The more able candidates, who explored less literal and more conceptual ideas of bridges, such as friendship or building bridges between nations in times of conflict, had backed up these ideas with observational studies and in-depth research of other artists' work to help inform their own. Sometimes the simplest solutions were the most effective with carefully studied hands from first hand observation being linked to create a bridge, which symbolised friendship and tolerance.

There were many other submissions of an esoteric nature concerning life and death, such as a bridge between life and death; the idea of moving on to the next world. There was also evidence of abstract interpretations. One strong submission contained intelligent gathering of information and perceptive recording, which had clearly informed a series of outstanding etchings. An expressive use of ink and paint throughout the development of ideas had led to an inventive outcome using card and paper constructions. The preparatory sheets of this submission were amongst the strongest seen in this component.

Many candidates in the middle to lower levels in particular, were challenged by their lack of understanding of perspective when representing the structure of bridges.  Candidates at the lower levels tended to work from secondary images from the Internet and sometimes produced a series of inconsistent and unrelated images resulting in a limited development of ideas.  Their weak skills in recording also hindered their level of achievement.

# ART AND DESIGN

> **Paper 0400/02**
> **Design Assignment**

### General Comments

Submissions were seen in response to all questions and across the whole ability range, although few were seen in the *Expert or Outstanding* mark bands (teachers should refer to the Assessment Criteria in the syllabus on pages 22-23 for the level descriptors). The bulk of submissions were *Satisfactory* or lower. Many candidates did not appear to understand the design process or the importance of starting with drawing from direct observation and much of the preparatory work relied on down-loaded images from the internet with little selection or understanding shown. Many candidates went straight to producing their final designs without adequate research or development of ideas or experiments with media and layout. Too often, text and image were seen as separate entities instead of being integrated and related as parts of the same design.

The best work, *Competent and Proficient,* was supported by supporting studies that demonstrated thorough research, including examples of established graphic designer's works, first hand observational studies and strong developmental work that showed a range of ideas and experimentation with media. Annotation and evaluation was relevant and showed good critical judgement in decision making, and in some cases there was an understanding of the commercial application of the designs.

It was noted that candidates had spent unnecessary time and effort during the preparatory period to record the media they had used for each image - *'I used pencil, pen, paint etc., for this drawing'* rather than explaining <u>why</u> they had chosen a specific medium or image.

In the lower mark bands, Assessment Objective 1 (AO1) was particularly weak with many candidates not using a range of resources and not recording from direct observation. Although subject matter was easily obtainable (lights, lamps, public transport, clocks for example), candidates chose to find these images online rather than explore actual examples visually through personal drawing. As a result AO2 showed little exploration of images or ideas with objects being traced several times and rendered in different colours. The ease of access to the internet means that, unless used as a creative tool, personal interpretations and originality are inhibited.

Media use was generally traditional with most candidates using pencil, pen, paint, pastel and occasionally collage. Some candidates submitted photographs and/or computer printed images with varying degrees of success.

Presentation was generally good and work was well labelled although a few candidates placed labels on the back of their work. Teachers are asked to ensure that labels are placed securely on the top-right hand corner to ease the marking process. Some Centres had stapled work in at least four places around the edges of the work, all of which had to be removed before marking could begin. Another Centre mounted all their work on foam board and another submitted their work on heavy MDF board, both making work very cumbersome to handle as well as expensive to post.

One particularly large entry Centre submitted work where 90% of the candidates had all responded to the same question (**Question 1**), and included a two point perspective drawn from a photograph of the same gymnasium. Apart from a few candidates, the understanding of perspective was poor. There was no research into other logo designs or into other graphic designer's works. Generally, there was little understanding of the design process and candidates had made poor use of time during the preparatory period. Some ideas were duplicated across candidates' work and in most cases, only one idea was explored. Supporting studies included practice squares with colour, tone or texture use which in many cases was unnecessary and did not relate to the final outcome. Overall, there was a lack of personal qualities and individuality which was a real shame but understandable when the majority of candidates had clearly been instructed as to which question to do and how to do it!

**Comments on Specific Questions**

**Question 1: Based on your own studies of outdoor activities, design a logo for a shop called Compass. You should also show how the logo could be adapted for use on the sign above the shop.**

This was by far the most popular question, but with the majority of work in the *Adequate* and lower mark bands.

Many submissions contained the same black and white silhouette images of compasses and stylised sports figures. These were either used with, or mostly without, creative changes and some indications of a personal development of ideas. Rarely were there any examples of first-hand drawings of compasses. Internet images prevailed even when objects (e.g. a ball) were readily available to draw from.

Printouts of logos were also resourced from the internet and although a few graphic designers and their works were perfunctorily investigated, they rarely influenced any further work or consideration. The strongest work with competent and very good design development came from scripts showing a wide variety of options in research with good use of drawing or computer skills to manipulate their images or typography through a process of change and elimination.

Lower level submissions were characterised by thin and weak research indicating a lack of involvement, poor drawing skills and design ability. The typography was sometimes included at the last moment rather than as an integral part of the design. Showing how the logo could be adapted for use on a shop front was not included by all candidates. However, when it was included, the more able students adapted the design for use within a specific space and became more aware of the ability to communicate their ideas. Some very good typographical work on computer and drawing and manipulations in 'Illustrator' were seen in a few submissions. These gave a professional finish to the work.

**Question 2: Design an advertisement promoting a visit to a local attraction via public transport, for use on the side of a bus or at a bus stop, train station or on the internet.**

This was the third most popular question and marks ranged from *Limited* to the *Expert* mark ranges. The very best candidates had researched local attractions and transport with some evidence of primary research with first-hand studies, in the form of drawings, and personal photographs. These candidates also combined hand-rendered images with scanned and manipulated images on the computer to produce more personal outcomes. One candidate produced an amusing zoo poster showing a rear-view of an animal with the caption '*For a Better View Come and Visit*….' which showed competent media handling but would have benefited from more research into colour use as the background and lettering were too close in tone.

Work in the lower ranges did not show any first-hand research and there was no evidence that any research into existing transport advertising had taken place. Some candidates had attempted to produce a poster design and to show how this would look at a bus stop, but with no understanding of perspective. Generally the placing of the typography in relation to the image was often unplanned and there was little experimentation with the composition.

**Question 3: Use all or a selection of the following as a stimulus for a design brief of your choice. You may produce your work in any appropriate medium (Lucretius quote).**

This was the second most popular question with marks ranging from the *Very Limited* range through to *Proficient.* There were some very good responses from some candidates that showed strong first-hand drawing skills from direct observation, and competency in the handling of media, particularly colour and tonal use. Some candidates chose to use the whole quote as an exercise in calligraphy but most of these examples showed insufficient control of letter shapes and spacing. Most candidates opted to create illustrations or book jacket designs, the latter with some good attempts at lettering. Some examples of illustrations were well researched with some innovative use of mixed media.

Candidates in the lower range did not appear to understand the quote and had no clear idea what they were trying to achieve. In these cases it would have been helpful if candidates had included their design brief to clarify and explain their intentions.

**Question 4: Using your own studies of lamps, shades, spotlights or torches, design a repeat pattern fabric for a fabric to be used in the head offices of a lighting company.**

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This was a popular choice for candidates, with submissions covering the mark ranges *Very Limited* to *Proficient.* This question gave candidates excellent opportunities for first-hand research and experimentation which was utilised well in a minority of submissions. The use of drawings, own photographs of lamps, bulbs, shades, wires etc., in different positions and in a range of media enabled the more confident and imaginative candidates to provide a far more personal and creative outcome. In a few submissions, lino-cuts and screen prints or stencils were used with great success. A more adventurous use of media was mostly seen in the higher mark bands and the more successful final designs showed competent investigation and creative manipulation of images.

At the lower levels, few candidates worked from first-hand direct observation even though lamps and bulbs are readily available. Many Centres had adopted a formulaic approach with all candidates working to the same format, using similar materials, imagery and media. Most images were downloaded from the internet with the same lamps being seen time and time again. Research into the work of designers' repeat patterns or resourced examples of fabric or wallpaper were very seldom seen within the work of lower level submissions and very often, these examples were not used to develop ideas.

The opportunity to show the pattern in-situ was not considered by many candidates. Although some candidates produced some very professional outcomes that had used a reduced computer image of the completed design in an office, while others drew the pattern in an appropriate setting.

Once again there was a lack of understanding of what a repeat pattern is from many of the candidates. Many of the weaker students simply drew the same object lots of times with no consideration to positive and negative forms or interlocking shapes. This was seen repeatedly on a Centre basis rather than an individual one and indicates a lack of appropriate direction.

**Question 5: Based on your research into the theme insects, design a full-length costume for an actor including a headdress.**

This question ranked joint second in popularity and produced the most exciting and adventurous responses, demonstrating the involvement and obvious enjoyment of candidates. Marks ranged from *Very Limited* to *Excellent.*

The majority of students produced work based on internet images of insects, although a few had visited museums to draw and take their own photographs.

At the higher level, ideas were well researched from differing sources, including fashion designers, costume designers or artists who had used insects as a basis for their own work. Some candidates produced work which incorporated two or three different insects, whilst others concentrated on developing designs from one insect. There was evidence of some excellent fashion drawing using a good range of media. The stronger candidates showed a clear understanding of garment construction and the manipulation of fabrics as well as experimenting with a variety of materials. A few candidates made their costumes and recorded them through photographs.

At the mid to lower ranges, candidates struggled with developing designs from their research and subject matter, and the work lacked clear direction. Preparatory studies were often full of internet images of insects (mostly butterflies), but candidates tended to use a generic form to produce ideas rather than relying on their own references.

**Question 6: Using the theme 'travellers', design a clock for a railway station. Show how your design would look when in place.**

This question ranked sixth in popularity and marks awarded ranged from *Very Limited* to *Proficient.* Some candidates were interested in producing an innovative way of telling the time and others concentrated on different ways of containing or presenting a clock in a railway station. At the upper level there were some good drawings of railway stations with interesting viewpoints showing the placing of the clock. Many candidates relied on the internet for image research rather than using a sketchbook and drawing in a railway station.

At the lower level, candidates struggled with perspective when attempting to place their clocks in the setting of a station and too much time was spent on trying to resolve this problem rather than on the design of the clock. Few candidates developed more than one idea for the clock, indicating a lack of involvement and curiosity.

**Question 7: Based on your research into traditional dance, design a mosaic panel for one wall of a theatre. Show how the mosaic panel would look when in place.**

This was the seventh most popular question and marks were awarded between the *Very Limited* and *Proficient* mark bands. This question enabled students from around the world to showcase their particular local dance, or a more generic form such as ballet or ballroom dancing.

The best submissions had given more thought to the construction and design of the mosaic, with clear references to other artists' innovative ways of making mosaics. However, work was not developed in their style. One of the better submissions showed a detailed design for a kabuki dance with a well produced and conceived drawing of the mosaic in-situ outside the theatre. Another candidate produced a very personal submission using photographs of herself whilst ballroom dancing with a partner. The candidate had developed several different designs for her final examination piece using close-ups of the material and movement of her dresses and the position of her feet.

Rather surprisingly there were very few experiments using individual squares of paper or other materials to emulate the actual technique of making a mosaic. The majority of final submissions were either drawn or painted.

Work seen in the lower mark band indicated that research was only carried out by internet searches. Opportunities to go out and about and take advantage of performances were completely ignored. The dance aspect of the question was considered more so than the mosaic design. If included, it was all too often an afterthought. The mosaic technique was often used as a random drawn cover for a painting or drawing and not understood as a definite way of designing with tessellated shapes. Some submissions relied heavily on computer programmes which produce a mosaic effect. Most candidates submitted drawings which indicated where the mosaic would be in the theatre, but inappropriately, some candidates had placed their design on the stage itself.

**Question 8: Design a water feature for a lake at a water park. The theme of the piece is wildlife.**

This was the least popular question with marks ranging from the *Very Limited* to *Adequate* mark bands. Work here could be exemplified by little first-hand research and a heavy reliance on internet images of animals and water parks. Typically submissions comprised some drawings of fountains in a local park with possibly some of these images being used in the final piece but with no changes or development of ideas. Many candidates here obviously thought that it would be enough to place an animal in a pond with water issuing from its mouth, without a more lateral and conceptual consideration.

The control of media and experimentation with processes was limited, except for one submission that included photographs of a life-size 3D giant tortoise with a water spout hole as a mouth, made in clay and produced for the examination piece. However, there was little to show that the design had been researched thoroughly or that any developmental work had taken place.

**Question 9: Using your own studies of local flora and fauna, design a range of fashion accessories such as shoes, bags or jewellery.**

This question ranked fourth in popularity and marks awarded ranged from *Very Limited* to *Proficient*. The strongest submissions contained candidates' own drawings and photographs of plants and flowers taken from the candidates' locality which were developed into a creative range of accessories. Some good examples of established designer's works were seen in the research ranging from hats to bracelets and bags to shoes. Animal images were still acquired from the internet. However, this question generated some interesting experimentation with a wide range of media and processes. As well as the usual painting and drawing techniques, screen printing, drawing with wax, embroidery and collage were seen. Some candidates at this level constructed accessories and submitted them, some showing some very good making skills.

Although this question gave good opportunities for first-hand primary research, few of the lower level candidates took advantage of this preferring to rely on internet images or cut and paste images from magazines. Occasionally their research included a few tiny examples of drawn leaves or flowers with little detail. There was very little studied examination of flora or fauna to enhance ideas development in all but a few submissions. Candidates at this level were inclined to produce basic non-specific 'daisy' designs that were used to decorate existing bags, shoes and necklaces, rather than design more personal and creative outcomes. One candidate drew a competent skeleton to hang a tiny bag and necklace on, completely missing the point of the brief.

# ART AND DESIGN

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**Paper 0400/03**

**Critical and Historical Assignment**

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## General Comments.

Submissions were seen presented as A4 folders/files, scrapbooks, A2 sheets sometimes with an A4 written essay included. Sometimes A5 – A3 books were produced from a web-site template, a few large and small sketchbooks were also seen but teachers should be reminded that the maximum size is A2. One Centre had presented all their assignments in purpose made black boxes.

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 marks in the *Outstanding* mark band. Teachers should be aware of the Assessment Criteria which describes these mark bands (see syllabus pages 22-23).

## Assessment Objective 1: Gathering, Recording, Research and Investigation

The strongest submissions contained evidence of first-hand sources for in-depth research and experience of the subject matter. In support of this essential element, visits to Art Galleries, artists' studios, museums and buildings of architectural significance had all provided material for visual and written analysis. Submissions at the lower levels of attainment contained little if any evidence of using first-hand source for research. The Internet, (which is a second–hand source for research) had been used by many candidates for downloading images and text. This demonstrated a lack of awareness and understanding and usually led to marks being achieved at the lower levels of assessment, within each assessment objective.

## Assessment Objective 2: Exploration and Development of ideas

Evidence of some recording from a first-hand source, using either photography or drawing (sometimes both) nearly always enhanced and informed the further development of the assignment. Several candidates had arranged and carried out interviews with their chosen artists and designers. Intelligent and well prepared questions had revealed insights into how the artists' work develops as well as particular working methods and techniques. This exploration of how artists, designers and craftspeople develop their work had enabled stronger candidates to make some significant personal judgements. Some personal experiments with related materials had clearly been informed by this kind of investigation.

## Assessment Objective 3: Organisation and Relationships of Visual and/or other forms

The presentation of the Assignment is very important, and imaginative methods most suitable for the subject were seen at the higher levels of achievement. Some extremely personal hand-made books were in evidence. All the submissions from one Centre were in the form of customised A3 sketchbooks, each presented in a purpose made black box or folio. Many submissions were presented on large mounted sheets of card, the best of which had carefully mounted photographs and drawings combined with related blocks of text.

Stronger candidates had identified related works by their chosen artists and carried out some perceptive comparative analysis. This visual exploration had informed some intelligent personal observations. This was enhanced by the way the candidate had placed the images in a logical and related sequence. Some limited submissions were seen which consisted of A2 sheets of coloured paper with badly mounted and sometimes quite random 'cut and paste' images.

## Assessment Objective 4: Selection and control of materials, media and process

Some very strong submissions had included examples of the candidates own work which had been clearly informed and inspired by personal insights into the working methods and development of ideas made by carefully chosen artists. Some very outstanding illustrated essays were seen, demonstrating high levels of written analysis, supported by related and imaginative pen and ink drawings. 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. A few outstanding assignments were seen to focus on 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. Weaker examples displayed little or no evidence of any critical analysis and were mainly descriptive accounts of second-hand source material.

## Assessment Objective 5: Personal Vision and Presentation

This Objective makes a clear link with AO3 and relates to the level of commitment and engagement evidenced by the submission. One outstanding example seen was by a candidate who re-traced the steps made by David Hockney in North Yorkshire when making his film for the 'Bigger Picture' Exhibition, and produced his own very personal visual photographic diary. This supported some extremely perceptive and imaginative comparative analysis of some selected works by Hockney. The strongest submissions presented very personal explorations, involving visual awareness, critical thinking and reflection, resulting in a well informed evaluation of the topic.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to make use of the outline proposal form (OPF), these should be completed and submitted to CIE for comments before study commences. They should outline their intentions for the assignment as well as list all sources for first-hand research and potential experience of the chosen topic. This form is designed to assist and encourage the careful and considered planning of the assignment. The vast majority of submissions seen within the mid to higher levels of attainment had submitted an OPF for comments and advice. Many of those below this level of achievement had not completed a proposal form and were found to contain little evidence of any personal observations or critical analysis.

# ART AND DESIGN

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Paper 0400/04
Coursework Assignment
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## General comments

A wide variety of work was seen with Painting and Related Media being the most popular choice for the candidates chosen field of study.

The most successful candidates had good starting points, exploring numerous ways to develop their ideas. These were supported with drawings from first-hand observation and their own photographs which were developed into exciting studies. The final compositions were clearly thought-out using colour studies and practising with their chosen media. These projects demonstrated both a good level of technical skill and personal qualities.

The submissions of the best candidates suggested a prior knowledge of the work of a wide range of other artists. This was documented with relevant downloaded images plus, in many cases candidates' own photographs from gallery or museum visits. Personal evaluation gave insight into the candidates' critical thinking and experiments with media and processes which informed the development of their own ideas. The development of the submitted project allowed an opportunity for more specialised research and often demonstrated a depth of critical thinking as the candidate sought to clarify their own ideas and methods. Ambitious experimentation was continually reviewed and became progressively more focused, which enabled the candidate to resolve highly personal outcomes.

Submissions in the middle range always demonstrated a mixture of strengths and weaknesses.

Typical examples in this range included submissions that had focused on producing a great deal of contextual research with emphasis placed on presentation and page layout; but without practising with the materials used within the final piece, the quality of the work suffered.

Others had placed more emphasis on media experiments where candidates had worked on combining materials to create different visual effects. There was some very personal and lively work seen where candidates had used their own photographs to create media studies and sculptures but candidates needed to develop their ideas more thoroughly and refine their technical skills. The candidates could not sustain this work into highly successful final pieces.

In some cases ideas were limited and broader research would have enabled the candidates to have more choice for their final outcome. Some candidates did explore their ideas well but the practical application of these ideas was missing from the research.

Some work demonstrated a high level of technical competence but relied heavily on secondary sources and did not display the personal qualities required to achieve marks in the higher mark ranges.

All of the work from a number of entries consisted of a series of well-observed first-hand studies using paint and pencil. Whilst individual objects had been skilfully formed, the complete absence of any research into the genre of still life or the work of appropriate artists severely limited the candidates' ability to develop compositional ideas. The candidates had approached their work as an accumulation of technical exercises rather than a process of exploration and outcomes lacked personal qualities.

Many other candidates had researched ideas enthusiastically but had written far more than they had drawn, painted or made. Extensive written explanation of ideas and research is not a substitute for practical exploration and experimentation with media that seeks to translate concepts into visual form.

A small number of candidates restricted their achievement by working on much too small a scale to allow them to develop and demonstrate detailed skills at any stage of their projects.

While the standard of presentation was good, the general standard of centre assessments was very poor with the majority requiring significant adjustments. It was not unusual to see Centres placing all of their candidates in the 80-100 range when the work only merited marks in the 20-50 range. Whilst the order of merit was generally correct Centres had over valued the candidates' technical ability, their ability to develop a range of ideas from initial observational studies and their ability to explore a range of appropriate media leading to a relevant final outcome.

Equally disappointing was Centres' failure to differentiate between the achievement of their candidates. Many Centres routinely place all of their candidates within a few marks of each other rather than using the full mark range to reflect obvious differences in achievement. In all of these cases, assessments were not based on evidence relating to the requirements of each of the five assessment objectives.

Centres are reminded that new Standards are available for reference and can be accessed from the CIE Teacher Support Site.

## Comments on Specific Areas of Study

### Painting and Related Media

This was the most popular area of study and there were many different approaches seen including the subjects of decay, flight, portraiture, still life, natural forms, vehicles, animals for example. Candidates also looked at alternative ways of taking their ideas through abstraction, distortion and Surrealism and Cubism amongst others. These were often the more successful submissions showing a clear progression of ideas, whereas interpretative approaches reflecting abstract concepts of an emotional nature could often lack direction and focus. Some of these examples had limited depth, analysis and fragmented ideas and observation - relying on secondary sources, lacking direction and a journey towards a successful realisation.

Portraiture featured heavily with varying degrees of success depending on whether enough research had taken place and the candidates' technical ability. There were some large scale portraits seen which were very personal approaches to the subject.

The most successful submissions contained explorations from first-hand sources with good compilations of research and investigation which clearly developed individuality and invention of ideas. These were often supported by the initial inspiration of an artist, where clear analysis and realisation was apparent, containing much personal engagement and clear observation and understanding of their subject, enhanced by the creative and skilful rendering of materials, concluding with a successful informed response. These submissions were very personal and clearly the candidates had followed their own interests, sometimes after initial studies undertaken by the whole Centre. For example, situations where all the candidates had drawn from the same collection of vegetables as their starting point but each had then gone on to develop their work into quite unique and individual outcomes. Some of these outcomes incorporated very strong understanding and exploration of colour and pattern influenced by traditional textile designs and resulted in abstract designs produced in mixed media.

Photography was very often used in the gathering of visual information and to help the development of ideas and was sometimes manipulated – torn or cut up, and integrated with other drawing and painting materials.

Less successful submissions often relied very heavily on secondary source material. Although candidates produced some potentially exciting ideas for an outcome, these ideas were often not backed up with sufficient visual investigations. Preparatory sheets included copies of images from the internet, sometimes traced, coloured-in and rearranged. Technical skills were not developed and the candidates struggled to produce outcomes that reflected their initial ideas. However, many candidates made good use of photography to complement their observational drawings, especially when their drawing skills were weak. In the best work these candidates were able to develop their ideas using a more suitable media and through sustained studies and practice with the media, were able to produce an outcome that reflected their intention.

The lower ability candidates tended to display work from the imagination which usually lacked technical skills with limited development and little reference to sources. Often they had submitted a series of fragmented and unrelated studies with little depth and with a weak handling of materials. However, it was apparent that some had spent more time on a final outcome, which despite being unrelated to other work had become a more fulfilled element of their submission.

**Photography**

The use of photography as a method of recording initial ideas in addition to drawn observational studies was very popular and many candidates had used this medium very creatively.  Candidates had dressed up models, painted their faces and set up photo-shoots in unusual settings.  Many were clearly using photography as an excellent tool to take their ideas forward and where they had then painted from these images the work became very lively and personal.

Where photography was the chosen area of study for the whole coursework submission the best work included several photo-shoots that demonstrated the candidates' ability to explore the subject matter fully, from different angles, viewpoints and scale.  The work was developed using a range of experimental techniques including the use of Photoshop and other image manipulation programmes.  The best work also referred to the work of other photographers and took inspiration from this research.

Unfortunately the majority of photography entries were very poor and often amounted to little more than everyday 'snaps'.  A photography submission must be informed by a critical understanding of the subject.  Explorations of fundamental photographic concepts such as depth of field, alternative viewpoints, composition and lighting conditions as well as some knowledge of different photographic genres are basic necessities to enable candidates to make judgements about their work.  Trawling through sources such as 'Flickr' to collect images that the candidate 'likes' does not amount to critical thinking.  Naive and uninformed applications of Photoshop filters to images is not sufficient evidence of editing and development.  The more successful candidates revisited their subjects to 're-shoot' following evaluation of initial images and demonstrate an understanding and control of composition.

**Graphic Design**

There were a small number of submissions of this area of study.  Most had designed a poster or logo as a final outcome.

The better work included a thorough exploration of colour ways and different compositions incorporating text and image.  These candidates had demonstrated a sound understanding of colour theory to inform their ideas and used this knowledge to review and refine their work to a successful conclusion.  Images were inspired from their own drawings from observation and from a collection of their own photographs.  There was evidence of extensive media testing to explore a range of background options for the designs.  The exploration of text was a mixture of hand-drawn and computer-generated, and both demonstrated an understanding of the formation of lettering.

Weaker submissions relied very heavily on images sourced from the internet and text was very simply produced from existing typefaces put together in a variety of combinations.  Technical ability was limited, where the work was hand-produced the painting skills were often weak and although the computer generated work demonstrated some knowledge of the programme used this was not explored or developed in much depth.  It was sometimes difficult to know exactly what was the candidates own work and what had been reproduced from the internet as the work was not annotated.

**3D Design and Sculpture**

There were few entries for this area.

Some highly successful entries featured detailed research and the candidates had considered the context that the sculpture would be seen within.  Maquettes were made before the final piece was crafted and placed in position to be photographed.  This level of candidate displayed interest in the subject beyond their chosen project.

Some sculptures using card and wire were seen that featured relevant artists and maquettes had been used effectively.  There was some work seen based on the human form but the final outcome was rather basic and more experimentation was the material was required.

There was also some political commentary which conveyed some interesting ideas but they could not sustain these ideas into a successful final piece.
A few candidates had created architectural design entries which used natural forms as a starting point to create designs for buildings.  Although the concept was strong, this work would have benefitted from researching the work of other architects and 3D models or computer generated imagery could have been used to convey the ideas more effectively.

There were only a few three-dimensional design ceramics submissions, which were of Satisfactory, or Adequate levels of achievement. Candidates had either worked figuratively from conceptual ideas or from photographs or influences of other designer's works. Some developed ideas into ceramic pots/vases using the inspiration of a chosen designer. The supporting studies often took the form of a few drawings in pencil and water colour or internet research with a few sketchy ideas. In some cases the research material was limited and undeveloped. Much of the effort and commitment had gone in to the exploration of materials and construction processes. Some candidates demonstrated successful technical skills in the construction process while handling the clay.

**Textile and Fashion Design**

There were very few fashion entries seen. Candidates used their initial research to develop their ideas into successful and innovative designs using places or objects as inspiration. The fashion drawings were well accomplished and described their ideas effectively.

Other less successful entries were very derivative and mostly copied rather than designed.

Some stencil prints were submitted demonstrating proficient levels of technical control with over prints of many colours. Ideas had been developed from first hand studies.