

ART & DESIGN

<p>Paper 0400/01 Coursework Assignment</p>

Key messages

- Most candidates chose to explore painting and related media, with some examples of photography, printmaking, book illustration, 3D, graphic design and textiles work seen.
- Stronger submissions included research of other artists or cultures to inform the candidates' own development.
- Many candidates used a combination of recording approaches, including from direct observation and photography and did not rely solely on the internet.
- Candidates should label their own photography to clearly distinguish it from images that are taken from secondary sources.
- When photographing 3D and fragile work to present in the submission candidates should make sure that the photographs show different viewpoints, detail, surface quality and scale.

General comments

Many candidates submitted a thoughtful and sustained body of work that was generally well presented on A2 paper or thin card.

Sometimes candidates would have benefited from editing their research to show their ability to refine and evaluate their work as it progressed to a final conclusion. If several different projects have been done throughout the course, candidates should select the best final outcome and edit the work to present a portfolio that demonstrates the development of ideas leading to and informing the final outcome.

Many candidates recorded from direct observation through a range of media including photography. A variety of themes were explored and many candidates researched themes related to the environment, sense of isolation, loss, rules and order, and found objects. Candidates had clearly investigated the possibilities of research material from around the home.

It is important that candidates reference all sources, where appropriate. At times it was difficult to distinguish between the candidates' own work and that of another source, for example an image taken from the internet. Where candidates choose to use Pro Create or similar digital drawing tools then the images used should be their own wherever possible, whether as a base layer or subsequent layers. Most importantly it must be clear where the images are from and also which are direct actions made by the candidate. Simple annotation will achieve this.

Photography was explored both as an area of study as well as a way of documenting large or fragile work. For most, this was effective and clearly portrayed the work.

Higher levels

Artist research supported the development of ideas in the stronger submissions and these references also often informed the use of media. Intentions were clearly communicated, whether through imagery alone or a mix of image and annotation, and the portfolios showed a clear journey leading to the final outcome.

Visual resources were generally recorded from direct observation using a range of media, including photography. Any secondary sourced material and artist or cultural references were appropriately selected and relevant to the theme. Observational work demonstrated a high level of independence and skill as candidates recorded their subject from different angles and viewpoints with consideration given to context and lighting. This thoughtful visual investigation into their chosen theme meant that candidates had a strong base from which to develop their ideas.

A range of materials and techniques were seen in these submissions, mostly traditional dry and wet media, but these were often explored in inventive ways, combining different media, also using collage, printmaking techniques and digital manipulation of their own photographs and studies. Candidates displayed a high level of skill in their handling and manipulation of media. Often this media exploration was informed by, and related to, the artist research.

It was clear that candidates were able to successfully review and reflect on their work to make informed decisions through perceptive evaluations at each stage of development. The candidates' own evaluations led to focused media experimentation and the development of technical skills. This self-analysis allowed candidates to refine media use and compositions before producing the final outcome.

Middle levels

Although recording from direct observation was seen in the mid-level submissions, mainly through photography, work often lacked the depth seen at the higher levels and candidates relied more heavily on secondary images taken from the internet. In some cases, unconnected imagery and drawings were included.

The development of ideas was inconsistent. Some candidates focused on the reproduction of photographs and other images through the skilful rendering of relevant materials but were less able to explore alternative ideas to progress their work. Other candidates demonstrated a strong and original concept but did not have the ability to refine their skills to deliver these intentions. Some candidates working at the middle level could have been more selective with their choices of artists in helping to inform their development from initial images to the final outcome. Candidates often made copies of the work of other artists, but these were not always relevant to the development of ideas.

Experimentation with materials informed ideas and candidates integrated media to explore alternative ways of expressing ideas. For some, the work demonstrated sensitivity and understanding of how to use the media effectively. However, this knowledge was not always developed or applied in the final outcome.

At this level some candidates were less able to critically analyse their work and identify the most promising ideas. If the evaluation had been stronger, candidates may have been more able to communicate the ideas and intentions seen in the portfolio, to present a more resolved final outcome.

Lower levels

The work in the lower mark range often demonstrated limited research skills from either primary or secondary sources, with sometimes no indication of where the imagery had come from. At this level there was a reliance on using internet sources and there was little evidence of detailed observational studies. Some candidates had taken their own photographs but these were often of poor quality and demonstrated little understanding of the use of composition or lighting.

At this level, candidates were less able to select and explore a wide range of media, often only using pencil or paint, which restricted the creativity of ideas and recording. Many candidates would have benefited from exploring the work of relevant artists to inform their media use and idea development. When making artist copies, some candidates demonstrated a satisfactory manipulation of media but were unable to sustain this level of working when refining ideas in their own work. More practice and sustained media exploration would have helped these candidates to select and develop their technical skills in appropriate media to use in the final outcome.

At times final outcomes were disconnected to the work in the portfolio and candidates chose to create an image that was unrelated and was different to the exploration within their development work. More sustained drawing studies from direct observation in the initial stages of the project along with more experimentation of ways to manipulate their drawings to generate ideas would have helped these candidates to present a portfolio that led to, and informed, a more resolved final outcome.

ART & DESIGN

Paper 0400/2
Externally Set Assignment

Key messages

- Where candidates chose to use digital drawing tools, the images used should be their own wherever possible, whether as a base layer or subsequent layers. Most importantly, it must be made clear where the images came from, what the actions made by the candidate were and how the image progressed. The artistic choices and manipulations made directly by the candidate as opposed to an automated function need to be clear.
- Many candidates took photographs of their chosen subject matter and then drew or painted from the photograph. No matter how skilfully a copy is rendered, it does not help to develop a real understanding of the subject matter and how it sits within space or of its structure, form and texture. Direct observation is always a better method.
- The inclusion of an artist study should be relevant to the project and should genuinely help and guide the candidate to explore ideas or materials further. Showing how an artist has influenced the candidates' own development is more beneficial than a copy of an artist's style.
- Succinctly editing the content of the submission as a whole allows the candidates' intentions and journey towards a final conclusion to be understood and also highlights the ability to reflect, evaluate and make critical decisions. Therefore, presenting a body of work that includes only relevant studies will be more successful than one which includes unrelated class exercises.

General comments

Great ingenuity was demonstrated by some candidates who were able to connect with artists and their work by utilising facilities online and by those who selected artworks, practitioners and craftwork that was more easily accessible to them. Many candidates worked from observation and in particular observations of still life were noted. This had a positive impact on candidates' gathering and recording in the initial stages of the project.

Most candidates chose to work in paint and related media but there were also examples of textiles, digital manipulation, graphic design, photography and 3D submissions. Most candidates included photography within their submissions as a means of recording information or documenting large scale work. Most were well considered, in focus and enhanced the submission. Some examples showed an engagement and a sense of exploration at the initial stages in the way they staged or set-up their photographs to reflect their individual intentions.

Each topic inspired examples where candidates had approached to the theme with originality and imagination. **Question 2: Leaves, petals and roots** was the most popular choice which inspired many pattern ideas, fashion design and textural observations. This starting point enabled candidates to work from direct observation from readily accessible sources, which the stronger candidates identified and made use of.

Question 5: Fractured, by contrast, attracted more conceptual ideas including reactions to a broken planet, fractured family units and mental health issues. These responses were often highly personal and thought provoking. The more successful works still gathered the initial studies from first-hand resources and developed their concepts from these. **Question 1: On a shelf** and **Question 4: By the road** provided more literal interpretations from some weaker candidates, who largely copied from photographs depicting obvious scenes. **Question 3: Getting ready** facilitated those able to render successful figure painting with plenty of opportunity to set up scenes using props and backgrounds to observe scenarios such as getting dressed and applying make-up or getting ready to participate in a sporting activity for example.

Clear intentions were reflected in the work of the most successful candidates who often arranged the elements of their explorations into several different proposals before settling on a final composition. This approach allowed for experimentation, freedom of expression and crucially, the opportunity to evaluate and edit work ensuring that the proposed message is clear and intelligible.

Higher Levels

The candidates who achieved the highest levels were clearly self-motivated and focused, engaging in a meaningful way to achieve a coherent body of work. Responses to the questions were imaginative and original. Candidates working at this level demonstrated the ability to consistently synthesise their practical skills with their conceptual understanding, which lead to a sophisticated exploration of their theme.

Initial stages involved gathering and recording from a variety of relevant and personal sources. Often, engagement with the subject matter was evident in these early stages with the manipulation of props or the considered arrangement of objects to be photographed.

Adept critical thinking was applied enabling candidates to select the most appropriate ideas to develop further. The work demonstrated continuous analysis, progression, focus and the enthusiasm to sustain and evolve ideas. This development progressed with the exploration and experimentation of media alongside concept. A good understanding of the visual elements, the expertise to manipulate them and a strong command of a visual language meant that intentions were confidently realised.

Artists' studies were effectively integrated into the work and these influences were apparent in the final outcomes. Candidates demonstrated their independence, supported by what they had learned. Annotation was included in concise form and aided the direction of the thought process.

Middle Levels

Work at this level often demonstrated an imbalance across the Assessment Objectives. Some work showed strength in the candidates' ability to select and utilise appropriate media without the maturity to convey original ideas and concepts. Others showed an enthusiastic approach to developing ideas and or media exploration without having the initial foundation of recording to draw upon.

At this level there were often gaps where candidates did not show a clear and relevant journey through the developmental stages. However, there was often a sense of engagement and discovery despite the chaotic presentation. Artists' studies were often included but were mostly superficial and concerned with style rather than reflecting upon a deeper understanding.

Although some planning and alternative compositions were explored before creating the final outcome, the need to identify strengths and critically evaluate work was evident. Often final outcomes did not reach the full potential of work seen in the supporting studies.

Lower Levels

Candidates working at the lower levels were over reliant on secondary-sourced imagery. This led to limited exploration and development of personal ideas. Often imagery was copied and repeated multiple times and candidates missed the opportunity to explore individual concepts and express originality.

Where candidates had researched an artist there was often little evidence of how this had been used to inform their own work and candidates were less able to make visual connections between their sources of inspiration.

Observational studies were less concerned with form and often outline drawings were created that were subsequently coloured in. Material experimentation was limited and was mostly confined to pencil and some painting use.

At this level there was a lack of cohesion throughout the work. With limited gathering of information, the scope to develop ideas was narrow. Few candidates explored alternative compositions for the final outcome and instead repeated an earlier study.

Candidates would have benefitted from observing a variety of sources to gather sufficient visual information, and so to cultivate a broader reserve from which to develop ideas.