ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01
Observational/Interpretative Assignment

General Comments

This was the first tranche of candidates taking the revised syllabus and in spite of significant changes the paper was well received. It is pleasing to note that standards of achievement were maintained and that responses were varied and creative.

Although the question paper is divided into an observational and an interpretative section there were many rewarding links between these approaches. This meant that candidates could answer questions in *section B* emphasising an observational rather than an imaginative approach, or answer questions in *section A* using an imaginative rather than an observational approach. Such crossovers between these sections are acceptable and can result in work of a very individual nature.

The examination saw many examples of candidates benefiting from the increased opportunities provided by a more open syllabus structure. Sculpture and large paintings were seen as outcomes that had been photographed and submitted as finished pieces, which was entirely appropriate. However, in such cases Centres should be aware that 3D work should be photographed from different viewpoints and include details such as textural qualities, along with an indication of the scale of work. Design based presentations were also seen where candidates had used these questions to set their own brief and arrive at original outcomes. Photography and computer aided imagery including video and animations were also submitted. There was still some evidence of over-direction: such as all candidates in a Centre were attempted the same question and in some cases, all candidates from a Centre produced the same view of a still life.

The revised Assessment Objectives and mark scheme place much more emphasis on Investigation and Research 20%; and another 20% for Exploration and Development. Candidates have access to 40% of the marks available even beginning their final examination piece.

The very best preparatory work was highly appropriate with few examples of 'padding out' with irrelevant work. Sheets were densely packed with drawings, paintings, photographs and mixed media studies from direct observation. Contextual references were relevant and carefully chosen and had informed individual development.

Less successful were the many candidates who still rely on producing sheets of cut and paste cut-outs from magazines and poor downloaded images which are all too often far removed from the candidates own experiences. There was, as always, a small number of candidates that failed to declare the source of their imagery. Such plagiarism is easily identified when the same image reoccurs in different candidates' work.

In the upper mark range the most impressive development and exploration was seen. The work generally involved compositional studies, experiments with media and processes with an element of risk taking. Digital manipulation was quite common in providing alternative solutions and easy methods of distortions. Photographs were used to document stages in the production of 3D forms, as well as explanatory notes. However, in the mid to lower mark ranges this proved to be the weakest assessment objective with individual studies of objects or images not interrelated in any way; the candidates only deciding on the final composition in the examination itself. Many had simply repeated the same objects three times using the same viewpoint with very little variation in media.

Clearly some candidates had been guided successfully which had enabled them to understand the formal elements of composition, form, space, tone and texture, and to use these through continual practice. However, some candidates need much more direction as well as time to practice drawing and painting techniques, and develop ideas with an emphasis on composition and viewpoint in their work.

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Work submitted was mainly painting and drawing, although preliminary work in a range of media was present. Ambitious printmaking was used for several questions from **section B** and included stenciling and relief printing. Sculpture, of a high standard, was seen in clay whilst model making, which was often poorly constructed, was seen in the lower mark range. Photography was used as an investigatory tool but some candidates had used this for their examination work. Digital manipulation was a popular means of exploring and developing imagery and ideas. In some cases these images had been used in larger scale for the examination piece and combined with other mixed media approaches. The most successful outcomes had practiced their chosen media and could use this with confidence to not only convey form, space and depth but to impart a sense of mood or atmosphere into their work.

Personal Qualities were always more evident in submissions that had strong evidence of working from first hand sources. The ability to select their own subject matter and set their own arrangements is part of the process of critical evaluation. Whilst those who are working from other down loaded sources are only ever using the selected view of somebody else; just as those who are making detailed copies from photographs are only ever showing skills in clever transcription from one medium to another. Where candidates made reference to other artist's work the best were able to give a highly personal explanation of its relevance to their own development. However there are still many examples of sheets of copious biographical details about a chosen artist's life which did not inform their own work in any way.

Most Centres had read and understood the administrative instructions, but a handful still continue to send in work on stretched canvases or heavy plywood or hardboard. Others are sending in sheets which are not attached firmly together. Paper clips, however large are simply not good enough as they inevitably catch and get pulled off. There were problems with reference work becoming detached from their backing sheets as pieces were not glued adequately, some even using Blu Tak.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1   Two bundles of root vegetables

This was the second most popular question from this section and gave candidates the opportunity to show their abilities in analysing colour and tone, mixing and applying colour and simulating texture. The strongest work showed all these strengths as well as a good understanding of composition and viewpoint. They produced a cohesive arrangement of objects and background which was unified by means of light and shadow and reflected colour. Although even the best found problems in fully resolving the depiction of space and depth, particularly when representing the chopping board or brightly coloured bag against the muted tonal colours of natural forms. These were mostly resolved as paintings although many had used oil pastels with high levels of success. Extensive supporting work was in evidence. Candidates own photographs were often included as an aid to exploring close-up views and selecting viewpoints.

Unfortunately some candidates who chose to use pencil failed to use a full tonal range with outcomes lacking in form, space and depth.

Many weaker submissions encountered problems with the perspective of the chopping board. Several left out the bag or adopted a decorative patterned solution to the question with simplified forms sometimes overlapping in a vaguely Cubist style arrangement.

The best of the few who had attempted a more interpretative approach had made some well informed contextual references, particularly Van Gogh and The Impressionists. One Centre had encouraged candidates to make detailed studies from the natural forms which had been developed into brightly coloured abstract shapes, again making informed use of the work of others.

Question 2   Two electrical appliances

This was the most popular question in this section, and one of the most popular throughout, although few reached the higher achievement levels. Appliances such as hairdryers, drills, irons, kettles and hair tongs all proved popular. Hard reflective surfaces were explored where candidates attempted to capture subtleties of reflections, tonal variations and distortions. Those who had considered the electrical cables and plug or had linked the objects with cast shadows produced the most successful compositions.

Most candidates, however, struggled with the perspective and ellipses and often overlooked the importance of composition. Preparatory studies tended to be repetitive, lacking experimentation with media and relying too much on photography rather than the searching analysis of observational drawing.

Some weak submissions attempted to disguise their lack of basic drawing skills by colouring-in the objects in a pattern of colour and shapes without any evidence of cultural or historical references to pattern making. Others had adopted a deconstructed arrangement, taking the form of Cubist or Futurist styles. The stronger candidates had worked from direct observation and involved studying the objects from various viewpoints so that the final image was created from a range of angles. However others merely used photocopied images which were collaged together in sliced sections.

Question 3   Figure in a deckchair

Only a very few attempted this question. Outstanding preparatory work was seen from the best with studies exploiting the potential for interesting viewpoints by viewing the figure from the feet, giving them the opportunity to display foreshortening and depth. A few placed the figure in context such as in a beach setting. There were a few submissions in photography showing good competent selection and technique.

The weakest submissions had difficulty not only with accurately recording the proportions of the figure but also the angles of the chair against those of the body were mismatched.

Question 4   Portrait study

This was a much more popular question than Q3 and there were some very strong submissions indicating an excellent understanding of the structure and form of the face and hands. Candidates had clearly explored their subject from a range of sources; from both directly observed drawings and photographs taken from different viewpoints. An awareness of the effect of light falling on figures was demonstrated as was the ability to record reflected colour from clothing falling on the face.

This question also provided a popular stimulus for photography, including character studies with side lighting and exploring the concealment of the head with long hair. One exceptional entry had deliberately distressed their final photographs of a figure sat at a desk and lit by candle-light to capture the mood of an old photograph.

Weaker submissions were limited in recording, exploration and development skills with one entry using only a single digital photograph as a starting point. A few had attempted some development from this single image by experimenting with different viewpoints and developing compositions by cropping the image. Candidates in the lower mark ranges who used the single image (which was mostly a frontal view of the figure) simply attempted to copy directly from the photograph with no understanding of the basics of form, structure and proportion.

Section B

Question 5   Street furniture

A wide range of interpretations was seen, featuring street signs, fire hydrants, traffic lights, street lighting and seating. The very best work benefited from thorough research from first hand observation, from which many produced a more abstracted approach based on street signs and traffic lights. A Futurist style was used to suggest a sense of movement of traffic contrasting with the static road signs. Road and street side cafes were another interpretation with references to Van Gogh and Renoir. The contemporary influence of graffiti, especially Banksy, was used to good effect in contrasting items of street furniture viewed against a graffiti wall.

Unfortunately many candidates used this question to submit photographic outcomes of series of prints which lacked any real investigation or personal development and failed to move on from what were essentially snapshots.

All too often secondary sources of very poor quality had been used by candidates in the lower mark ranges. Results consisted of very diagrammatic representations of road signs lacking in form or structure.

Sculptural interpretations were seen which involved reassembled chair parts being used to create large scale environmental structures. Some had undertaken interesting research into modern sculptural seating and shelter designs which were used as a basis for their own original designs. *Photoshop* was used to good effect in these submissions. One candidate had designed a roadside mural presented in a Pop Art style. The final image was presented with the aid of CAAD on a wall in the candidate's locality. Another had created a park bench in Dada fashion which could not be sat on.

Question 6   Concealed

This was one of the most popular choices with the hidden face; behind the burkha, masks, sunglasses, hands and fans being the most inspiring. Some had projected cast shadows onto faces as part of their research. Others had constructed 3D masks as a basis for their paintings and in some cases, theatrical make-up was used in a similar way to disguise faces. The various stages of the application were recorded photographically prior to candidates producing final paintings of humorous and rather sinister self portraits.

There were a few excellent photography submissions, one using a face concealed by a Venetian mask covered and surrounded by jewellery; another recorded a figure veiled behind a semi-transparent curtain.

One Centre had submitted appliqué fabrics where transparent layers of fabric were superimposed over still life objects, with details added using sewing machine stitching.

A still life approach was used where objects such as glass bottles were concealed or lost against very brightly painted patterned fabric backgrounds.

Good references were made to Magritte's wrapped figures and heads as well as the portraits of Arcimboldo.

Outstanding work of great originality was often seen with the more able candidates utilising the formal qualities of light and shadow. Faces and figures were dissolved into dark shadows where candidates used chiaroscuro effects to obscure their subject. Rembrandt and Carravagio's works were a major influence in such pictures.

In the mid to lower mark ranges outcomes were very often direct copies or a weak pastiche. Too many candidates having chosen this topic ran out of ideas to develop, and the preparatory work of the weaker entries was not capable of supporting the development of strong or original outcomes.

Question 7   Roadside incident

This was the least popular in this **section B**. The best submissions had attempted to make some social comment on recording the life of people who lived on the streets. The recording was well documented photographically but final outcomes were generally disappointing.

The majority of entries fell into the mid and lower mark ranges, most of whom portrayed car crashes on deserted roads, some copied from downloaded images, or from car dealership brochures, and many from imagination. Generally the approach to this question was too literal and too obvious and more thought needed to be given to what 'Roadside Incident' could mean.

Question 8   Dancers

This was quite popular with many well executed paintings that not only handled the articulation of figures well, but also suggested movement. Some had used this question to submit photography and video and there were some examples of sculpture also seen.

Cultural influences were strong especially Indian, the Far East and Africa whilst others had investigated more contemporary aspects of the topic. Historical references had generally informed the work; Degas was a popular choice, but Futurist references were seen where candidates had focused on the patterns created by dance movement interpreted in the manner of Balla, Severini and Boccioni.

Mid range submissions demonstrated problems with the proportions of figures and produced static, frozen representations of dancers, but they did give consideration to composition, pattern and colour.

A significant number, particularly amongst the weaker candidates used downloaded images with little or no personal input or development of ideas. A photograph of a dancing Michael Jackson, mostly traced featured many times.

Question 9   Twisted and Knotted

A very popular question giving rise to a broad range of topics and lending itself to abstract as well as observational approaches.

The best images were often enlarged, showing close-ups of some very carefully observed studies of subjects such as headphones with twisted cables, shoe laces, ties, scarves, knotted rope plaited hair, and rusted chains. Some final outcomes remained as strong observational studies, whilst others were developed into exciting abstract compositions.

A substantial number of candidates from the higher mark ranges used this as an opportunity to experiment with alternative techniques and processes. Some very strong printmaking was seen within supporting sheets, and sculptural techniques were carried through into final outcomes showing interlocking branches and wooden root forms using real branches entwined with wire sculptural forms. Real rope was interwoven with papier-mache forms.

Textile work featured twisted, knotted and pleated fabrics as well as real bows and ribbons stitched to stencil printed backgrounds.

The distortion of conventional cityscapes and landscapes produced images with a strong surreal quality. These compositions showed skyscrapers twisted into tree like forms with roads spiraling around.

A few candidates attempted to explore ideas of twisted emotions, laughter and music distortion, but these usually lacked thorough investigation or exploration.

Weaker work, particularly with reference to rope, was repetitive and formulaic and lacking in ideas and knowledge of composition.

Question 10   Fencing

Only a few candidates chose the sporting aspect of this question. Results were generally weak copies from downloaded images, many using old engravings of figures duelling. However some had taken the initiative to visit local fencing clubs to take photographs; although these were rarely developed beyond literal copies.

The most successful had looked at fences within a landscape or urban setting. A few looked closely at the variety of patterns within fences and constructed woven abstract paintings from these studies. The best examples experimented with the relationship of objects in front of, behind and interlacing the fence posts. The analysis of such spatial complexity produced works rich in pattern, texture and interlocking forms.

A few focused on the 'fencing in' concept using the bars of a prison cell to introduce a subjective viewpoint of hands reaching out for freedom. In another, the Berlin wall featured as subject matter.

Weaker submissions presented front elevations of fencing with little sense of depth or attempts at detailed analysis. There were many examples of made–up landscapes with a line of fencing cutting across, demonstrating a very poor understanding of perspective or composition.

ART AND DESIGN

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Paper 0400/02

Design Assignment

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General Comments

With the first submission for the newly revised syllabus, it was good to see that standards of achievement were as good as ever and that responses were both creative and personal. The revised mark scheme rewards those that take care to gather, record and investigate in depth much more emphatically. Such initial gathering and recording invariably preceded the most competent and confident examination pieces, with good, thoughtful and intelligent preparatory work seen in the supporting studies. Excellent teaching and the use of appropriate media and processes is another factor in success. It was encouraging to see that the opportunities afforded by the revised syllabus for increasing the use of modern media, such as computers and the use of digital photography, has been fully understood.

The most popular question by far was **Question 1**, asking for a logo design for a chain of jewellery shops called ONYX, with nearly 25% of candidates attempting it. The second most popular was **Question 4**, for a costume design for a street performer such as a juggler, magician or acrobat, with 20% of submissions. Other questions were equally attempted with around 10% of the entries for each.

Unfortunately, far too many of the less successful attempts were unclear of the aims of the *Design Assignment*. The syllabus description of this paper is very clear; the intention is to test the candidate's ability to research, analyse and develop ideas for a design brief and to arrive at an appropriate solution. Guidance and advice is available via the CIE website, where there are several examples of design outcomes from previous years' examinations, along with the Teacher Guide which is available from Publications.

Thankfully it appeared that there were only a few cases there were some Centres that had clearly not taught very much design, or had not realised fully that paper 2 is no longer an interpretative paper. Some candidates, especially for the DVD cover design and the design for a mosaic seemed to think that just a picture or painting was a suitable outcome, with the design challenge totally ignored and seemingly not attempted in any way.

Overall the presentation of work was often very good indeed with the vast majority of Centres taking great care in organising each candidate's submission with the final piece on top and preparatory studies beneath; well labelled and either tied with string in the top left corner or firmly joined together with a staple. Paper clips, and other flimsy ways of attaching work together, invariably did not survive the journey to CIE and work all too is detached. Mounting work on thick card or large pieces of paper is not helpful: it makes large packets of work unwieldy and unnecessarily heavy.

Where work is presented in the form of photographs, it is essential that the photographs are printed out on paper and not just sent in on a CD. Although a CD might be sent if the work is a moving image, a PowerPoint presentation, evidence of a design of a website or as a supplement in terms of alternative outcomes or lines of research, Examiners require evidence of the candidates ability to select and organise their submission with good judgement and skill. Presentation of work is part of one of the five Assessment Criteria, assessment objective AO5: present an informed response through personal evaluation, reflection and critical thinking. Merely sending in a CD with a collection of disorganised digital images is neither sufficient evidence of skills of presentation nor is it evidence of selection and control of materials, media and processes, as examined through AO4, requesting clarity of intention in using media effectively.

Some Centres are submitting work which is dangerous or using potentially dangerous materials and this must not be allowed to continue. Glass and other materials such as sharp metal or fragile ceramic work are not suitable materials. Work that is too large, fragile or possibly dangerous should be photographed instead.

Candidates should select and organise their submissions carefully. The restriction of two sheets, or four sides, of paper must be adhered to. The ability to organise examination work in a well-chosen and thoughtful way in order to inform the Examiner clearly about the research and development of the work is a skill that candidates should be encouraged to develop. There is a tendency in some Centres to submit rather too much: all the Examiner needs is the edited evidence of the journey the candidate has taken from initial ideas, observation, research experiment and development through to the final piece.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: asked candidates to Design a logo for a chain of shops selling jewellery with the name of the chain, 'ONYX', be included in the design. In addition they were asked to show how the logo might look on a shop sign or a small newspaper advertisement.

This was by far the most popular question with work seen from the highest to lowest levels of the mark range. In the most successful outcomes directly observed research of jewellery in general and semi precious stones, ONYX in particular, really supported the candidate's initial thoughts about the topic and later in the development of ideas. The very best submissions included very careful and intelligent use of typography for the word ONYX. Most unusually, it was noted that many very good designs relied on the actual letters for ONYX forming a piece of jewellery in itself. There was excellent use of intertwining letters, letters joined by links and the use of three-dimensional effects of shadow and highlight to create effects of gold and semi precious minerals. Illustrations of how the logo would appear on a shop sign were often clearly presented with some very able candidates using perspective with skill to show a street scene with the shop in it. Some excellent work was done through use of digital images of shops with the candidates logo inserted through a computer programme with a pasting facility: effective when done with care to render shadows and highlights to create a realistic representation.

With mid range candidates, their main problem was the choice of appropriate media. Unfortunately, all too often they had disadvantaged themselves and the presentation lacked a crisp graphic image for the final solution. Acrylic paint was a popular choice but it was not suitable for sharp, precise letterforms. Pastels, when used, also proved invariably unsuitable. There was too much dependency on secondary sources for research of jewellery and semi precious stones: images gleaned from mail order catalogues and magazine advertisements were seen in profusion and often formed the only source of information to develop logos from. For many, a higher level of attainment would have been possible if further development of ideas and alternative outcomes had been undertaken. Also, in several submissions, a very good idea was all too often hampered by a lack of refinement to create a sharp, crisp and well formed logo with carefully considered relationships between elements such as letterform, space, line, colour and tone. These aesthetic considerations, in the context of design, are not only to do with refinement, but also relate to the ability of the logo to communicate ideas and notions of quality, craftsmanship, expense or other concepts invariably related to jewellery.

The weakest submissions often neglected to even think about primary or secondary research and were typically done from imagination and memory alone. Few of the weaker candidates considered how they might develop ideas beyond a basic initial response. In the very weakest, media was used clumsily, letterforms were poorly drawn, even when traced from magazines, and the logo lacked any sense of a final, considered solution.

Question 2: (a), 'Design the DVD cover for a film entitled 'BEFORE DAYBREAK' produced by a company named 'Enigma'.

This was a fairly popular option with most responses of a mid level, for which research of sunrises, silhouettes of couples against the dawn light and other images were mainly carried out from secondary sources. Some interpreted the film as a horror or gothic film where images of castles, graveyards, Dracula and vampires along with all the other paraphernalia of the genre abounded. There was some very good work which was carried out using photography and computer programmes such as *Photoshop*. Here, lettering and images were combined often with skill and the other elements of a typical DVD cover: a strap-line and short promotional piece, for example, a few subsidiary images on the back cover, and so on. Clearly, well-briefed knowledgeable candidates had researched typical DVD cover and had attempted to replicate some of its key features in terms of dimensions, text and illustration.

(b) Using a calligraphic script, to write out the whole or part of the poem 'Night Crow' by Theodore Roethke.

Unfortunately there were only a few submissions for this. However, several very sensitive and well-executed pieces of calligraphy were submitted. The few Centres that teach this skill continue to do so with great success, and it is gratifying to see such crafts being continued. Other Centres rely on candidates tracing letterforms that are usually much less successful. It would, perhaps, be better to attempt the writing on a computer, which is permitted within the new revised examination. In future years this kind of question will continue to be available but teachers need to be aware that the options within the brief are wider, or less restrictive, to encourage more diverse responses using a range of media including digital media.

Illustrations and decorative borders were often well researched and integrated with the text. The strongest candidates conveyed the sense of the poem with well-chosen paintings or drawings of crows, bare and threatening branches and twigs of desolate trees. Some wove the calligraphy and illustration together very skillfully to create a final outcome of a very high standard.

Weaker attempts were generally hindered by the lack of skill or practice in lettering. Often, these attempts were no better than neat (or not so neat, in some cases) handwriting, or clumsy and crude letterforms that varied from line to line and even from letter to letter in terms of typeface, kerning and line spacing, making a jumble of letters that neither scanned or sat well within the page.

Question 3, to create a repeat pattern for a sunshade based on research from animal or reptile markings.

There were only few successful outcomes for this particular question. Those that were had studied animal markings carefully through drawing and photography and had chosen an example or examples of animal markings that lent themselves to refinement, modification and repetition. These candidates also experimented with the markings to ensure that the repeat pattern had an aesthetic rhythm and organisation that suited placing or printing on a generally circular format.

Weaker candidates often imagined animal markings or copied the first picture from a magazine or from the Internet that they came across. Rarely did weak candidates develop the animal marking in any sensitive way to enhance or focus on positive and negative space, the interaction of colour and tone, or in the rhythmic qualities possible in a repetitive design. Too often candidates used an inappropriate animal marking that did not work as a design at all. Often, placing the design within a circular format (although not necessary and not explicitly asked for in the question) on a parasol proved to be beyond such candidate's capability and he result was a disjointed and clumsy final design.

Question 4, asking for the design of a costume for a street performer or entertainer such as a juggler, acrobat or magician elicited a good proportion of entries. There was a wide range of ideas, giving full consideration to the potential of the question. Some responses were excellent, demonstrating first class research and a high level of knowledge of the inherent possibilities of the question and of the ways that costume design should be presented. These candidates included such details as how the costume might be constructed and sometimes included fabric swatches. Some candidates gave full consideration to items such as headwear, footwear and showed the costume in use in a street setting.

Many mid level responses, though competently researched and executed, tended to develop designs with only a picture of the final design illustrating how it would look on a performer rather than showing the design from different angles or viewpoints and a limited idea of how it might be constructed from fabric.

Less able achievements were generally typified by a lack in any experiment of alternative ideas or development following limited research. There was very little personal initiative and were all too obviously based on finding the easiest solution to the design problem often based on or even copied directly from secondary images from, for example, existing designs for films such as 'Batman'.

Question 5 was for a mosaic design for the base of a swimming pool based on reference to marine life. This was best done where candidates had made extensive observational studies of marine life. Even when these were based on secondary images, they often succeeded with further development in integrating the forms, colours and shapes that had been discovered into a cohesive and well thought through outcome. Shapes of swimming pools were often fascinating, and use of ovals in various forms as well as geometric shapes were used to good effect. Some candidates well versed in design restricted their colour palette and simplified shapes of fins, claws and other features of marine life to good effect, making the use of these features a much more easily adaptable visual feature in creating their mosaic design.

Often, mid range candidates merely tried to do a picture of marine life as a painting or drawing rather than converting or developing it into a design suitable for mosaic work. Many missed the point of the question completely and the result would have been more suitable for a question for observation or interpretative work.

Weaker responses were limited by poor references to marine life, and were often simplified versions of fish and shrimps, for example, based on imagination or from memory.

Question 6 required candidates to design an aviary on a hexagonal ground plan. There were more responses than expected for this question, especially from a few Centres who had clearly briefed their candidates with some skill and expertise into the requirements of this sort of design problem. Often, this question is tackled by very few candidates indeed and it is gratifying to see that Centres and some candidates are realising the potential in the environmental question that always features in this component. There were some excellent, highly imaginative submissions, some of a standard that bordered on outstanding. Some candidates researched designs already in existence very thoroughly, or visited suitable locations such as zoos or animal sanctuaries.

Where candidates had a good grounding in architectural drawing, there was a good grasp of how to communicate structure and materials, sometimes with a high level of technical drawing skills. Some, equally good in their way, succeeded as they provided a good artists impression of the aviary in perspective. Some of these were rendered with care and were very convincing, even if the plan was not so successful.

There were almost no weak submissions for this question.

ART AND DESIGN

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

General Comments

This was the first cohort to take this paper in the new syllabus and the number of candidates entering rose by over 50% so this was a very encouraging start. It was clear that most candidates had enjoyed the direct contact made in visits to buildings, art galleries and interviews with artists and designers. Most submissions were based on written and visual analysis but there were also some who concentrated on the more practical option with varying effect.

The new format seemed to be very successful with some well-researched information in the work of many candidates. In the best examples, these research skills were emphasised and used to good effect giving studies clarity and a well informed structure.

Many candidates chose themes which were very personal to them; as a result they were engaged in the research and this had a positive effect on the level of achievement. Weaker examples usually had no clear aim and this gave rise to poorly informed work with limited information and investigation.

Very good use was made of local resources in some Centres. This often involved visits to art exhibitions, tours of buildings and interviews with local artists. Good recording of these events through sketching and photographic evidence was helpful in the best submissions. With regard to the Internet, some candidates sifted the material carefully to support their work and showed that the use of electronic resources is a valuable asset, but it must be vetted and not accepted without editing.

Presentation was generally good but there is still space for more careful placing and organisation of pages. There is enough time to make the submission presentable, especially as this is still an art project. Some submissions were poorly clipped together and labels did not adhere properly. Photographs should be supplied where candidates undertake any work larger than A2.

Some projects were beautifully word-processed but numbering and labels were then added very scruffily with handwriting and some photocopies were so dark as to be unintelligible. Whilst many candidates made good use of drawing and mounting skills, the cutting out of images and text and remounting was very ragged and untidy in some examples. If an intentionally zany or ragged look in used that is fine, but carelessness should be avoided in a project that has such a broad time span in its formulation.

The word limit needs to be adhered to and candidates are advised to submit an outline proposal to aid development of the work and check that the study has enough resources.

Examples of very high quality submissions this session included an excellent CD on public sculpture and a study of glassmaking techniques, beautifully illustrated with photographs and drawings together with a written account. All in all, this year's submissions represent a very pleasing start to this amended syllabus.

ART AND DESIGN

> **Paper 0400/04**
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> **Coursework Assignment**

General Comments

The first year of the revised syllabus and perhaps unsurprisingly the entry had increased to about 2000. Centres seemed to have a good understanding of the differences and requirements of this paper with the majority of submissions being well focused on one project which had been carried through to a final outcome. Sheets of preparatory work were mostly relevant and had clearly informed the candidate's development of ideas. Any additional work was usually helpful with far fewer instances of submissions consisting of just a series of unedited collections of class exercises.

There was a wide range of responses, showing imagination and the development of personal interests. A wide range of media was seen and most candidates appear to have been encouraged to develop personal directions. However there was evidence of some over direction particularly where all candidates within a Centre had followed the exactly the same approach. Although this approach invariably benefitted the weaker candidates, who could be seen to thrive within the structure, invariably there was little freedom to develop individual ideas resulting in a narrowing of the ability range. The best candidates fail to meet their full potential and very few are able to access the higher range of marks available, especially within the Assessment Objective of Personal Qualities.

There were many examples where contextual studies had enhanced personal work. Candidates had been encouraged not just to copy the work of other artists but to analyse aspects of their subject matter or technique to inform there own work in a surprisingly mature way. However there were still a few entries comprising of copious written biographies of chosen artists, or lengthy descriptions of technical processes.

Photography is increasingly popular as an information gathering/research tool; mostly to good effect. Some excellent shots of candidates' environment and surroundings were seen as preparation for painting and design applications. As usual, amongst the weaker submissions, there is still an over reliance on downloaded images and illustrations cut from magazines. Where photography was used to show final outcomes such as large paintings, and 3D pieces including packaging designs these were usually of good quality. Centres should be aware that for 3D work, several shots from different angles as well as detail of textural surfaces and some indication of size is very helpful.

The new five Assessment Objectives and attainment criteria seem to have been well understood by the majority of Centres. Most Centres had produced a sound order of merit with many submitting reliable levels of marking requiring little or no changes. Inevitably though there were always a few Centres where perhaps limited experience and only a small number of entries, had meant that it had been wrongly assumed that the best candidate must be in the mark range of 90+, and their weakest below 30. In such cases CIE Moderators had to make some considerable scaling adjustments.

Centres are reminded that when entries exceed ten, the sample selected for moderation should reflect the full mark range used i.e. the top and lowest mark awarded as well as an even selection from within the range.

For Centres needing further advice and guidance CIE provides an excellent on-line service. Standards for this session's examination will shortly be posted and there is also a dedicated Art and Design discussion group, details of which can be found on: http://lists.ucles.org.uk/lists/listinfo/cie-artdesign

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

Much of the work presented for this area reflected the candidates' obvious enjoyment and engagement with their course of study. Commitment and focus were evident in many submissions and the work was generally diverse, both in terms of media and scale, and wide ranging in ideas and concepts. It was common to find related media such as photography, digital manipulation and printmaking used as a vehicle for exploration and ideas development. Where sketchbooks were included the best were particularly strong, revealing a genuine sense of enquiry beyond the submitted project.

Subject matter was varied but still life or themes based on natural forms were the most popular. This enabled the majority of candidates to work from first hand observation and to practice skills in basic construction of form and space using perspective, colour, tone and texture.

Work from the human figure was also a popular choice and again the best submissions had recorded directly from the model, using friends, family and themselves. There were some stunning self portrait paintings full of expression and emotion which had clearly been informed by referencing relevant artists, both contemporary and from art history. Many Centres had used aspects of the 'self' as a subject in setting a common theme from which candidates had been encouraged to develop ideas in individual directions.

As always, weaker submissions were lacked any practice of basic drawing skills. Many ideas were well in advance of the candidates' abilities to express them in visual terms. There were many attempts at fantasy or vague Surrealist compositions with little real understanding of composing a picture. There was an over reliance on copying from secondary sources. Even when a few candidates had used their own photography their final outcomes were usually attempts at straightforward copies with little evidence of interpretative or personal expression.

3D Studies

A wide range of approaches was seen; ceramics, modelled forms, wire and card sculptures, 3D design and architectural model-making.

In the best work the relationship between personal ideas and craft skills was well balanced. Ideas were derived from a variety of starting points with information collected using first hand drawings as well as the candidates' own photography. The development of ideas and the transition into 3D forms was often well documented through further sketches and a series of photographs of work in progress.

The figure was a popular subject with many showing the influence of both European and other cultural traditions. Architecture also provided a rich source of subject and there were a number of ceramic forms and relief sculptures derived from the study of local buildings.

Some less successful submissions had placed too much emphasis on making skills, producing copies of musical instruments, masks and other man-made objects. There was little sense of personal development or aesthetic awareness.

There were some very weak environmental designs for tree houses, children's play areas and garden fountains. There was little research with a very poor understanding of the design and visualisation process. Candidates producing architectural models were often more intent on producing a model of existing plans rather than designing anything original themselves. Generally the craft skills employed to construct the models was also very weak.

Fashion and Textile Design

It was encouraging to see some work of a very high standard in this area. Out comes were personal and sometimes ambitious in scale. There were examples of candidates' own designs that had been made into finished garments, and in one case a photo-shoot was arranged with some of the images manipulated to produce an advertising poster.

The best of the fashion illustrations were informed by current trends and due care was paid to some imaginative presentation formats. However many others lacked any apparent exposure to the work of current illustrators and illustrative approaches. Results were too often poorly drawn copies of photographs found in fashion magazines or catalogues.

Cultural influences could be seen in many fabric prints and Batik work, although the imagery used was usually from secondary sources. There were some better block prints seen where candidates had worked directly from plant studies or in one case, research into wave and cloud formations.

Graphic Design

Outcomes were varied and consisted of CD/DVD and book-jacket designs; posters, banners and logos. There were a few packaging designs and some illustration.

There was a considerable reliance on digital manipulation software and the use of downloaded images, which meant that the majority of submissions never reached the very high attainment levels.

However some candidates did use their own photographs and had scanned images of hand drawn imagery. It was also noticeable that the best work recognised the importance of typography, and in such cases the candidates had integrated this within their own imagery. Here the designs demonstrated an awareness of contemporary design practice.

There were a few examples of whole Centre approaches where all candidates had worked to the same design brief with all candidates using the same computer software. Results were very similar, predictable and lacking in any individuality.

Photography

It was disappointing to see so few submissions this session. The majority of work was produced using digital processes and amongst the best, digital manipulation was handled sensitively, with meaningful intent. Final selected images showed evidence of considered composition, selection and evaluation from earlier collected shots.

Mid to lower range submissions were little more than a collection of snap shots loosely based around a theme. Candidates are reminded to clearly identify their final piece/s.

Some Centres submit all work for one candidate on a CD which is not ideal as submission of work in this format tends to result in a lack of accompanying explanations of what the photographs were aiming at, or of the intentions of the candidate. Clear indication as to what images are the candidates' own work and that which is secondary reference material is not possible in these cases. Centres are advised to provide a hard copy, even as printed thumbnails with suitable notation included, as well as an indication of what software has been used.