

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/01
Controlled Test

General Comments

Generally submissions were lively and personal with responses seen for all questions, across the mark range and from a wide variety of media. Many submissions were located at the 20-49 mark levels, especially in the 30-39 range. There were fewer responses at the lowest levels and in the very highest mark range (90+). A considerable number of submissions were on a large scale, mounted on heavy mount board which made the work cumbersome and difficult to handle.

Section A was the most popular area of the question paper; well over 65% of submissions were in response to questions in this area. The majority of candidates preferred to respond to an open ended starting point which had the potential for a very personal response. The most popular starting point in this section was **Question 1** – ‘Fear’, attracting 25% of responses. The next two most popular topics, again from this section were **Question 2** – ‘Water Surfaces’ and **Question 4** – ‘Through Glass’. Submissions were scattered across the mark range, with the majority in the low to middle levels.

Section B - attracted just under 20% of responses which were spread across the mark levels, with much fewer at the very low, and the very high levels of achievement. The most popular starting point in this section was **Question 8** – ‘Fruits and vegetables placed on a mirror...’ with the least popular being **Question 7** – ‘Upside down bicycle.’

There were less than 10% of responses to the topics from **Section C**. Responses were scattered across the whole mark range. The least popular starting points were **Question 10** – ‘Reflections in a shop window’ and **Question 15** – ‘Typography, designs for male and female costumes...’ each attracting the same number of submissions. .

Painting and related media was the most popular area of study and consisted mainly of paintings on board or paper, supported by preparatory work in a range of media, but mainly conventional drawing and painting materials were developed into in the final outcome. Other areas of study explored were fashion design, graphic design and some printing. Photography submissions once again formed a large proportion of the submissions seen. Photography and digital media techniques were also used by many candidates to form elements of the research and manipulation processes of the work.

The photography work, which was submitted electronically on USB sticks or on disc, tended to be formulaic in approach, however the presentation was clearer and more effective than in previous years. When candidates included annotation it was informative and descriptive, presenting their own interpretation of concepts within examples of other artists’ work. However, very little visual analysis was demonstrated.

The overall standard of work from the country with the largest entry was of a disappointingly low standard, with the subject matter of some work being worryingly aggressive in nature. One candidate was seen photographing herself with fire-arms shooting at her own image in a mirror, whilst expressing details of her alter-ego.

Photoshop had been used in most submissions, though was less superfluous as in previous year’s submissions, but did not always enhance the work. The use of Photoshop within some entries could be crudely manipulated while trying to compose a balanced composition, illustrating both a lack of technical understanding of the potential within the programme, and an aesthetic awareness. Often some candidates would use successful photographs to manipulate, but ended up either oversaturating their image, or overdoing the double exposure so that the image was confused and spoiled.

While connections were made with the work of other photographers, these were very often lesser-known or unknown Internet sourced photographers and did little to inform the development of the candidate’s work. Images produced trying to portray ideas of surrealism was quite popular with the candidates, though none

had actually referenced the very influential and important artists of this movement such as Dali and Magritte. However, there was evidence of more popular photographers being studied with some reasoning of why they were selected.

The more skilful candidates however, demonstrated their ability to form a successful composition within their submissions, this was less apparent within the work in the lower mark levels. Candidates at the lower levels tended to copy ideas almost entirely from the Internet and included very little evidence of an appropriate personal response to the work of others. There was a better level of engagement with the topics selected this session as many candidates had carried out more than one shoot, across the levels.

Photography candidates who submitted digitally printed photographs on boards were much more successful in demonstrating their exploration of personal ideas, techniques and processes. There were some successful and appropriate choices of techniques to represent their subject matter using both colour, sepia and black and white imagery to express their ideas, demonstrating much consideration.

Where candidates were encouraged to produce responses to a wider range of starting points, more individual and creative responses were made. Final outcomes were supported with much vital research, good observational awareness with carefully observed studies; exploration and accomplished rendering of a range of media reflecting sensitivity and confidence; appropriate use of photography and clear and relevant analysis of ideas and development.

Candidates at the **highest** mark level demonstrated a clear journey of development, creatively inspired by their starting points. They had worked from direct observation and their appropriate research into the works of other artists had influenced the personal direction of their work. There was evidence of creative and individual interpretations of their subject with a genuine desire to explore the question. The preparatory work reflected evidence of an enquiry of investigation, resulting in some thorough research and a depth of analysis. The time spent on these studies was used effectively

The work at the **middle** level of ability often demonstrated less recording and observation from first hand sources, and sometimes the origin of their sources was unclear. Some candidates at this level however, illustrated much technical skill in the rendering of materials and produced some sensitive studies. Preparatory work could contain some successful pieces of work and ideas, but the final outcome did not always reflect the apparent promise within the preparatory work. In some cases this was due to the candidates not exploring alternative compositions or colour schemes sufficiently to enable them to make decisions on the development of their work. Within the work of some candidates at this level the analysis of their topic could often lack depth, as with their observation, exploration and development of ideas, which could often be repetitive.

The candidates at the **lower** levels would have been wise to spend more time researching their question and sustaining their preparatory work, to provide themselves with the opportunity to demonstrate a fully resolved and informed final outcome while fulfilling all areas of the assessment criteria. The preparatory work often contained a limited development of ideas and personal engagement. There was less evidence of working from observation, with more invented imagery with little evidence of source, or with an over reliance on secondary sources. Those who made drawings and recorded from objects demonstrated little development, but merely repeated images using different media. Other candidates at this level sometimes appeared to be passing off Internet imagery as their own, by not clarifying their photographed images, from those originating from other sources. The manipulation of media in this range tended to be less developed, demonstrating technical weaknesses and often limited in selection. Very little reference to the work of others was evident and many selected inappropriate media to express ideas towards their chosen question.

Overall the standard of presentation was generally very good. Great care had been taken and most work was well labelled. Generally the work had been well attached to the sheets. One particular Centre had over used heavy mount board for presenting preparatory work, which led to difficulties in handling the work during marking. Here, a thinner and lighter weight card for presentation would have been a better solution. However, most work was presented on more appropriate thin card or substantial paper.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

'**Fear**', this was clearly the most popular starting point by far and attracted a large 25% of the submissions. Responses came from across the whole mark range with the majority located in the **lower** to **middle** areas of the mark range. This question represented an opportunity for candidates to express normal adolescent concerns such as appearance, relationships, the state of the world and medical issues, with some interesting work relating to bullying, loneliness, the death of a friend or relative and existential angst. The candidate's approaches to the work tended to be interpretative and imaginative, though often at the lower levels quite obvious. Many responses contained fearful and emotional facial expressions such as screaming mouths, close-up portraits of figures crying and in distress; agonized faces partially covered with hands, death and decay, operations, zombies, claws, dolls, grasping hands and so on. The question sometimes provoked an immediate, but less intelligent or critical response. There was also a focus on the candidate's own particular fears such as a fear of heights, of death and ageing, or fear of the dark and dark and creepy places.

There were some imaginative and well executed submissions in the work at top of the mark range. Within the more thoughtful and **higher** work candidates gave more consideration to the concept of fear itself and its effect on others and how it might be expressed visually, through imagery and marks. Candidates demonstrated insights into phobias and the fear of being different to others. Sensitive ideas had been explored and some candidates had researched the works of Francesca Woodman, Goya, Munch and Francis Bacon to inform and inspire their research and development. Candidates had often produced figurative pieces, or the close-up of a screaming face. At this level, candidates had worked from direct observation and those who had worked with something to distort the face i.e. using mirrors or squashing the face against glass usually produced the most interesting work. Those candidates using photography, and who were prepared to do several shoots were usually rewarded well for their personal and inventive research and ideas.

Some candidates in the **middle** level relied on more obvious and predictable ideas, and there was less evidence of initial research, though the subject matter was varied. Some observations were derived from first hand and often supplemented with secondary sourced material. Some candidates at this level had often used photography to capture poses of their friends trying to look frightened or in positions of fear or vulnerability. However, despite working from direct observation and demonstrating a personal engagement in their work, their outcomes were often predictable and the execution was limited. Other candidates at this level demonstrated individuality and independence in the development of ideas, manipulated through a range of media to produce some dramatic effects. There was some attempt at contextual referencing but sometimes the development of ideas could be confusing and incoherent and outcomes could be obvious interpretations.

The work at the **lower** level tended to rely heavily on secondary sources, or was often invented from the imagination. The work tended to frequently contain incoherent collections of gory imagery, deriving from horror films or computer games. There was less exploration of materials to record and develop ideas and little thought was given to the use of colour, with black and red tending to be the most dominant. Drawings and paintings were weak with little evidence of close observation from any sources and the candidates at this level tended to repeat their images rather than exploring alternative ideas. There was either very little supporting work or, preparatory work which mirrored an obvious final outcome.

Question 2

'**Water surfaces**' this was the second most popular question and the work seen was mainly in the **lower** to **middle** areas of the mark range, with only a few at the **higher** level. The nature of the topic stimulated work from observation and was a very popular starting point for candidates producing photography submissions. Themes included the sea and waves, pools, streams, droplets on flowers, tears, water in vessels, distortion through water, pollution, and reflections and so on. In some submissions textures and surfaces formed by the addition of soap, oil, ink and paint to the water were studied to good effect. Textural studies were seen at this level with string, tissue, embroidery and collage employed as well as silk painting. Some candidates chose to use fashion design to good effect with ruffled silks and moire surface patterns.

The majority of the **middle** range work demonstrated the recording from first-hand sources as the starting point for the development of ideas, containing relevant research and appropriate references to artists, to inform the progression of work. The photography submissions displayed much use of Photoshop to

manipulate an image, along with an understanding of composition, balance and focus. At this level, and in both photography and other media, candidates explored alternative viewpoints and angles of their subject and confidently manipulated a range of media. Some sensitive rendering of surface texture was apparent, through appropriate and controlled mark making and manipulation of materials, with strong observational studies or the candidate's own photography. There was also evidence of substantial research into alternative sources of water surfaces. However, while some submissions demonstrated good research and a personal engagement, others at this level, despite often displaying strong technical manipulation and a sense of a good aesthetic awareness, demonstrated limited evidence of research.

The work at the **lower** levels relied greatly on the use of secondary source material. In the case of photography, the quality of the images was often not strong enough to convey a coherent idea, despite the use of Photoshop. Also at this level there tended to be an overuse of Photoshop, where the programme did little to enhance an image, demonstrating the candidate's lack of understanding of the potential within an idea and a lack of skill in the manipulation of the technique. Unlike the work in the middle level, candidates tended to record their subject through the camera from only one viewpoint and illustrated little consideration of vantage points, scale, focal points and lacked the investigation of angles and sources to inform a considered outcome. However, other work at this level demonstrated little creativity with potential for development, though the candidates did not appear have the technical skills to execute these ideas successfully and the final outcome could be incohesive. The presentation of the work at this level was often less well-considered which could lead to a fragmented and confusing submission of work, which hindered candidate achievement.

Question 3

'**Inside out**' the responses to this question were scattered across the mark range with many located in the **lower** to **middle** areas of the mark order. This topic stimulated the exploration of turning the human form inside out to contrast the lining of skin against the external surface of the body.

The work at the **higher** level was thoughtful and inventive demonstrating thorough research, experimentation and execution, as well as personal and imaginative responses. Much evolved around the human form as a starting point and other ideas included emotions and memories inside the head, the inner person or views through windows/broken glass. Appropriate research into the works of others was apparent and was used intelligently to inform ideas. Artists such as Andy Goldsworthy's land art to the technical analytical works of Leonardo da Vinci stimulated a variety of approaches. The better work demonstrated recording and the exploration of materials from first-hand to replicate the lining of skin, tendons and arteries. One submission at the higher level had explored raw meat and portraiture. Layered slices of raw meat had been partially placed over the face to portray contrast and were then recorded through photography and through a confident series of large paintings.

The work in the **middle** mark range also demonstrated research from direct observation through drawing and photography, with personal engagement and inventive ideas. One interesting submission in this range contained images of partly demolished buildings illustrating the 'inside' and 'outside' together in the image. The candidate developed studies and ideas by integrating collage and painting to simulate the texture, shapes and patterns of the crumbling graffiti which adorned the derelict structure. Another candidate had filled transparent plastic bags with fruits and had gone on to produce some very well observed studies and a series of photographs reflecting various angles and close-up studies. Candidates manipulated a range of materials skilfully and creatively, though the development of ideas was sometimes either unclear or repetitive leading to an undeveloped final outcome.

The work at the **lower** level demonstrated more obvious and literal ideas, but there was evidence of recording from first-hand sources. One candidate had produced studies from a car engine through the bonnet of a car, but did not have the technical skill to execute the idea successfully. Another interesting idea, though poorly executed, was the study of transparent packets of food and the display of their contents, but this resulted in a series of incoherent copies from observation rather than development. There were also some interpretative approaches and concepts such as the representation of split personalities and horror inspired ideas which tended to be obvious, literal and poorly constructed, demonstrating weak technical skills. The weaknesses in the submissions at this level tended to be due to the lack of development, exploration of ideas and media and an absence of contextual referencing. As a result final outcomes were limited.

Question 4

'**Through glass**' this was the third most popular question with responses from across the mark range. The candidate's approaches to this question tended to be mainly observational where they worked from found objects, still-life arrangements and from their own photography from sources within their locality. There was also some evidence of inventive interpretative examples.

The best work located in the **higher** and some of the **middle** levels was based on research from primary sources and included well observed studies, sketches and photographs. Responses were more thoughtful. Candidates explored ideas such as, observing objects and forms through drinking glasses and spectacles; they investigated the shapes and patterns through the bottom of glasses and through distorted glass, resulting in some accomplished drawings and paintings which identified reflections, distortions, refractions of light and the magnification of an image. Candidates at this level explored a variety of 2D media demonstrating a mastery of techniques. Mixed media had been used to good effect and sometimes developed into more personal abstract forms. An interesting photographic submission demonstrated a personal and inventive response where the candidate took a picture frame on an underwater swimming adventure and photographed images of figures through the frame, exploring an idea based on 'Alice Through the Looking Glass'. This was then appropriately manipulated back in the studio using Photoshop. Candidates, who had really considered the impact of using Photoshop during the alteration of their image, often produced the most successful results.

In the **middle** range sometimes the final outcomes could be incohesive, not reflecting the promise seen within the preparatory work, which often contained more successful research and demonstrating clearer achievement. There were some thoughtful ideas at this level, with one submission showing the exploration of alternative angles and viewpoints of their source material. Another idea involved the setting up of lenses in front of an image to invert part of the picture, resulting in imaginative exploration and development of images. Some candidates also explored the idea of filling glasses and jars with liquids or objects and even ice, to record through drawing painting or photography, to illustrate the subtle tones, forms and shapes of the contents distorting through the glass.

Work at the **lower** levels explored predictable ideas such as reflections in the mirror or looking through windows. Sometimes compositions consisted of imagery which was derived from the imagination rather than from the observation of sources, demonstrating weaknesses and inconsistencies in the representation of form, structure and tone. Photography responses to this starting point could be literal in interpretation, lacking any imaginative or personal attempt to develop an idea.

Question 5

'**Grids and frames**' The responses to this starting point came from across the mark range and stimulated some inventive, considered and personal ideas.

The work at the **higher** mark levels demonstrated a high level of engagement and the candidates had worked from direct observation. The better examples provided evidence of the candidate setting up their own arrangements containing grids and frames, and also the candidate's constructed structures using 3D materials held together with string and masking tape, from which to make studies. Sometimes the process of demolition of these structures was also recorded through drawing and painting and instigated the development of ideas. Another starting point was a busy bus station where angles and grids were recorded from different viewpoints and perspectives. One well researched photographic submission had arranged a series of connected images in grids, referencing Hockney. An idea using grids to divide the image, not just to explore composition but also to express a conception or a psychological issue, was apparent. There was much superimposing of frames and their contents, to create geometric and abstract compositions. The technical skills were very accomplished in the work at this level and the exploration of a variety of materials was apparent and rendered with confidence and sensitivity.

Middle level ability was indicated by evidence of strong observational studies of embellished and carved picture frames, demonstrating good observation and strong control of materials. However, the idea did not develop beyond the obvious superimposing and layering of the frames, despite apparent potential for further ideas. Other examples used imagery of buildings, scaffolding as a layer in front of the façades of buildings, windows and spectacle frames, to good effect. Even the spokes of a bicycle wheel were used as a frame and formed fragmented and abstract shaped compositions. This was an appropriate starting point for candidates submitting photography, containing opportunities to experiment with depth of field, composition and multi layered images using Photoshop. The manipulation of materials in the work at this level could be inconsistent and illustrate weaknesses. Occasionally, although the preparatory work demonstrated some inventive

research indicating much potential for development, this sometimes did not develop into a fulfilled final outcome.

The work at the **lower** ability tended to lack sufficient research to be able to produce an informed response. A series of submissions at this level consisted of random geometric patterns made up of grids and frames derived from the imagination, with no reference to sources or context and without evidence of development or progression. There were some obvious ideas such as drawings of figures looking through the bars of a prison window, which had either been copied from secondary material or constructed from the imagination, demonstrating a limited use of media and weakness in control. Other work contained the candidate's own photographs of figures holding frames, as if to illustrate a framed self-portrait. Works like this tended to progress down a conceptual route which enhanced the candidates poor ability to analyse and express ideas visually.

Question 6

'**Vortex**' the candidates responding to this starting point was mainly situated in the **lower** and **middle** of the mark range.

The best work seen was often thoughtful and supported by strong research work, displaying an appropriate use of media. One candidate took architectural forms as a starting point and studied Mobius strips, combining both studies with a self-portrait, showing considerable accomplishment. There were some obvious responses, but those who were prepared to investigate, develop and experiment with ideas, produced the most successful outcomes. Candidates had sometimes researched the meaning of vortex and had manipulated their images appropriately to capture energy in their studies. The stronger work was often informed by the candidate's own photographs which were thoughtfully developed using Photoshop as an aid. Other ideas included time travel or space, which tended to rely more on secondary sources. Candidates manipulated a range of 2D materials though their skills tended to be inconsistent.

The work at the **lower** level of ability tended to be predictable, though occasionally could be supported by more promising preparatory work. Some of the inspiration at this level was based on cyclones, whirling water, galaxies, repeated and concentric circles, eyes, kaleidoscopes and even a toilet flushing! Often at this level the final outcome was not supported by any referenced or sourced material and final outcomes tended to be both incoherent and under developed.

Section B

Question 7

An upside down bicycle ...' this question shared the same number of few responses with two others, and was one of the least popular questions. Work seen was mainly located in the **lower** and **middle** of the mark range with just a few at the **higher** level. The question stimulated approaches from direct observation and was usually recorded from the setting up of a workshop situation, with an upside down bicycle surrounded by tools and other workshop paraphernalia. The recording was usually constructed from drawings, paintings or photography. The focus of these responses tended to be mainly observational with the exploration of the shapes, forms and structures within the subject. Many of these submissions lacked a development of imagery or ideas and tended to result in the production of an unfulfilled final form.

The work at the **higher** level demonstrated skill in the depth of their observation and in the rendering of materials, showing an awareness of the technical construction of the bicycle and various other tools, illustrating a good representation of form. At this level a strong sense of colour was apparent and there was an exploration of dramatic abstract shadows cast from the structure of the subject.

In the **middle** of the mark range there was evidence of some strong observational work, though demonstrated by an obvious recording of the subject, consisting of some predictable imagery. Only where the bicycle was explored from unusual angles with interesting lighting, did it become more promising.

The work at the **lower** level gave little thought to viewpoints, angles or close ups and demonstrated a poor selection of materials to represent the topic, demonstrating weak technical skills. These candidates struggled to represent the structure and perspective of their subjects, displaying a weak analysis and construction of form.

Question 8

'**Fruits and vegetables**' this starting point was selected by many and the responses came from across the mark range, with most in the **lower** and **middle** levels. The majority of candidates worked from direct observation and had included a variety of fruits and vegetables of various sizes, shapes and colours.

The candidates at the **higher** levels demonstrated accomplished analytical and a sensitive rendering of materials, illustrating an understanding of form through detailed observational studies, to produce informed compositions. The work at this level was accomplished throughout the supporting work, resulting in a confident and successful final outcome. There was a very personal photography submission seen that contained a body of detailed research and a developed series of images from the inspiration of Dutch still life painting. The images were rich and produced to good effect.

The work at the **middle** level displayed a variety of observational recording with detailed explorations of the subject through the use of a range of materials. There was little evidence of the development of ideas through processes and much work tended to be faithful copies of a predictable still-life group. However, the quality of the observational studies was successful and demonstrated a competent and sometimes sensitive rendering of materials. However, many candidates struggled while trying to capture the quality of the reflected subject in the glass mirror and missed the subtle tonal differences between the objects and their mirrored reflections. There was some evidence of the exploration of the works of others at this level and candidates who used their artist's references in an intelligent way benefited both in terms of style, colour combinations and more interesting compositions. Sometimes the work illustrated more strength in the preparatory work, but weaker development during the examination. The final outcome sometimes remained undeveloped, where there was a tendency to repeat an image rather than manipulate alternative images and ideas.

The candidates at the **lower** levels produced pastel and water colour arrangements with many repeated, rather than developed drawings and images, with little manipulation of ideas. Other candidates either only used one viewpoint or made studies of individual objects during their preparatory work, resulting in a fragmented and incohesive final forms.

Question 9

'**Figure playing musical instrument...**' The responses for this starting point were scattered across the mark range.

This topic attracted some very able candidates in the **higher** mark levels, particularly those with the ability to portray the figure. These candidates had made very strong first-hand studies of figures playing saxophone, guitar, piano/keyboards, and drums and had used photography to capture character and movement from which to develop their work. Compositions illustrated various angles and viewpoints, along with recording close-up studies of animated hands in the act of playing the instrument. There was evidence of sensitive and thoughtful work demonstrating serious intent. These candidates had also referenced the work of other artists such as Picasso and Braque to inform and inspire their progression of ideas, colour development, composition and media exploration. The use of colour evoked mood and sound, and enhanced ideas. The appropriate rendering of marks on the paper also helped to express rhythm and movement. The manipulation of media was confident, accomplished and rigorous and most candidates produced successful final outcomes with strong visual qualities.

The candidates in the **middle** of the mark order also made use of photography while recording their subject matter. Their theme was well documented and the supporting work contained references to the works of others. At this level there was more reliance on copying from their images rather than manipulating and exploring the placement of figures, and inevitably, final outcomes tended to be copies of the candidates own photographs. Those candidates, who manipulated their images beyond mere copies, usually produced the most interesting work. The technical skills at this level contained some weaknesses and compositions were less successful.

The candidates at the **lower** mark range tended to copy figures from secondary sources, without expressing any personal interpretation. These candidates lacked the ability to portray the figure with confidence and also lacked creativity and aesthetic awareness, tending to rely on the use of very few images. Their lack of research and exploration of ideas hindered their opportunities to produce an informed final response.

Question 10

'Reflections in a shop window' this was another of the least popular questions.

Most responses were located at the **lower** and **middle** levels of the mark range. Candidates had mainly sourced their imagery from their own photography of mannequins and clothing and such like, displayed through the reflections seen within various windows of their local shops. Their images were usually explored and manipulated through painting or photography. The **best** work contained thoughtfully painted studies of reflections. However, the complexity of both the reflected and real image sometimes became muddled and confused during the development process, with the original ideas not clearly or successfully developed in the final outcomes. There was evidence of some sensitive and well researched final forms depicting a number of glass fronted shops and buildings, with interesting reflections and levels of distortion.

The responses at the **lower** levels were weaker and many were photographic. These submissions tended to display very little manipulation or development of imagery and weak photography skills. The construction of a successful composition tended to be obvious and limited with little depth of exploration of an idea, consequently there was little evidence of a personal departure.

Question 11

The starting point '**Cider with Rosie**' attracted candidates from across the ability range but the majority were located in the **lower** to **middle** levels of the mark order with only a few at the **highest** level.

The best work seen here demonstrated much creative ability and drama in their work. There was evidence of study from direct observation and appropriate sources were selected to evoke atmosphere or effect. Candidates at this level demonstrated a strong manipulation of materials and excellent recording skills in the form of drawings, paintings and photography. At this level the exploration and influence of the works of other artists was apparent such as Caravaggio, Rembrandt, Henry Tonks and Francis Bacon. Small sections from the extract were selected by candidates, but faces in candlelight seemed to strike a chord with many.

The supporting work at the **middle** of the mark order consisted of many photographs of candles, some including faces which were flushed with candle-light and hands reflected in the light, along with drawings and paintings. Candidates also experimented with various media to explore the effect of candle light on surfaces and to create shadows. However, some missed the opportunity to explore the works of many other artists who have used reflective light in their paintings, to inspire the development and progress of their experiments and ideas. Other candidates at this level used candles effectively to reflect light onto portraiture in order to create atmosphere in their work. There were inconsistencies in the technical skills and in the rendering of materials in the middle range submissions and sometimes the final outcome could be unfulfilled, where the promise in the candidate's use of materials and ideas seen in the preparatory work was less successful.

Candidates at the **lower** level demonstrated little imaginative or personal qualities and a limited collection of research, recording and development. The imagery they produced was inspired by secondary and some first-hand source material. Where candidates were trying to create the dramatic effect of light reflected onto the face, it was clear that their understanding of the light source to create an accurate interpretation was limited, suggesting that this imagery had either been derived from the imagination or the Internet. Technical skills were weak and final outcomes tended to be incohesive and unfulfilled.

Section C

Question 12

Responses to the '**The Art Company bag**' were mainly located at the **lower** to **middle** of the mark range with only a few at the **higher** level.

The best work had been well researched, illustrating the candidate's inspiration and source material through photography or drawing. These submissions demonstrated the candidate's consideration to the design of the bag and how it would work as a three dimensional form, as well as the overall aesthetic appearance of text and logo working together as a design. There was much evidence of exploration of design development, considering alternative combinations of text with image and colour, as well as evidence of the candidate's understanding of the commercial importance of the bag, through consideration of design and construction. However, it was disappointing that few candidates had made the bag, which would have been beneficial in demonstrating how the designs would work on a three dimensional form. Sometimes the design tended to

take the form of a larger version of the business card and merely attached to the side of a drawing of a bag, rather than exploring the possibilities of alternative ideas.

Work in the **lower** levels was often limited in direction and demonstrated less observational recording or development of ideas. There was little production, if at all any, of alternative designs. Designs tended to be conventional in concept and lacked creativity or individuality. The candidates who developed ideas from original sketches or drawings usually produced the most original designs. The manipulation of media was limited which sometimes hindered the communication of ideas within the final form.

Question 13

'Health and safety poster' this was not a popular starting point and received only a few responses. This question attracted candidates from the **lowest** and **middle** mark range and a few at the **higher** level.

The submissions at the **higher** ability range contained much research from first-hand sources in the form of studies, the investigation of Health and Safety in the work place and also contextual referencing of poster design. There was much exploration of alternative ideas with image and layout, but one end result tended to be cluttered and would have benefited from more editing of the elements to be used for a clearer communication of the final design.

Some of the work in the **middle** mark range used first-hand sources to gain inspiration. One response at this level illustrated the recorded images of a friend, produced using photography, posing in various positions which symbolised health and safety issues. The photographs were then used to make further drawings, which were appropriately simplified for the design and construction of the poster.

Many of the responses were located at the **lower** level and some basic and simple outcomes were apparent. There was much reliance on Internet images which were used for the research of figures, or digitally manipulated derivative designs based on existing similar designs. There was a general lack of research and experimentation of ideas and processes. Some submissions had presented their final outcome, but had little or no supporting work to provide evidence of investigation, ideas or design. In the photography work at this level where images had been manipulated in Photoshop, it was unclear as to whether the original image was the candidate's own work.

Question 14

'Wallpaper for florist's shop and van...' this starting point attracted responses from candidates in the **lower** and **middle** areas of the ability range, with only a few located at the **higher** level.

The **stronger** work included some evidence of observation from first-hand studies in the form of drawings and paintings from flowers and plants as the starting point for the design process. Candidates had experimented with media and explored alternative design layouts and various colour ways, which sometimes resulted in either screen printed samples or paper designs. At this level of ability the execution of designs was confident, demonstrating some understanding of how to construct a repeat pattern, with the best examples giving much consideration of the placement of their designs onto the van's three dimensional surface. Sometimes candidates could include a three dimensional design of a florist's interior to illustrate how the selected wallpaper design would appear in situ.

The candidates at the **lower** level demonstrated little research from first-hand sources, with much reliance on secondary images. There was very little evidence of coherent research, with designs lacking development work and not demonstrating the process of constructing a design. There was little evidence that the candidates at this level had understood the construction process of a repeat pattern and how the motifs in the design could be linked together to form continuity in a pattern. Designs at this level tended to be obvious or sometimes the repeat of existing dress designs.

Question 15

'Typography, designs for male and female costumes...' this was not a popular question, with the few responses located in the **lower** and **middle** of the mark range. Often the responses seen for this starting point, at these levels, tended to lack research in the form of first-hand studies or the exploration of relevant fashion/costume designers as inspiration for ideas.

The **best** work displayed some successful manipulation of lettering in the formation of garment design, illustrating some clever design structures, through the exploration of a wide range of materials, in executing

their ideas towards an appropriate final form. There was evidence of digital manipulation to produce a design, but although interesting, was not supported by informative research.

The **lower** level work was less adventurous when exploring shapes and structures to form a garment design and merely used the letter shapes to form some obvious surface patterns to fill in, rather than using the typography to create new forms. Technical skills were weak which hindered the communication of intended ideas. Other work at this level contained limited research, resulting in a predictable final outcome.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/02
Coursework A

General Comments

Painting and Related Media was the most popular Area of Study. There were only a few Centres offering discrete courses in other areas of study, although there were instances where a few candidates within a Centre would choose to enter work from other areas; the most popular was photography.

Although approaches vary enormously, most Centres understand the different emphasis between the two coursework components. The best have a structured course in which there is an understanding that an interest in exploration and experimentation is valued for its own sake. There was evidence that candidates had experienced using a variety of media and processes to manipulate images largely collected from first-hand observation, this had provided a body of information from which to develop fresh new ideas. There was evidence that candidates had been encouraged take risks and make mistakes; it is only through such experiences that they develop the ability to evaluate their own work in progress.

Exposure to the work of other artists, designers or cultures was also seen as an important part of many of the better investigations in the search for new ideas. There was evidence of visits to museums and galleries so that candidates could appreciate the value of seeing works first-hand and of motivating an interest for future investigations relevant to Component 4: Personal Study.

Where there was evidence of all these activities taking place then candidates had access to the entire syllabus Assessment Objectives and their performance could accurately be rewarded with some justifiable marks at the very top of the mark range.

Unfortunately the majority of submissions were rather mediocre. The work was much narrower in the range of research and exploration undertaken, with more emphasis placed on producing finished pieces. In some cases the same subject had been repeated in different media such as watercolour, acrylic and pencil. The use of secondary source material was quite common and skills in producing safe, competent copies of such imagery were considered of more value than the ability to conduct experiments and to develop personal ideas.

There were a few instances where supporting work had been minimal and almost perfunctory, with a few poorly drawn sketches, or perhaps some secondary images that had been the sole research. Some candidates managed to submit only one, slight, piece of work with no supporting work at all, completely disregarding the syllabus requirements.

On the other hand, there were portfolios seen that had well over the required maximum number of sheets submitted, these including unnecessarily extensive written explanations which did nothing to inform or impress. It is helpful if some work is annotated to inform of sources or of reasons for decision making, but it should be relevant and precise. The visual studies should convey the research undertaken.

Clearly a great deal of care had been when it came to the presentation of work, but where there was fussy decoration and unnecessary use of spray paint (except of course where spray painting techniques are a genuine part of the experimentation and use of processes) used to fill empty spaces, this did nothing to support the quality of work seen in relation to the assessment objectives. A few submissions were stuck on extremely heavy card, again unnecessary and it just made handling of the work difficult.

Most Centres complied with the requirements of the syllabus and produced well-presented work mounted on neutral coloured thin card, well labelled and coherently organised to convey the artistic journeys of the candidates but care must be taken especially with adhering pieces of work especially collages and photographs, to make sure they don't come unstuck.

Teacher assessments were varied. In some cases the syllabus guidelines and criteria had been consulted and used with sensitivity in marking their candidates' work and no changes were required. In most cases the marking was too generous at all achievement levels. On many occasions teachers had only used a very narrow range of marks, often placing several candidates of varying ability on the same mark.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

This area of study was by far the most popular with work undertaken in a wide variety of media. Many of the more successful candidates tested out the possibilities of the media with serious intent, in order to decide which media to use for more effective expression of their ideas. Candidates in the lower achievement levels simply tried out a few alternatives as an afterthought.

The best work resulted from extensive drawing and research from first-hand with photography as an aid. There was some creative use of mixed media this year; paper creased, torn, folded, printed and sprayed textures and papier mache. Colour had been used in atmospheric and expressive ways. They had studied other artists' use of colour and paint quality by doing actual samples, not just including a few downloaded prints and some notes.

The majority of the work seen in the lowest achievement levels showed drawings in pencil, coloured pencil or with marker pens. The least successful were often copied or traced from magazines or downloaded images. Those candidates who merely copied from photographs, however proficiently, did not achieve the expressive outcomes possible from a more creative/experimental approach. It was apparent that in some Centres the methods of working had acted as a constraint rather than an opening up of possibilities, this was very apparent when all the work from the same Centre had all been developed to the same formula (posterisation from photographs for example). Sadly this made the development and recognition of any possible personal qualities very limited.

Portraiture was very popular as a subject matter possibly because of the increasing popularity of 'selfies'. The best responses aimed at conveying more than a likeness by attempting to convey mood, feelings, social conditions and so on but some examples just ended up as very 'flat' albeit with carefully drawn eyes, eyelashes and lips (usually from photographs of fashion models) but with little attempt to convey the form of the head and no vitality in the use of colour or line or tone.

Other traditional subject matter were also seen, especially still-life and landscape. Many of these whilst showing increasing technical skill and control displayed little evidence of personal creative development. Usually when a candidate had looked at the work of relevant artists they were able to make the leap from the mundane to the artistic.

Some beautifully ethereal imaginary work, based on apparitions, or fantasy creatures were seen, as were some submissions that explored the boundary between costume design and painting.

Photography

This was the second most popular area of study and submissions covered a wide range of approaches and all ability levels. A few Centres are using this area to enter all their candidates; others are submitting just a selection that show an interest and aptitude to explore the subject further than just using photography as part of their painting or design work.

The best work had final pieces which clearly reflected an aesthetic awareness and were technically proficient. Candidates had gathered a variety of sources and used effective computer manipulation techniques and processes to enhance their themes. Excellent links to other artists were seen. Some candidates had also included analogue photography as a process.

There was much use of macro photography but it was generally out of focus due to a lack of technical understanding and the appropriate use of lenses.

Mid-range submissions had chosen individual themes but there was insufficient exploration of these subjects at the start of the project. There are still very few candidates who explore with a camera, shooting from different angles and viewpoints. There are still far too many examples of shots taken by candidates standing and viewing their subject from a 45 degree angle.

Many seemed to have a preconceived idea of what they wanted to achieve, usually based on researching another photographer's image from the internet and simply attempting to replicate it by setting up their own photo shoot and using a digital process.

Work seen at the low achievement levels had often produced a small collection of final images with little evidence of consideration to alternative locations, composition or technical awareness. No contact or thumbnail sheets were seen and few experimented with unusual views, lighting or composition. The use of Photoshop was also limited and usually only involved simple effects or changes of colour.

Graphic Design

The majority of submissions had made use of contemporary IT processes. The best submissions had used first hand observations including drawing and photography, and ideas had been explored effectively and developed into designs demonstrating excellent aesthetic choices. These had evidence of a deeper understanding of design principles. In some cases story boards were developed to show consideration of alternative compositions and colour ways. Effective links to existing contemporary designs were also included to inform personal development.

Less successful submissions were generally less strong in Aesthetic Qualities. Whatever skills levels they had reached, the source of their ideas were only coming from being exposed to a very average commercially produced examples. Sometimes quite competent levels of ability were spoilt by muddled designs incorporating too many ideas.

Weaker work tended to be presented without adequate selection and aesthetic considerations. Some were just a very repetitive set of logos or typefaces. Sometimes adjustments were made at the touch of a button on a computer and little selection or development had taken place, just a series of alternatives presented.

Sources were rarely shown and little reference was made to the work of other designers. Knowledge and critical understanding as well as aesthetic choices were mostly at a very mediocre level.

Fashion and Textile Design

Although the most successful fashion design submissions had used obvious starting points: nature, birds, fish, animals, the seasons, they had all developed designs through experiments with media and materials. There were references to other designers or other cultures. Fabric swatches and alternative colour schemes were included. Final fashion illustrations were sometimes developed from figure drawings made from fellow class mates and designs were shown from the front and rear views.

Weaker submissions were no more than a small series of fashion drawings copied from secondary sources. Starting points and the development of original ideas were missing. Many had included scrapbook resource sheets which were of little use in formulating original designs and were mainly space fillers.

The best textile work demonstrated highly skilful batiks, screen prints and silk painting which had subsequently been made into final pieces. Photography had been used effectively to record making processes, excellent links had been made to the work of others, and exploration of ideas and designs were a coherent part of the creative process.

Drawing was seen as an essential part of the process. Many had included their drawings with collage, free stitching, embroidery and other processes on a wide range of textured materials to develop original ideas for hangings, garments, soft sculptures and multi-media final pieces.

The weakest submissions were very thin with hardly any evidence of research or development. Submissions were based upon technical exercises with little understanding of aesthetic awareness.

3D Design and Sculpture

Very few submissions were received. All candidates submitting sculptures included very good photographs of their work and sometimes of the work in progress. A few demonstrated an outstanding

knowledge of contemporary sculpture and were able to realise mature concepts through highly skilled manipulation of a range of materials. These were always supported by excellent drawing skills.

However, most were in the lower ability range. Topics showed very little research and investigation with no evidence of the exploration of materials to be used. Making skills were only of an adequate standard.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/03

Coursework B

General Comments

The emphasis of this component had been well understood by the majority of candidates with responses that indicated engagement and enthusiasm. It was clear that they had enjoyed the opportunity of developing work towards a finished outcome, and the best were ambitious both in scale and complexity of ideas. These candidates showed that they had gained confidence from the experience they had received from their studies for Component 2. Themes and ideas had been thoroughly researched and the influences of researching how other artists and designers have approached similar themes and their working processes could be clearly seen. Sketch books, at their best were full to bursting with drawings, studies, experiments, collages, testing out of ideas, visual references; in fact like mini laboratories of visual experimentation, and of immense help in gaining an insight into the candidates' interests. Many large scale outcomes were seen, submitted as high quality photographic prints. Some indication of scale was included sometimes by including the artist posed next to the work.

Mid-level work was characterised by limited or poor research. Too much emphasis was placed on producing a number of finished pieces rather than focusing upon an in-depth exploration of a chosen topic, before then developing an idea through to a conclusion. Sketchbooks at this level usually consisted of a few unrelated pencil studies, many appeared to have come from earlier exercises and had been cut and pasted in.

Many of the comments on the report for Component 2 are equally relevant to this component.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

Work at the highest level demonstrated a clear journey showing intent, judgement and aesthetic awareness. Starting points were conceptual or visual, and developed initially with thorough observational studies from which the candidate could select and develop their ideas with considered reference to the work of other relevant artists and/or cultures and then a combination of control and risk taking with media.

Portraiture was an increasingly popular subject matter, however the best were able to take the subject further than a simple likeness, but through distortion of various kinds (either in terms of changing the artistic style within the image or with more surreal variations) candidates were able to reach very creative outcomes. It was interesting to see an increase in the portrayal of the role of women in society with some very powerful attempts to convey abuse and repression of females and the representation of women in the media, as well as the more conventional and accessible nurturing aspects of motherhood.

Some candidates pursued a variety of areas of study in their projects. One candidate in particular stands out as work of the very highest level with their submission that consisted of large photographs beautifully lit via the candidates own LED light circuits, of layers of intricately cut paper giving a contemporary take of an ancient legend and also of traditional techniques. The work was supported by prints (lino cuts that had the intricacy and finesse of Japanese wood cuts), beautiful ink and wash drawings and paintings as well as further paper cut work of the most impressive and outstanding degree of mastery and control. Reference had been made to the narrative prints of the Ukiyoe masters of Japan and this had informed the work. The achievement of this candidate was truly remarkable and it was a privilege to be able to view it.

Mid-range work displayed plenty of evidence of very good technical skills. Sometimes too much had been attempted in one piece and the work lacked an aesthetic refinement. This was particularly true when mixed media was used; trying to integrate relief techniques into paintings, or combining collage with drawing without much idea as to why or what they were trying to achieve. Other candidates produced submissions containing several pieces of finished work to a good standard, but had not indicated the most interesting or aesthetically pleasing design for the final outcome.

Sadly there were some extremely poor submissions demonstrating very limited skills and knowledge and unable to meet any of the assessment objectives beyond the very lowest mark level.

Photography

The strongest candidates demonstrated a highly sophisticated conceptual vision and demonstrated expertise and creativity in use of digital applications to enhance the image in a relevant way. One candidate collaged their images, superimposing layers of photography and painting in very effective ways and with excellent aesthetic understanding. They had all been informed by referencing the work of other established photographers. The quality of presentations was also of an excellent standard.

Again as with component 2, weaker candidates' work had little impact or selectivity. Whilst submissions tended to be technically competent they lacked any personal or creative individuality, for example a series of coloured still life photographs with little thought given to different effects of lighting or viewpoint.

The weakest work was little more than snapshots with no evidence of intelligent investigation or creativity. Final prints were of very poor quality.

Graphic Design

The strongest submissions had worked to clear design briefs and had considered how their final designs could be used in a number of related contexts such as logos, packages, posters, and web-page designs. Ideas were thoroughly explored using their own excellent photographic references, computer derived and hand produced lettering, drawing and some innovative printmaking.

There were many far less successful submissions with simplistic images and typography, or copied cartoon imagery straight from the internet. The relationship between text and image lacked thought and there were few experiments with different colour ways. Many were very thin submissions and not really focused, sustained coursework projects.

Fashion and Textile Design

Some very inventive fashion presentations were seen based on Chinese calligraphy; bird plumage; designs developed from architecture and playing cards. They were well researched and developed with fabric samples and alternative designs. Final designs were developed into sportswear, evening dresses, children's wear and avant-garde designs of great imagination. Some had extended the work into made up garments with lots of photographs of the finished garments being worn.

Work seen in the lower levels of achievement demonstrated lively and inventive fashion illustrations but there was little evidence of the sources of these designs or of any understanding of design development. There were few experiments with colour or materials and very few had included colour fabric swatches.

Those exploring textile processes experimented with a good range of materials with designs developed from first hand observations. Some innovative samples were developed using burning, dying, weaving and free machine embroidery. Sketchbooks were very comprehensive and full of additional ideas and experiments.

Weaker candidates had produced simple tie and dyed, block printed or appliquéd pieces which demonstrated poor craft skills and design development.

3D Design and Sculpture

Very few submissions were received, but generally they demonstrated very good craft skills in realising quite individual and imaginative ideas. Good photographs of the finished pieces as well as work in progress accompanied evidence of research and exploration.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/04
Personal Study

General Comments

The very best submissions reached the highest levels of attainment and the vast majority of these had made full use of the outline proposal form (OPF). Completing an OPF before the start of the Personal Study had enabled these candidates to effectively plan a suitable structure for their study, indicating vital sources from which to carry out essential first hand research. Candidates often gained valuable experience of their chosen subject through direct contact with an artist, designer and sometimes an architect. It was good to see teachers making supportive and advisory comments on the OPFs; there really is no good reason not to take advantage of this service as it clearly benefitted submissions where advice had been sought. Many of the submissions at the lower levels of achievement had not submitted an OPF and all too often chosen to investigate unsuitable topics with limited or no first-hand sources evident.

There are still some Centres where they consider information down-loaded from the internet as first-hand study. Whilst information gleaned from the internet is very relevant and helpful when used to support and inform visits to galleries and the artist's studio, it is not first-hand experience. First-hand experience is where the candidate has been to a gallery or studio in person. There was a wide range of topics that were chosen with more thematic approaches seen, such as 'dance', 'the sea', 'street vendors', 'urban landscape'. These studies were only successful when they had been related to practitioners with visual connections being made. Where a candidate identified their choice of study as 'dance, for example, then they were only successful where the candidate had made explicit references to particular chosen works of art relevant to dance. The very best responses were where candidates had chosen topics that was personal to them and where they made links to their own practical responses.

Many very creative and individual responses were seen which had benefitted from the first-hand experience of visiting different artists and exhibitions, clearly informing and influencing the studies at this high level of achievement. The presentation of the visual and written material was appropriate and often very inventive. There was a greater inclusion of a variety of media used in presentations at this level and candidates often combined their own photographs with drawings and paintings. The visual material was very personal and highly impressive, reflecting the style of the chosen artists as well as developing an aspect of the theme. At this level there was a strong sense of sustained development throughout the study, from the initial ideas, leading to a conclusion that showed a real sense of understanding and awareness of the theme. Candidates within the mid achievement levels had often selected topics using local artists, such as festivals, however, the level of personal engagement was more limited and opportunities for discussion and dialogue with the selected artists were often missed. At the lower levels of attainment, candidates often interviewed their artist without considering the questions more carefully and had presented the text without any analysis. At this level, the reliance on second hand source material was evident. Interviewing an artist via email can be very informative but candidates should carefully consider their questions to allow for an understanding of the artist's work rather than just resulting in a record of biographical details.

At the higher levels of achievement, candidates had used media, techniques and processes to engage with some excellent skills. One outstanding example was a study on illustration where the visual presentation reflected the work of the chosen artists through a highly personal interpretation of the work. There is an increase in the use of IT technology to present the work in a very professional way and one that can capture the often transient nature of contemporary installations and works in fragile materials. At this level candidates often used very complex and interesting comparisons to demonstrate their understanding of the selected works, through an imaginative and perceptive combination of text and visual material.

Within the lower to mid-bands, the presentation and selection of material was more limited and a few candidates had included material that was not relevant to their chosen topic. At this level an interview was often included as a means to show some analysis, but usually just provided some biographical details and/or descriptions of works of art. Some submissions focused on the process and techniques involved with producing works of art without any discussion of those examples. The strongest of these had achieved a

more personal response through direct contact with a local artist/artisan, although not exploiting the potential for further analysis.

Many outstanding examples were seen at the higher levels of achievement, in which candidates revealed a full understanding and awareness of the artists they were investigating through some very imaginative and inventive presentations of the study.

Increasingly IT was used to show an understanding through the presentation; layering and contrasting images together, making strong visual comparisons combined with relevant text. Several A4 spiral bound submissions displayed those qualities. At best, the use of IT was creative and visually stimulating; often combined with the candidate's own visual studies to create a more personal response. At the highest levels the studies often included art work that revealed high levels of skills and the outcomes were very impressive. Some candidates had explored a particular technique, such as hand printed textiles using carved wooden blocks. This had informed some of the candidate's own experiments with the researched process, and demonstrated a high level of understanding.

Some excellent studies also included very high quality photographs, either of candidates own work or as an Artwork which had clearly been informed and inspired by previous relevant first- hand experience. The use of photography where candidates had investigated architecture provided opportunities for some excellent and personal work. Some exceptional studies were seen which contained very imaginative and well informed visual explorations interwoven with extremely perceptive and individual critical analysis, all presented in hand-made and spiral bound A3 books.

Many submissions found to be at the lower levels of attainment lacked a coherent development of ideas, often totally relying on the internet as a second hand source for information.

Several excellent submissions demonstrated an impressive ability to analyse, and evaluate the chosen subject as well as clearly communicating personal views and judgements, cultural awareness and understanding. Some of these submissions contained very sensitive and engaged practical and material based responses which displayed an extremely high level of knowledge and perception gained through in depth and searching first- hand research and experience of selected key works. An outstanding example of this was a study on the works of Jenny Saville which had led to some extremely personal and sensitive visual responses.

Within the mid- to upper levels of achievement, candidates had begun to develop more personal views supported by their research and were able to reflect this in evaluations made of their work and that of the artists selected. The research led the direction of the study and therefore had more relevance. Combined with some more careful planning and a wider range of references, candidates were able to discuss the themes and questions relevant to their intentions.

At the lower levels of achievement, candidates had included material which revealed a much more limited approach to selecting and interpreting information. Weaker submissions only contained evidence of material taken from the internet. Stronger studies within this level often contained an interview by email and the material was organised into sections with the research consisting of secondary material which was more descriptive than analytical.