

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/01
Controlled Test

General comments

This year's question paper provided scope for a very wide range of interpretations across all media and in general candidates responded positively with many different media being used to explore an impressive range of ideas. There was a slight rise in the inclusion of observational work/studies.

Candidates who relied initially on direct observation and personal photography for their gathering and research, generally managed to develop more ideas and experiment with a variety of media before making decisions about a final outcome.

The best entries were usually distinguished by sensitive and perceptive drawing. Sustained observational drawing from both primary and secondary sources contributed to these submissions. In weaker work an emphasis on secondary rather than primary sources tended to compromise the quality and interest of outcomes and preparatory work.

In this session the use of Photoshop and other such graphics tools was fairly good and candidates were often able to integrate its more sophisticated features as well as the simpler cut and paste or filter features.

One issue that was frequently seen was the use of relief in photographic submissions. The majority of these cases included relief work that was driven not by any thematic, conceptual or even experimental motivations. The reason for the inclusion of this kind of work appeared to be purely aesthetic in an attempt to sharpen an edge or create a sense of depth. Unfortunately this often simply highlighted the inability of these candidates to use their given medium at its strongest.

Artist reference was an area which often required more focus with many candidates lacking an awareness of how to use these references. In many cases artist references appeared to have been added after the majority of preparatory work had been carried out, which did not help the candidate to develop their ideas and to show progression. Some references to artists showed little or no connection to the submission. Very few submissions included any artist references that became a significant part of the development of work. A few of the candidates included photographs of their chosen artists without any further visual references to their work.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1: Tied up

This was a fairly popular question with a wide range of subject matter.

The strongest submissions were imaginative in terms of their choice of focus and the emotional landscapes being explored. The observational drawing seen in the non-photographic submissions was much more in depth than those at the lower levels and also showed more range in terms of compositional possibilities and a greater willingness to use a variety of media.

Work in the mid-level of achievement was often less strong in terms of observational drawing and skill in handling media. In addition, there was a noticeable lack of imaginative or playful qualities – something essential to the aspect of development. This lack of risk taking with the theme, the media being used, and composition held these candidates back. In many of these submissions candidates appeared to rely on tried and tested skills, or consolidated what they had. These submissions did not always demonstrate a creative

journey. There was very little by way of artist references in submissions at the mid-level. Media use was fairly limited, although what there was, was quite skilfully handled in some submissions.

In weaker submissions candidates usually focused on a single figure that was bound which obviously made figure drawing and observational studies important. Most of these studies were honest, straight forward attempts, but they did little to really understand bodily form and the more demanding aspects of figure drawing such as the joints, hands and feet and facial features. Other than the lack of sophistication and depth in these studies, there were further weaknesses. In general there was very little in terms of media exploration. Candidates on the whole chose one medium and did not explore that one in any particular depth. The preparatory work was fairly thin and repetitive, without much in the way of clear development. The primary sources seen included some first-hand photography with some observational drawing. The quality of these sources was generally not strong and the photography was dimly lit and often out of focus. The sense of composition in these submission was basic, and often appeared to be random.

Question 2: Queuing

In stronger submissions for this question observational skills were often strong, as was the control of the medium although it was frequently little limited in its range. Submissions often had a sense of composition. Artist references were seen but were relevant and used intelligently in reference to the development of the candidates' work.

In weaker submissions there was often some fairly good figure work seen which was generally taken from photography. Work showed some expressive qualities. The control of medium was reasonable here, but was often limited in its expressive range. At this level there was often a lack of development and experimentation. There were usually no artist references, or any material which could have given a greater breadth and richness to the work.

Question 3: Surprised

Stronger submissions for this question were often colourful and vibrant and were very individual. However they sometimes lacked a sense of depth and intensity in research and development. There was often a lack of open ended and experimental work. There was little in the way of artist references, although the influence of pop art was in evidence in many works.

At lower levels, the question was approached in a very straightforward way with some very literal submissions. In many cases work showed a lack of real development in the preparatory studies. Often no alternative routes were considered and there were no experiments for different compositional possibilities. Control of media seemed to be more important than expressive or experimental approaches in these submissions.

Question 4: Construct/deconstruct

At the high level of achievement there were several submissions which had very individual approaches. Some of these showed successful experimental and developmental work in the preparatory studies. Candidates had made good use of artist reference to inform their work and showed good control of their chosen medium.

The themes of architecture and destruction were common at the mid-level of achievement. While some of these were of buildings and natural forms, others were individual and distinctive. These candidates often produced sensitive preparatory work which informed the final work. There were some photographic submissions which accentuated the abstract qualities of architecture. These submissions were generally fairly sophisticated in their outlook – focusing more on structure and composition, rather than just breaking things up. There was overall some development and experiment with these pieces, although the range of media accessed was relatively narrow.

The weakest submissions were generally very basic in their approach to the subject matter, which typically consisted of various objects being smashed up. The preparatory work on the whole did not include anything beyond the images found in the final piece. The handling of media was unsophisticated and was fairly poorly controlled. Furthermore, the range of media was often limited to pencil and paint. Occasionally the final image showed little connection with the preceding imagery.

Question 5: Resplendent

At the higher level while there were some strong works, often these could have been enhanced further with more evidence of the development of an idea rather than the production of a final idea. In these works there was sometimes a lack of sense of progression. Usually candidates showed a strong grasp of their chosen medium but on occasions it would have been beneficial for them to have either pushed this medium into an area which was more open ended and uncertain or to have taken up an alternative and less safe medium.

There were a number of submissions that used photography at the mid-level which were full of colour. There was a reasonable sense of development here with various compositional try outs but there was a still a relative lack of subtlety. Colour dominated everything and tonal depth and range wasn't a big feature of these pieces. There was plenty of material in these submissions but partly due to the overwhelming nature of the colour, the overall effect was essentially very even.

Weaker submissions often looked at birds or butterflies for subject matter. While these pieces in general had a strong sense of engagement, the aesthetic sensibilities of these candidates seemed to lack any subtlety. The media used for this question typically consisted of felt tip pens, glitter and paint.

Question 6: Opposites

The strongest submissions for this question consisted of solid work from candidates who were obviously highly engaged in the development of their work. Often the preparatory work included quite a few experimental images which were then developed towards the final outcome.

Work at mid-levels usually displayed a strong sense of contrast regarding the opposition being looked at. These candidates typically took one subject and examined it in a variety of ways/viewpoints and used either a broad range of media or pushed a limited range to an interesting point.

Work at the lower levels often showed no clear interpretation of opposition and the preparatory work was similarly unclear and unfocused. There was very little primary source material and what there was, was of a low quality – poorly lit or unfocused photography, brief sketches made with media that weren't particularly suitable.

Section B

Question 7: Make up bag

At the higher level there were a few submissions with a diverse range of experimental studies from various aspects, compositions and eye levels, some of which gave a monumental feel to the group of objects. Perspective was used to a high standard in many works.

Work in the mid-level of achievement often showed a fairly good handling of media, a dynamic sense of composition and some sensitive observational skills. However, there was often a noticeable lack of references, especially other artists' work. From the developmental point of view, many of these submissions were rather static. No signs of a journey, a developing narrative or progress were seen.

The weakest submissions usually consisted of fairly simplistic studies from life. The preparatory work was generally made up of little studies of individual elements of the final piece (lipstick, mascara etc.). This final image was generally a combination of these elements in a composition that was relatively flat. The understanding of form was very basic, as was the handling of the media involved. This was usually limited to one medium – generally coloured pencil. Candidates would have benefited from grouping objects together and experimenting with different viewpoints and compositions as well as from using a range of media. There were no artist references of any sort and the research that there was, was limited to photographs/adverts from magazines.

Question 8: Preparing a fruit salad



The most common approach to this question was to photograph lots of fruit preparation and then make drawings and paintings from these sources. Candidates would have benefited from working from the items first-hand. Most candidates responding to this question chose to use a lot of colour, mainly acrylic.

In stronger submissions there was evidence of work which was supported by consistent preparatory work exploring a number of media and different compositions. Some work at this level included contrasting elements which were successful.

Some of the submissions at the mid-level were fairly broad in their use of media and explored a few alternative compositions, but there was a lack of real experiment and exploration. Some submissions included some good preparatory work, but there were inconsistencies in the outcomes.

At the lower end there was often much more gathering of imagery than there was development and experiment. While there were often lots of pictures in these submissions, these were not used effectively to develop the final outcome. There were sometimes one or two artist references but they were not used in any meaningful way to inform the work.

Question 9: A person fastening a shirt button

There were some strong responses seen for this question. Submissions often contained a great sense of open ended exploration and development and there were some submissions with a very sophisticated grasp of the subtleties of composition.

At the mid-level of achievement there were some strong submissions. The observational work was in general of a high quality. The media used were handled with a good degree of control and there was often a strong sense of expression as well. While artist references were not commonly seen, they were usually highly relevant when they were present and were used in a way which helped the candidates to progress. Furthermore, the primary source material (photographs and drawings) were to the point, were usually well executed and were used relevantly.

Most of the weaker submissions tried to avoid the difficulties and challenges of figure drawing by making different approaches but these were often unsuccessful. There was usually little understanding of the design process, research or development, which resulted in weak outcomes. None of the lower level submissions looked at any established figurative artists' work.

Question 10: A sink or large bowl full of mugs, plates, saucepans and cutlery

At the top end of the assessment scale works were lively and were based on strong research and preparatory studies. Other aspects of the kitchen surroundings had been considered and there were often elements of text apparent here as well. Research was often impressive not only in terms of its relevance but in the way it was integrated into the development of the final piece.

At the mid-level there was some very sensitive and strongly investigative drawing, alongside an open ended and probing use of media. Candidates at this level showed an understanding of the potential of the items chosen and made lots of alternative compositional studies and changed the viewpoint.

At the lower levels candidates managed to depict their collection of crockery etc. in a way that was fairly basic. Compositions were usually flat, often containing strange contortions of natural perspective. The use of media was probably the weakest element for the majority of these candidates, typically showing a lack of control, inexpressive mark making and in general poor decision making. There was very little artist references or material outside the primary source drawings and photographs. Colour use and tonal work were both equally unsophisticated.

Question 11: People in glasshouses

There were very few submissions for this question. Submissions that were seen were generally in the mid-level of assessment. There were some thoughtful submissions concerning the impact of words on people suffering from health issues. Often although the preparatory work was strong the final outcomes were not fully resolved.

Section C

Question 12: Nearfar Logistics

In nearly all submissions for this question there was a lack of development. The final idea had been arrived at early on in the process and the majority of the preparatory work was just a repetition of this idea. Many submissions focused on simple, text based graphics. The idea of 'Nearfar' appeared to be ignored or largely unexplored.

There was very rarely any initial drawn images from direct observation. Digital images appeared in many preparatory works without any references as to where they had come from. There was often very little annotation explaining any decision making or reasons why certain images had been chosen. Whilst the submissions appeared slick and well presented, they mainly lacked parts of the design process that are crucial to a strong outcome. The media used were generally limited; usually digital, pencil and pen. What experimentation there was, was kept to minimal changes to the text or graphics.

Question 13: Fruit juice containers

In this question candidates generally seemed to enjoy using a wide selection of materials and a range of mark making and expressive use of various materials was seen. Alongside this greater use of media was some evidence of development. While on the whole this was still fairly limited in its scope, there was some connection between the candidate and the preparatory work. Primary sources tended to be simple observational drawings and the occasional photograph and there were few, if any, artist references. The use of text was problematic with most of these submissions. Typically, it was too small and poorly placed and treated as a secondary addition, rather than as part of the overall image.

At the lower level, there were some submissions which were purely digital and contained no primary drawings or information as to where images had been sourced. Often there was no relationship between the shape, colours or typography of the three bottles, and rarely was there any experimentation with typography and the relationship between type and image.

Question 14: Street carnival outfits

The stronger submissions took inspiration from nature and carnivals to design and make the outfits. In some cases the final outcome was stronger than the developmental work which could have shown more of the process.

At the mid-level of achievement there were submissions which while not particularly sophisticated, were full of ideas, experiments and source material. However these often lacked cohesive development and evidence of real progression. Submissions at this level often did not include any artist references.

Weaker submissions for this question sometimes consisted of little more than the final outcome with no evidence of preparatory work which limited the credit that could be awarded. In some cases the final outcome was good but without evidence of development, primary sources and artist reference the submission was limited.

Question 15: Music shop flooring

Most submissions for the question fell within the middle or lower levels of achievement. The stronger works often used the design of instruments to inform the look of the final piece. There was some variety of media and mark making processes seen. Sources and references were limited to observational drawing however and more evidence of artist influences/references would have been beneficial to these works.

Weaker submissions often contained a relatively strong idea but these were then not fully developed and lacked references and sources. Any experimentation was limited to the main idea.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/02
Coursework A

General comments

The most popular area of study was Painting and Related Media, with some examples of Printmaking. Another area of study which had several entries was Photography which included digital manipulation. There were few 3D, Graphic and Fashion Design submissions.

Candidates had generally identified individual themes for investigation and a wide range of topics was seen. Almost all candidates submitted collections of finished pieces or whole class exercises, and focused on the development of ideas.

The most successful entries were sustained, sensitive and personal and candidates had selected individual themes to investigate at an early point in their course. Closely observed first-hand studies which often included the candidates' own photography supported technical experimentation that used a range of media. Experimentation was evaluated and informed by substantial research into the work of selected artists. Outcomes were often ambitious, skilful and represented the culmination of a considerable learning experience.

Most submissions were well presented on thin card or substantial paper, securely fastened and clearly labelled. Consideration had been given to layout and annotation, and submissions were organised in a logical sequence to show progression and development of ideas through to the final project. Other candidates did not appear to have been selective enough in the presentation of their experiments, photos, drawings etc., which resulted in the submission of more sheets than required. Candidates would have benefited from editing their work in order to focus on the quality rather than the quantity, as some submissions included very weak or seriously irrelevant work. Some work was poorly presented on thin sheets of coloured card or paper and stapled together, which became detached, creased and torn. Little thought had been given to the layout, and the research sometimes contained much written content instead of practical and visual exploration.

The Centre's application of the assessment criteria was generous, giving an inaccurate assessment of the candidates' skills. Often the order of merit was acceptable but Centres over valued the candidates' technical ability and their ability to experiment with a range of appropriate media and processes to fully explore ideas.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

Portraiture and work from the figure were popular themes along with plant and natural forms. Other candidates had made good use of their own environment to produce work based around urban or rural scenes. Fantasy and comic illustrations were common amongst submissions in the lower ability ranges.

The stronger candidates had worked in a variety of media. They had experimented with collage, mono-print and other printmaking methods, and digitally manipulated some of their own photographs to change shapes and colours. Although not all were highly finished they showed the progress and development of the candidates' ideas.

The majority of submissions fell within the mid-levels of achievement. Some of these submissions demonstrated good technical abilities but the preparatory studies did not show evidence of working from direct observation or the development of original ideas. In other cases work was very personal with creative and exciting ideas, but lacked technical skill. More evidence of working from first-hand observation would have allowed the candidates to develop a better understanding of their chosen theme and could have

encouraged more exciting and thoughtful responses. Exploring the texture, pattern or colour of an object, for example, could have led to some more extensive media experiments, which could have informed the development of ideas. At this level candidates often did not use their artist research much to inform their own work. Where the work of other artists had been investigated it was either used too literally or was not really relevant, with a lack of meaningful connection to the candidates' own work. Some annotation was seen, but this was often descriptive rather than analytical and did little to inform development.

The submissions in the lower mark range lacked focus and were often just a collection of unrelated pieces of coursework. Frequently, the research work consisted of secondary-sourced images such as pictures from magazines, images downloaded from the internet, or completely invented images. There was little evidence of the development of the visual information into any meaningful ideas. The limited exploration of media and the apparent tracing of images meant that rendering skills had not been developed. Consequently, candidates were unable to portray their ideas convincingly.

Graphic Design

The more successful candidates created their own design brief and gathered initial images from direct observation. It was clear to see how ideas had developed, using research into other designers for inspiration on ways to experiment with different media such as paint, printmaking, photography and digital manipulation. These submissions demonstrated a good ability to experiment and explore a range of design options, considering how best to combine text and image and trying out colour combinations. Candidates created logos from initial drawings or photographs and direct links from the initial image to the designs were made. Submissions were personal and creative and demonstrated the ability to explore ideas. Several candidates made prototypes of leaflets, book covers and magazines which demonstrated the ability to experiment with alternative media.

Many candidates selected individual products or companies to explore. However, an excessive number of layouts and ideas were presented from which to produce viable designs which was confusing. There were logos, menus, posters, business cards, packaging, magazine covers, costumes/uniforms, etc. Candidates would have benefited from selecting fewer ideas to then explore in greater depth into a range of coordinated designs.

Pre-existing logos from the internet were presented in the lower level submissions, with limited critical analysis to show that the elements of design were understood or how they could be used to present further ideas. Candidates at this level often presented all of the printouts of their designs in every alternative design permutation and colour, without analysing or annotating what they considered to be the most relevant or successful idea. It was sometimes difficult to know exactly what the candidates' own work was and what had been taken from the internet as the work was not annotated.

Photography

Some excellent photographic submissions were seen at the higher level, where candidates had explored a range of techniques in an inventive way, whilst also employing other media such as cutting and re-assembling, stitching, layering and working into photographs with paint and other media. These submissions displayed a high level of individuality and personal qualities. Where Photoshop was used it was with a degree of sensitivity and relevance rather than dominating an idea. The work of other photographers had been investigated and intelligently informed the development of the candidates' own ideas. The analysis of other photographers' works, and comparisons made with their own work was also evident, through clear critical judgement. The submissions clearly illustrated the candidates' aesthetic awareness and technical proficiency.

In the work of lower level submissions, reference to other photographers' work was often superficial and candidates did not demonstrate an understanding of the concept or technical qualities of the photographs. Annotations were descriptive with little analysis. A lack of exploration of the media and limited awareness of basic elements such as composition, lighting, viewpoints and contrast in the photo-shoots limited these submissions. Candidates were unable to develop their work by exploring different ways of presenting the image or by combining different techniques. There was a heavy reliance of the use of filters and colour adjustments in Photoshop to attempt to develop their own photographs. Some candidates tried to make use of digital manipulation such as by combining images, experimenting with double exposure and altering the opacity of layers to merge images together.

Generally photography candidates had selected interesting subject matter but did not evaluate their first images and reshoot with a more focussed approach to examine and exploit the potentials they had found. Researching the work of appropriate photographers would have helped to inform that approach.

Fashion and Textile Design

Very few submissions were received for either Fashion or Textile Design. There were some candidates who produced silk screen projects. Whilst the initial first-hand studies were powerfully drawn, the final prints were poorly composed with inconsistent repeat patterns and overprinting. There was little evidence that work by other designers had been researched.

The few fashion entries projects began with first-hand studies and photographs and explored themes to create mood boards and well laid out design sheets showing alternative colourways, fabrics swatches and competent fashion drawings. Some were developed into handmade outfits.

3D Design and sculpture

There were very few examples of Sculpture this session. Some photographs of 3D ideas and experiments were presented within the supporting work, but these did not relate to the chosen theme or outcome and instead just demonstrated the exploration of a range of media with little concern for relevance.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/03
Coursework B

General comments

While there were many good projects submitted which were supported by evidence of first-hand research, development, experimentation and cultural reference etc., there were some candidates who submitted a series of competent finished pieces, and did not demonstrate the journey towards these pieces.

Most of the work seen was in the area of Painting and Related Media, with some entries in Photography, digital and lens media and Graphic Design. Candidates mostly used figurative subject matter in their work and popular themes were inspired by emotions and feelings.

There were some excellent examples seen, where candidates had developed their knowledge into well researched projects with a clear conclusion. Some projects were very ambitious resulting in impressive, large scale outcomes or installations.

A small number of candidates used their sketchbook as a working document in which they considered, developed and explored issues arising in their projects. Such sketchbooks were informative and helped to develop personal and ambitious work. However the majority of sketchbooks were not as strong. Many sketchbooks contained little work and showed collections of random drawings with little or no connection with the candidates' projects.

The presentation was generally very good, with work clearly displayed and appropriately labelled. Most candidates had presented their coursework on A1 sheets, with accompanying sketchbooks.

Generally, the Centre's application of the assessment criteria was generously applied, presenting an inaccurate assessment of skills. On the whole the order of merit was acceptable, but Centres had over valued responses across the assessment objectives. Large adjustments were often required to appropriately redress the Centre's assessments.

Comments on areas of study

Painting and Related Media

The strongest submissions were very personal and candidates had used primary source material as their starting points. Ideas were developed through experimentation of materials and clear links were made between artist research and the final outcomes. Popular themes included identity, local environment, architecture and natural forms. These submissions demonstrated a clear journey from initial studies through development and experimentation of media to well considered and informed outcomes. The supporting studies were relevant to the outcomes and the candidates had demonstrated skill in their choice of media.

Submissions that were less successful included supporting studies which were often not related to the final outcome and lacked cohesion. Although separate elements within the work were skilfully painted or drawn, the supporting work did not demonstrate a clear journey to the end piece. Work seen in this middle level either had evidence of good technical skills but without evidence of exploration of ideas and a willingness to experiment with media, or the candidate had gathered images from first-hand observation, developed ideas through experimentation of media but lacked refined and accomplished technical skills. Several candidates presented unfinished final outcomes. Experimentation should be sufficient to enable the candidate to refine ideas, skills and compositions into fully resolved outcomes. More practice in their chosen media, referring to the work of other artists for inspiration, would have benefited these candidates.

Some of the submissions at the lower level often contained very limited, or no evidence of research from

primary sources, exploration of media and techniques, or development of imagery. Ideas had not been thoroughly investigated and consequently the outcomes were incoherent. In other submissions, the candidates sometimes focused more on experimenting with different techniques and superficial background effects and patterns, than on the main subject for research. When the candidates' own photographs had been presented as part of their research, they were either of a better standard than their painted copies, or poor quality which made any reproductions equally poor. Submissions sometimes lacked focus and too many disconnected ideas were presented instead of selecting one idea and exploring it in more depth. The supporting work often contained insufficient planning to lead to a resolved outcome.

Graphic Design

More successful candidates demonstrated an ability to think imaginatively around their chosen theme to gather original and thoughtful images and these led to personal and creative designs. These candidates demonstrated a good ability to refine their work and to make informed decisions as their work progressed. Outcomes were carefully composed and related well to the supporting studies.

Work seen in the mid levels was often personal with original and creative ideas, but these candidates often lacked technical skill. This could have been improved with more experimentation and practice of the chosen media. These submissions relied more on digital manipulation to try out simple colour changes and arrangements of text and image. There was less evidence of genuine understanding of what made a successful design and outcomes were often accidental rather than considered.

Weaker submissions were competent but lacked original ideas. There was often insufficient research at the start of projects. There were few first-hand studies and ideas were derivative. The development of ideas was stronger however and there were some skills in both hand-drawn and digital manipulation.

Photography

There were some excellent and very personal examples of photography this session where candidates had explored their subject matter in depth. All candidates had explored individual themes and produced very inventive, well focused submissions. Themes tended to be similar to those investigated within the painting and related media area of study, with much portraiture and figurative work seen, along with architecture. Digital manipulation processes and Photoshop had been used well and were relevant to intention, and this enhanced ideas.

The strongest candidates used a variety of ways to experiment and develop their work, such as lighting, composition, manipulating the photographs physically by tearing, ripping, burning, drawing stitching and scratching onto them. The work of other photographers was used as inspiration for experimentation and developing ideas. Work was annotated and candidates had used relevant terminology to explain the processes and to demonstrate an understanding of the media. Supporting studies included several photo-shoots that demonstrated the candidates' ability to explore the subject matter fully, from different angles, viewpoints and scale. The progression of ideas was clear, thoughtful and well communicated, leading to resolved outcomes which were mature and innovative.

Photographic submissions in the middle mark range tended to be more straightforward, with some creative ideas and competent manipulative ability, but with less exploration of other approaches. Fewer photo-shoots had been organised and there was therefore less work to select from. Some reference to the work of other photographers was seen, but was less relevant to the candidates' own work at this level. Some aesthetic considerations were incorporated into the work, but on the whole with less success than the better work. Submissions were resolved to a satisfactory level, but lacked clear decision making and planning.

The submissions at the lower end of the mark range tended to contain more snapshot type imagery which were then mainly manipulated in Photoshop. Photoshop effects tended to be overused, with candidates focusing on producing patterns and colour changes, with little purpose or intention. Some evidence of research into the work of other photographers was seen, but often this had no real connection with the candidates' own work. Final images were not fully planned or resolved, due to the lack of exploration in the supporting work.

Textile and Fashion Design

There were a few screen printing submissions that were heavily reliant on secondary sources and prescribed methods of development. Skills were inconsistent and there was no evidence of researching the work of other designers.

Fashion designs were generally successful due to a solid foundation of observational drawings at the start of projects. Sources of inspiration included architecture and other cultural influences. Despite their success, it would still have been beneficial for candidates to research relevant designers to aid the creative process.

3D Design and Sculpture

There were too few entries to comment upon for this area of study.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/04
Personal Study

General comments

The subject areas covered included fine art, sculpture, graphic design, ceramics, architecture, fashion and textile design. The importance of first-hand research and experience of chosen subjects had been emphasised by effective use of proposal forms. This had clearly benefitted many submissions although it was evident that in a number of weaker submissions these forms had not been used. Informative visits to studios, galleries, museums and workshops were in evidence.

Methods of presentation seen varied between hand-made large and small sketchbooks and digitally produced A4 formats. Some submissions consisting of large sheets of card mounted with text and images were seen. A few very individual presentations were submitted.

Visits to exhibitions had been used as a starting point for development of a thematic approach to the study. These had usually provided very good visual sources for exploration. More studies were seen where candidates included their own practical work in response to work seen on these visits. This was more beneficial to the study when it was clearly demonstrated that this work had been informed and influenced by research and experience gained from selected works by chosen artists.

High level

Candidates achieving the higher levels of attainment had all identified appropriate sources from which to research and investigate their chosen topics. Often works by a number of artists were thoroughly investigated and analysed. Most submissions at the higher levels of attainment included related and well informed material based responses. At these levels of achievement candidates had carried out in-depth, comparative analysis which enabled perceptive and personal observations and critical judgements to be made. There were some very well-researched topics which were fluidly translated into strong and related practical outcomes.

The strongest submissions often involved an imaginative integration of visual and written material. The inclusion of candidates' own studies added to the personal approach and revealed confident levels of personal skills in the use of technique and media. Candidates used IT at a level which clearly and creatively presented their ideas. The use of photography was of a high standard and a few candidates used film, recorded on CDs, which revealed a high level of artistic understanding.

Mid level

The submissions seen within the mid-levels of attainment demonstrated attempts to view artworks at first-hand and often included an interview with a local artist or craft-person. These interviews were often conducted through skype or email. The quality of questions constructed for these interviews revealed the level of understanding and awareness which the candidate had for the particular area of study. Candidates had often gathered information about the process and techniques involved with such practices as textiles and sculpture. These submissions often contained discussion of selected works which tended to be more descriptive and contained fewer significant personal observations. Many competent explorations were seen in the mid-levels of attainment which contained evidence of vital first-hand research gained by visits to galleries, artist studios and workshops. These examples often contained thoughtful personal observations supported by evidence of these visits through photographic recording. Candidates had gained personal insights and valuable experience of some of the techniques involved with practices such as architecture, graphics and fashion design.

Many candidates would have benefited from making well-considered selections of key and related works by the chosen practitioners, enabling them to make more in-depth comparative analysis of those examples. This

process would have helped to inform the candidates' own evaluation of the topic through personal observations and vital independent judgements.

Lower level

At this level candidates mainly used secondary research material or sometimes examples of their own coursework as first-hand reference. This demonstrated a clear limitation with the ability to analyse and discuss works from personal experience. The lack of a comparison leading to a conclusion inhibited any development of understanding from the candidate. The presentation itself was often seen to be limited, usually a digital and A4 format. Some hand-made sketchbooks were seen but with weak organisational skills.

A few candidates presented examples of their own practical work without making connections to the work of any other artists. These often included very limited discussion and descriptive of those works. This was obviously a severe limitation on the ability of the candidate to make any significant evaluation which is an essential element for any personal study (written and/or visual).

At the lower levels of achievement, submissions were found to contain little evidence of any personal views or independent judgements. Instead, they consisted mainly of descriptive accounts of second-hand sourced images with unnecessary biographical details.

Many submissions at this level displayed a lack of structure and coherence and consisted of copied material, often downloaded and pasted onto pages with little thought given to organisation and presentation. Due to the absence of first-hand research there was little or no evidence of any personal appreciation of works of art. A few of these particular examples were brief introductions of a broad topic, such as 'fashion design'.

