

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01
Observational Study

General comments

Entries from all the ability ranges were submitted for all the questions in this paper. For the **Still Life Group Question 1b**, *Fresh from the Garden* was the most popular. From **Section 2, Natural and Man-made Forms, options a, and b** attracted equal entries. **Option b**, *the portrait study* was the most popular from **the Human Figure Section 3**. Those using **Interiors or Exteriors, Question 4b** *Reflections in Water* attracted the most interest, with **4a** *A Night Market* attracting the least.

Results at the very top of the mark range were much higher than last year, with some candidates showing evidence of outstanding abilities in all of the Assessment Objectives, producing work which was highly individual and personal, and possessing a maturity which far exceeded the normal expectations at this level of examination. However, the majority of entries fell within the middle and lower middle mark ranges. As with previous years there was very little really weak work with almost every entry receiving a grade.

Most Centres now have a firm grasp of the syllabus requirements for this paper and prepare their candidates well. Consequently most candidates are able to produce fully resolved outcomes during the ten hours allocated for the examination period. Of those who do not manage a finished piece of work, there is usually enough evidence within the work itself or within the preparatory studies to assess the candidates' levels of ability.

Examiners have noted a growing trend to treat this paper in more of an interpretative manner e.g. by placing a still life group, or a study of the figure within an imaginative setting. Whilst this can add to the composition, Centres should be mindful that the main aim of this paper is to test the candidates' ability to record from direct observation. Any additional visual material used within such compositions should have come from first hand sources.

Likewise there are more instances where candidates are working almost entirely from photographs. Even when they are the candidates' own they should only be used as a supplement, since a full understanding of viewing and recording the relationships of objects in space can only come from direct observation.

Competent preparatory work is the key to success. Investigations into a variety of arrangements and viewpoints, lighting effects, experiments with media and processes can instil confidence, especially when supported with relevant references to the work of other artists or cultural sources. Weaker final pieces are usually supported by repetitive studies of the same composition, or sheets containing studies of individual objects, with little indication of how these will later be placed together into a composition. Some very weak entries contained preparatory sheets containing work which was entirely irrelevant to the chosen subject, and which had obviously been taken from earlier coursework.

The range of media was most impressive with various pastels, paints, coloured pencils, collage, printmaking (including mono printing, block printing and stencilling) being in evidence. In a few cases multimedia work which achieved a great deal of cohesion was seen. There was some excellent photography used to research and support painting and drawing, as well as some digitally enhanced experiments used to investigate the subject.

In most cases Centre administration was very good. A few Centres failed to include attendance registers which can give Examiners problems when checking in the scripts. There were also cases of work not being fastened together properly, or of the examination piece not being on top. Centres should refrain from packing individual entries in separate folders. Preparatory studies should be stuck firmly onto mounted sheets. The use of spray mount is not recommended as many individual pieces do come adrift. There was also one case of work being attached by "Blue Tack". One or two Centres who used their own labelling failed to declare which page was the finished work or even the question number undertaken by the candidate.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 Still Life Group

Option (a)

Baubles, balls, marbles in all varieties and sizes were seen. Some had used balls of wool or twine to give added texture. Some had included additional baubles in a box to add the element of straight lines to the composition. A few had replaced the sheet with a sheet of white paper which missed the opportunity of portraying the folds.

The best had clearly understood the challenge of recording reflective colour against and within the shadows of the sheet, and of placing the balls to create a sense of space and depth within the composition, both with overlapping forms and differences in scale, and the use of tonal contrasts between background and foreground.

Many less successful entries failed to observe or record colour within the shadows of the sheet. Some had treated different balls in a different medium or technique. In both cases the compositions lacked a unity.

A few candidates resolved this question entirely through pencil drawings, missing the whole point of recording reflective colour.

Option (b)

This was by far the most popular option with some very imaginative compositions using all manner of fruit, vegetables, some with their leaves and sometimes with earth still attached to their roots. Flowers were frequently chosen, either presented in tied bundles, arranged in decorative vases or in the process of being cut with secateurs. A human hand was sometimes included in the process of cutting or holding the flowers. All manner of baskets, boxes and bags were included as containers for the produce. A few had placed the produce within wheelbarrows and had also included other items such as water boots, gardening gloves or garden tools.

Good practice was observed in those entries where care had been taken when arranging the lighting for still life groups, and the best of these had been able to use reflective colour in shadows to enliven otherwise neutral areas of colour.

Sometimes an involvement in representing the variety of pattern and textures was better than the representation of form and space.

Candidates in the mid ranges tended to treat each object independently and the resulting compositions lacked a unity of colour or tone.

Weak candidates frequently ignored the presence of shadows completely.

Question 2 Natural and Man-made Objects

Option (a)

Most entries were from very able candidates who rose to the challenge of recording complex forms and structures. Subtle and well observed studies in a range of media, including pencil drawings, were seen. Crabs and prawns were the most popular subject matter, and some excellent submissions at the very top of the mark range had used water colour studies of great sensitivity which recorded not only the light and colour of the crab's shell but also the complexity of surface textures. There were some equally successful studies of prawns where the reflected colours on the creatures' bodies had been recorded with great skill at mixing and applying washes of colour.

Studies of single empty shells, especially where no colour had been used, were less successful.

Option (b)

This was the most popular option for this question and entries covered the full ability range. The best had used their preparatory time well to explore the subject from a variety of angles as well as analysing the structure of the hinges attaching the arms to the main body. Finished sheets also contained a number of different studies carefully placed on the page, although others had produced enlarged images which effectively explored space and depth. At this level successful use was made of reflections in mirrored sunglasses with delicate self portraits and reflections of rooms being shown on a small scale.

Mid range work made good use of the shadows and reflections cast by the glasses but the form and structure were poorly represented. Images were often flat and viewed from a single but often repeated viewpoint. Angled views of the glasses presented problems with weaker candidates who did not possess the skills or knowledge of perspective required to show the complexity of the arms that supported the frames.

Many weak candidates attempted to disguise their lack of analytical skills by placing the glasses on a person's face and becoming too involved in making a portrait study. Others tried to include other items such as cases or bottles of sun cream.

Option (c)

Very few entries were submitted but most were in the upper levels of attainment. There were some delicate and sensitive pencil and pen and ink studies exploring the complexities of leaves and branches or stems. The potential of layering was explored by many through the use of stencilling of leaves and block printing techniques used to create complex textured bases prior to over working in pencil or paint. The more able candidates used a wider variety of printed shapes which enriched the complexity of their compositions, whilst candidates in the mid to lower mark ranges often used a single silhouette without adapting the outcome.

Question 3 The Human Figure

Option (a)

Only a very few used this option. People dressed for tennis, football, rugby and American football were the most common interpretations. The most successful candidates had worked from direct observation and had conveyed a very good understanding of form and proportion. There was evidence of many using photographs of their models and their work was less successful, resulting in flat, formless compositions. Some very weak candidates had tried to disguise their lack of skills in figure drawing by producing compositions of a sporting figure in action within a stadium, and completely copied from a secondary source.

Option (b)

There were some outstanding submissions for this option, both using painting, drawing and printmaking processes. They had all undertaken thorough experiments with viewpoints, compositional studies and arrangements of the scarf and hands. Many had taken the opportunity of using ethnic costume within their compositions, and transparent and translucent qualities of scarves were used to mask parts of the face without completely hiding the form. At this level the quality of any photography used was of the highest standard and had enabled them to work in depth in interpreting qualities discovered within.

Some very competent compositions had attempted to highlight the scarf by rendering this in a different medium to the figure. The resulting compositions were never totally successful, lacking a unity of tone or colour.

A few very weak entries were seen from candidates who lacked any experience of prior working from the model. A few copies of Old Master portraits were submitted on which poorly drawn scarves had been placed.

Question 4 Interiors or Exteriors

Option (a)

There were a limited number of entries for this option with none in the higher mark ranges. Some submissions using pencil drawing failed to convey any indication of time of day, but there were some better paintings which employed suitable colour ranges effectively.

Candidates in the mid mark ranges had used photography as a research tool but interpretation was lacking with only a literal copying of the image being evident.

Weaker entries tended to work from imagination with no evidence of researching from the real world. Results were very formulaic, using mechanical perspective and dark but formless shading. Shadows were invented and market features were merely hinted at.

Option (b)

This was a popular option with a wide range of interpretations. Reflections of trees, bushes and buildings in rivers, lakes or ponds were used as starting points by many candidates. Harbours and shipping gave a more industrial outlook for those candidates who lived near coastal towns. Rural settings of boats in marshlands and river banks were carefully observed with complex patterns of tall reeds and tangled vegetation. Experiments with different times of the day or different weather conditions created almost abstract compositions where the better able candidates could exploit subtleties of colour and texture in expressive paintings. Others had looked more closely at their immediate environment, producing detailed studies of garden ponds and swimming pools, and often including parts of figures.

Candidates in the higher mark ranges demonstrated an excellent understanding of the laws of reflection. Very able candidates could also show an overlay of shadows on top of reflections.

Entries in the lower ranges often confused reflective angles with shadows. At this end of the ability range there were lots of copies of scenes taken from postcards or travel brochures of places far removed from the candidates' immediate environment.

Option (c)

This was used by many who demonstrated competent painting skills. A meaningful application of paint was seen ranging from delicate watercolour to impasto created with brushstrokes and palette knife to enhance mood and atmosphere. There was plenty of evidence of direct contact with nature with evidence of careful colour mixing to render the variety of foliage, textures and the shadows cast by trees cutting across pathways.

Weaker compositions were rather flat with little use of perspective or the ability to render depth through a recession of colour, tones, or scale of mark making.

Paper 0400/01
Coursework

General Comments

This year thirty two Centres submitted folders of work from nearly five hundred candidates. Most submissions were for Painting and Related Media. Some 3-D work was seen as well as Textile Design. One Centre submitted some Graphic Design Work. There was very little Photography seen, but more Centres had encouraged the use of Printmaking, both as an area of specialist study and as an additional process within painting and drawing.

In the majority of cases candidates had pursued well structured courses. There was ample evidence of good teaching practice which had encouraged a variety of approaches and a range of media. These candidates' submissions had met all of the Assessment Objectives for this paper, and most Centre assessments were therefore fairly accurate.

There was a great deal of work that started from observational studies, or included work from first hand sources somewhere in their folder. Similarly there was evidence of relevant research into the work of other artists, designers or cultures, and this had a positive effect on individual outcomes. There were also significant efforts made to really explore media. Final pieces were based on excellent development and well founded evaluation of the work in progress.

Within the best entries supporting work was entirely appropriate. Candidates had selected sketches, their own photography, and experiments, and mounted these in a logical sequence so that their thinking and progress could be clearly measured and rewarded accordingly.

Some Centres seem unable to grasp the idea of submitting one piece of work supported by studies that the candidate undertook to research and develop their ideas towards the final outcome. In some submissions a number of finished pieces of work were submitted with little relationship, or with few relative supporting studies. It was difficult to see where ideas had originated, how they had developed, or what experimentation had taken place. In such cases it is also impossible to justify how the Centre has arrived at their assessments when so little can be measured directly against the Assessment Objectives.

Most Centre marking was within acceptable levels of accuracy and only slight adjustments were needed. Most frequently reductions were made because levels of investigation, research and development were often insufficient to properly demonstrate independence and personal qualities. In other cases lack of attention to adequate analyses of form and structure meant that outcomes were lacking in aesthetic understanding.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

The best submissions within this option had good evidence of observational studies, and there was a high level of experimentation with a wide range of media: pastel, paint, inks and collage were all seen. Some large scale final paintings were documented with good quality photographs. There was evidence of ambition both in the scale of work and in the complexity and maturity of ideas. Supportive teaching had directed candidates towards relevant first hand sources as well as the work of other artists, the influence of which could be traced through to the finished pieces. Good use had been made by some from working direct in their surrounding landscape. They had been well trained in painting skills, to both mix colour well and to apply paint in an expressive manner to convey atmosphere and space as well as to convey form and structure.

Some less successful submissions showed high levels of individual research but little evidence of analyses. Many did not really know how to develop what they had researched, and the experiments they had undertaken were not always relevant to their final ideas.

Some much weaker submissions were almost entirely lacking in relevant research. There were several finished paintings, often of entirely different subjects and with no relationship. It was as if they had been randomly selected for assessment. With some it was clear that the candidates had not benefited from a structured course of specialist study.

Printmaking

A few highly original and imaginative submissions were received within this area of study this year. The best showed excellent control over techniques. There were examples of multi colours with careful over printing. Candidates had also experimented with their final printed images by cutting and reassembling and further over printing or even drawing into them. Some had combined the use of printed fabric into these multi layered works.

There were some more straightforward lino prints. Whilst the design development was very good and based on sound drawing skills, the craft skills of cutting and printing were rather traditional and lacking in an experimental approach.

3D Studies

Submissions using assemblage, ceramics, and architectural model making were received.

The best ceramic work was derived from careful studies of the human head that had been developed into a very impressive 3D modelled head. Other ceramics in mid ability levels showed highly developed technical skills to produce complex, if rather illustrative, images.

The architectural models were all of a high standard, based on in depth research, and sound design development. The finished models, using card, plaster, plastic, sponge, and even plastic figures to give a sense of scale showed competent levels of technical skills.

The sculptures using assemblage techniques were less successful as candidates had failed to use chosen media with sufficient care or skill, and an overarching regard for the sculptural form and structure was not in evidence.

Textile Design

The most popular medium in this area was batik and submissions covered the full ability range. The best had a good understanding of repeat pattern and had very good technical control to achieve their desired outcomes. Folders were well organised and it was clear that many candidates had benefited from visits to craft workshops made as part of their course to stimulate research into their chosen subjects. Mid level achievements still showed good levels of technical competence with well thought through designs in terms of balanced forms and colours. Weaker work was much more derivative. Design content was often over complicated or lost in control of colour.

There were some excellent submissions using an integrated approach with screen printed motifs on ceramic tiles, or pottery which was presented alongside printed fabrics and curtains using similar motifs. These were highly individual, and were well supported with relevant research based on a fusion of two cultures.

Graphic Design and Photography

One Centre presented work in graphic design. Designs for DVD covers and logos were submitted. Projects were based on past examination papers for Paper 3 which was a very good idea from which to build a relevant unit of work. In most cases the work was of a very high standard, and even weaker candidates had benefited enormously from a strong course structure and teacher support.

A few candidates in one Centre produced folders of photography. They were mostly photograms and still life photographs. Details of their performance will have been included within the Centre Report.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/02
Interpretative Study

General comments

The question paper followed the usual pattern in providing six open ended and varied starting points, open to interpretation in many different ways. The starting points in the questions are designed to stimulate personal responses based on experience and observation, and many candidates responded well with a wide range of individual and interesting approaches. The most popular questions, representing over 60% of responses this session were **Question 1**; 'Bad Weather', **Question 2**; 'Making Choices' and **Question 6**; 'Construction or Demolition'. Two other questions were also fairly popular, **Question 3**; 'In the Spotlight' and **Question 4**; 'Growth', and were well represented in the scripts examined with just over 30% of responses. **Question 5**; 'Purification' was the least popular with less than 10% of candidates choosing it.

There is plenty of evidence in the quality of some of the work submitted that many Centres have well structured courses designed and taught in a way that prepare the candidates fully for the control test. These Centres are very aware of the syllabus requirements and their candidates submit very personal work that is very strongly structured with plenty of evidence of rigorous preparation in research, the development of ideas and experiments in using media. Informed teaching can be detected, for example, in good use of primary and secondary resources early in the preparatory studies, using observational drawing from life, or where photography is used it is in support of studies for reference and with original photographs taken by the candidate. If the photographic images used were not the candidate's own, they are carefully selected and used just as a source of visual information rather than as something to be merely copied. In many successful submissions, there is both experimentation and accomplished use of media and techniques, and sometimes evidence of candidates working with courage, confidence and maturity to produce work that is authentically individual and alive with personality. Even where such candidates went beyond their known abilities, seeing the experiments that failed were just as interesting and valuable as seeing more successful attempts, and such boldness did not generally go unrewarded.

The value of supporting studies cannot be overemphasised. The general recommendation for the majority of submissions is that the allowance of three A2 preparatory sheets is needed to fulfil the requirements of the examination fully. Some of the best supporting work in the preparatory studies seen showed real struggles and experimentation with the questions during the period leading up to the examination, with genuine engagement with ideas that extended and challenged the abilities of the candidate. Good judgement to assess the quality of potential solutions and the success of an experiment with media or composition was often seen in these candidates. Some very able ones did this visually, with the growth of their response easy to trace through their preliminary studies, without any writing or annotation. Written annotation by drawings, diagrams, notes and evaluation can be helpful in some cases to understand what is being attempted: however the use of a visual trail of sketches and studies in the preparatory sheets is a perfectly valid way to communicate candidates' intentions and judgements.

A large minority of entries also made reference to established artists. Studying the work of artists was used wisely by many candidates, and in various ways informed or aided them in the development of their responses, their subject matter, the media used or in composition of their work.

Such evidence of the use of time in the preparatory period leading up to the control test is absent or severely limited in far too many candidates. As a full third of the assessment criteria are related to research, development and working with maturity towards an outcome, it is plain that attention to these areas are one of the keys to success. In the middle ranges of ability, for example, one often saw very little or no observational work or genuine research, the preparatory time being used mainly to quickly fix on and rehearse the final piece, so that the final submission consisted of perhaps one sheet of outline ideas quickly sketched out, an outline drawing of the final idea, a practice painting and then the final piece done in the examination, which had perhaps been copied from the practice piece. It is fair to say that in the majority of these cases the outcomes were limited by lack of genuine research, and that the practice final piece was better than the examination piece. In the copied examination work there was a reflection of the lack of

engagement of the candidate, with a piece of final work that had really been done and finished days before the control test, and that they had stopped thinking about. It is worth remembering that any weakness in a piece of work executed on the days of the examination, caused by examination nerves or in the candidate still experimenting and trying out new ideas, can be more than compensated for by evidence of the thinking, abilities, skills and research carried out prior to the examination. The work is still alive and fresh. However, the marks for research and development cannot be awarded without evidence, however successful the final piece is. Good preparation is a key to success.

With the most limited candidates there was little or no indication of their thought processes or intentions: some even submitted a final piece with absolutely no evidence of any work done before at all. Where a little preparatory work was seen by weaker candidates, there usually seemed to have been very little thought given to any alternative responses to the chosen question or to developing the initial idea beyond a reflex reaction that had been arrived at in the first few seconds of seeing the examination paper – in other words doing the first thing that came into their head. Copying from poorly printed images downloaded from the Internet or cut out of magazines proliferated in many of the submissions of the weaker candidates. One even saw many candidates from the same Centre using exactly the same downloaded Internet images.

Comments on Specific Questions

1. Bad Weather.

This was one of the most popular questions. Some of the better candidates responded in a literal way and made good use of the preparation time to observe and sketch cloud formations from life, sometimes informed by work from relevant artists such as Turner or Constable. A fairly common response was to portray the approach of bad weather, with storms, tornados and winds seen in the distance. Sometimes this was very effective, capitalising on the dramatic contrast between the sunny, calm pre-storm landscape and the dark, powerful approaching violence of the bad weather. The effects of hurricanes or torrential rain on towns and people featured, with varying success, sometimes with people rushing for shelter or trees and buildings being damaged. In a few cases, the bad weather successfully portrayed was of drought or a heat wave, but this was fairly rare.

The title was used by some as a metaphor or symbol for arguments, bad relationships or marriage, or of a difficulty in life or in society at large. This proved to be a successful response in many cases, and the candidates really sought out ways of showing relationships visually through extensive drawing from life, posing friends in appropriate ways to model for their studies.

At the higher mark range, some candidates used expressive colour and tone which heightened the mood and atmosphere of their work. Line and brush strokes conveyed the energy and power of the bad weather, sometimes almost to the extent of the work becoming abstract. Many weaker candidates simply downloaded pictures from the Internet of storms and lightning and made straight copies, generally poor and rather crude, for their final exam work, with little or no development or interpretation.

2. Making Choices.

This was the most widely interpreted question with a vast range of differing responses. Its open ended nature provided candidates with the possibility of a wide range of subjects ranging across human relationships such as choices between boyfriends or girlfriends, use of drugs or alcohol, good and evil, heaven and hell, making decisions in games such as chess and poker, anorexia or obesity, material wealth or poverty and other relevant pairs of opposites or life decisions. Weaker candidates struggled to represent their ideas visually and often chose to imagine how their subject looked rather than seek out primary sources or sources from the art world that might support them.

Those candidates who chose subject matter that could be studied first hand tended to be more successful than those that did not. Some of the very best work came from candidates setting up still lives of their subject matter and working from them: one memorable piece came from a candidate who set up a game of chess in progress and worked directly from it. But even if a more interpretative response was being made, the 'making choices' of the question including keys and padlocks for example, a drawing or study of keys from observation invariably informed the later work to advantage. There were weak images of people in prison, hypodermic syringes, and crossroads with signposts pointing to success or failure or to career choices, almost all of them completely from imagination or very poorly informed by superficial preparatory work.

3. In the Spotlight.

This was a very popular choice and responses were very interesting. Some candidates took a very literal approach and set up small arrangements of objects lit strongly by a desk lamp or spotlight to create pools of light or highlights and strong deep shadows in the still life. Others used the title to reflect on the nature of celebrity, or of people in the news, sometimes referring to the work of artists like Andy Warhol or the way in which some newspapers and magazines focus on celebrity.

Many candidates, especially in parts of the world where the political situation is problematic, used the subject to base their work on a reflection of the common concerns and tensions in society. Other fears about world situations, poverty, war, population growth, global warming, and drought featured, often from candidates who were clearly very well informed about these issues and were very articulate in their visual statements about them. The best of the work in this genre was highly interesting and showed great insight and wisdom.

4. Growth.

Not surprisingly, almost all responses centred on the natural world of animals and plants, and in many cases this question allowed the opportunity for candidates to make a literal choice in some primary source drawing and painting of subjects such as young children and elderly people, plants, trees, and eggs and birds. There were some beautifully observed plant drawings of buds, flowers and seed heads, but by contrast the development of embryos and representations of evolution, fairly commonly seen, were rather weaker as they relied heavily on stereotypical or biological images from textbooks. Similarly, those interpreting the question as life cycles of butterflies and frogs, nearly all taken from photos or imagined, were of varied success.

5. Purification.

This was the least popular question. Not surprisingly many candidates took the spiritual or religious route, but some referred to the cleansing of the body as a source of imagery. In either case the preference was to use magazine photos or images from books. Water was symbolically seen as a vehicle for purification, and there were many images of washing, baptism, and surfing. In one exceptional example, a candidate used her friend to pose as if in a shower in a series of life drawings that were both dramatic and symbolic of the process of purification, with a successful outcome in a series of well seen and painted images.

A few very able candidates used abstraction to convey their response through shape, texture, tone and colour, with gradations of hue or form to represent the process of purification. An unusual interpretation involved a critical view of the purification of a nation, with references to racism and 'ethnic cleansing', done in a very personal and very political illustration style. Another candidate had clearly seen the work of Goya and made reference in their work to the psychological processes explored by that artist in the 'Proverbs' series or in his other works that are divinations of man's inner world of demons and torment. Some courageous candidates attempted twentieth-century visualisations of the alienated human condition. At the other end of the ability range, very tired looking comic book or biblical fantasy figures emerging from torment or hell into a serene or heavenly situation were also in evidence.

6. Construction or Destruction.

In most cases, candidates followed the question and did either construction or destruction, but occasionally both were tackled in the same submission, by way of a comparison or juxtaposition. Sometimes this resulted in some very strong abstract work. The opportunities for abstraction using strong line and ambiguous space, creating patterns and structures were in many cases well thought through, using relevant artists such as Tatlin, Giacometti, and Victor Vasarely as models

The question also gave many candidates the opportunity to explore their own local environments and to draw and to take photos of building sites as part of their preparation. In some cases, the teacher responsible took the whole cohort of candidates to a nearby construction site and every candidate's work was based on the excellent studies made.

There was a range of interesting responses that referred to topics such as birth, the building of bird's nests or spider's webs, emotional and social demolition, and the destruction of the twin towers in New York, snails eating flowers, and the construction of mechanical bodies and hearts metamorphosing into robotic machines rather than organic form. The influence of the dada or surrealist artists Duchamp or Max Ernst was noticed in some candidates' work, sometimes with collage or montage being used effectively. This question did result in very imaginative and innovative responses with a great deal of lateral and original thinking.

Other Comments

The predominant media used was water based paint. Pastel and coloured pencil featured in many of the submissions and there were also some very strong examples with inks being used. Photography was used successfully by some candidates to inform their painted or drawn work, but it is worth remembering that photographs that are the candidates own should be used wherever possible, and if they are not, they should be limited to information or reference only rather than used as a primary source merely to copy from. As much evidence as possible should be submitted to show development of ideas and techniques, and where images from secondary sources are used, these should be included in the preparatory work as well.

Question papers can now be downloaded from the CIE website as soon as they are published, and given to the candidates. This avoids time waiting for the post, and means that candidates can have a really good length of time to prepare properly for the control test. It is advisable to give plenty of time for reflection and there should be opportunities for candidates to change their mind, to develop new or alternative solutions and to refine their responses. This might mean that the three sheets of preparatory work have to be an edited version of the journey taken by the candidate towards their final outcome, with some experiments omitted and just relevant or key studies included. The teachers concerned are in the best position to know the strengths and weaknesses of their candidates, and to structure the preparatory time.

The Art and Design CD for IGCSE, published in 2004 and available from the publications department, can be a useful aid to teaching. Its reference is 'CD0400 04 01'. Attention is also drawn to a project underway as this is written to publish pictures of artwork from candidates on the CIE website for all of the 0400 IGCSE Papers and for the 9704 'A' Level. It is hoped that teachers will share and discuss the examples that are published to support candidates in their own work.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/03

Design Study

General comments

There were considerably more entries for Paper 3 this session than in previous years. Nearly 40% of all candidates chose **Question 1**, *Design using Lettering*, with a further 20% opting for **Question 2**, *Illustration and Calligraphy*. The next most popular choices were **Question 5**, *Fashion Design* and **Question 6**, *Fabric Design*. Substantial numbers responded to **Question 4**, *Interior Design* and **Question 7**, *Printmaking*, but very few submissions were received for **Question 3**, *Environmental Design* or **Question 8**, *Photography*.

The most successful outcomes resulted from thorough preparatory investigations and an exploration of ideas which were informed by an understanding of contemporary or historical practice for the chosen specialist design briefs. Inevitably, the less able responses were inhibited by patchy research which offered poor information to develop or evaluate, and a surprising number of submissions offered no preparatory studies at all. Experimentation with appropriate media for clear graphic communication, sometimes including digital photography and computer manipulations, was apparent in all competent to high level achievements, but many weaker attempts were either limited or very uneven in the selection and control of media.

The Examiners appreciated the concern shown by the majority of Centres for clear labelling, sensible mounting and the presentation of work. However, it is still necessary to point out that when the examination work is not attached to the **front** of the preparatory sheets considerable confusion can arise. Some Centres have adopted the practice of enclosing the work in individually labelled folders, but then leaving the work itself unlabelled; this led to a loss of identity once the work was removed from such folders in order to be assessed.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Design using Lettering

The logo design brief for an international parcel delivery company, named *SWIFT*, resulted in several excellent and many very competent to high level responses. But, as this was by far the most popular question, the majority of candidates offered solutions which were either only just satisfactory or less than adequate. The most able submissions grew from thorough research of birds, animals or human athletes which informed the development of images to integrate with similarly refined letterforms. A strong awareness of the design problem was apparent in the sequential exploration of a dynamic or rhythmic emphasis of line and shape through the manipulation of colour and tone to enhance figure-ground relationships. Such solutions were then very effectively shown on labels for parcels or company vehicles.

At the mid levels of achievement candidates offered some understanding through the development of images and the selection of letterforms. However, once a single idea had emerged there was a tendency to be satisfied with the result, rather than engage in experimentation with the relationships of visual elements to refine the logos. Less successful responses avoided any serious investigation and, all too often, made use of existing images downloaded from computer software, without any further development of personal ideas. The weakest submissions showed a poor ability to research and record images or letterforms and very little awareness of the particular demands of the design problem. Many candidates had apparently chosen this question because they thought they could offer a quick and easy solution.

Question 2

Illustration and Calligraphy

- (a) The design brief for the cover of a DVD production, entitled *Perturbed Spirits*, produced by a company named *Spectre* was the most popular option for this question. The best submissions offered interesting experiments with surface layering to evoke atmospheric effects. When this was combined with personal research of the human figure or a particular environment some excellent design ideas developed to integrate with individually devised letterforms. Mid level responses were either successful with the illustration or the development of letterforms, but seldom achieved a unified balance or clarity of communication with both; this was usually because the relationships of visual elements had not been explored sufficiently in the preparatory studies. The less successful outcomes relied heavily on secondary sources from fantasy comic books, showing little concern for layout or the placing of text in relation to image.
- (b) Although fewer candidates responded to the calligraphy option for Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem *Phantom*, several excellent and many good submissions were received. The Examiners were pleased to note that this specialisation is increasingly being taught to a high level of expertise, resulting in practised calligraphic scripts, with considered spacing and page layout, integrated with thoroughly developed illustrations and borders. Many competent scripts were also seen at the mid levels of achievement, but integration with illustration and borders was usually less well developed, particularly in terms of tone and colour relationships. The weaker responses invariably focused on the text of the poem alone, often employing ordinary handwriting, rather than a specific style of calligraphy.

Question 3

Environmental and Structural Design

Only a few submissions were seen in response to the design brief for a miniature railway to encircle an amusement park. Most candidates, though, offered well developed ground plans of the layout, the best of which made good use of line, shape, tone and colour coding to distinguish between and distribute the various attractions of the amusement park. Some of the artist's impressions of a view from the train station platform used perspective techniques successfully to communicate structures and surroundings. The only less able submissions seen resulted from a lack of understanding of the requirements of the question to present a ground plan, or artist's impressions were misguided attempts to copy an existing image of an actual train station.

Question 4

Interior Design

The design brief for a mural for the entrance lobby of an engineering and construction company specified a limit of black and white and three colours. This restriction encouraged the majority of candidates to focus on the organisation of tone and colour distribution in their preparatory work. However, the most successful responses were also fully informed by thorough investigations into structures, such as roads, bridges or buildings, and construction plant, such as cranes, earth-movers or diggers. Some excellent and many good designs were developed from this information, following evaluations of the forms, shapes and patterns recorded.

At the mid levels of achievement, although similar research was more limited, candidates developed competent outcomes by exploiting the rectilinear qualities and grids of scaffolding or steel space frames. When this was linked to the work of Piet Mondrian, some interesting abstract solutions evolved, or, if figures were included, references to the work of Fernand Léger gave a positive boost to the sense of direction for the final outcome. An awareness of the early 20th Century work of such artists also informed an understanding of line, tone and colour distribution, as well as the use of collage elements to create underlying bands and shapes to unify the designs. There were fewer less successful responses to this question, as most candidates found a way to develop a design idea, even when only a basic level of ability to gather information was apparent.

Question 5

Fashion Design

The two options, *Ice Cold Sundaes* and *Red Hot Peppers*, for the costume design brief, for a participant in a dance extravaganza, were equally popular. Many very good interpretations were received for each theme, some of which achieved the highest levels of the mark range. In such work design ideas were clearly informed by lively investigations of ice cream desserts or capsicum, both from directly observed drawing and personal digital photographic recording. This motivated a concern for the form and structure of the costume, designed to fit the models, as well as cool or hot colour themes, pattern, and surface embellishments. Direct observations of a variety of poses of the human figure from different viewpoints led to very stylish and accomplished presentations of the designs for the final outcomes.

Mid level achievements also showed a competent understanding of the question by researching the themes effectively, but the design developments tended to focus on flat decorative effects, rather than exploit the sculptural potential of a costume to fit the human figure. While the quality of figure drawing was adequate to display the designs, further exploration of a variety of poses would have fostered more individual and less formulaic results. There were also a considerable number of less successful submissions, for which the depiction of models was inhibited by poor figure drawing skills, and some candidates even resorted to tracing poses from magazines. It was also surprising to see how many of the weaker attempts used reds and oranges to convey 'cool' or whites and blues to convey 'hot', an indication that little consideration had been given to the specific design brief.

Question 6

Fabric Design

The design brief, based on birds in flight, for a furnishing fabric for a hotel situated close to a nature reserve, was interpreted in the majority of submissions as a repeat pattern. If, however, some other form of arrangement was developed, this was acceptable, as the requirement to produce a repeat pattern was not actually stated in the question. As in previous sessions, many well considered designs were seen, particularly from Centres which specialise in teaching repeat pattern techniques. These were invariably preceded by thorough investigations of birds in flight to inform the development of dynamic or rhythmic positive-negative reversals and colour/tone counter-changes.

Mid level responses showed a concern to develop and organise shapes, but further explorations of figure-ground relationships and personal colour mixing could have led to higher levels of achievement. The less successful submissions offered sparse research which was often dependent on tracings of the most easily accessible images of birds, followed by very basic attempts to manipulate or organise the information as a design. Consequently, the relationships of visual elements, such as line, shape, tone and colour showed very little progression in exploring the theme of the question.

Question 7

Printmaking

Compared with previous sessions, far fewer submissions were received for this question. Of the three themes offered for a print for a tourist poster, *Local Crafts* and *Boats* were the most popular choices, with very few seen for *Markets*. Similar to the other questions, candidates who engaged in thorough preparatory investigations developed the better design ideas. Most of the work seen, though, could be described as painting using stencils, rather than a specific technique for reproducing images, such as relief printing with blocks or screen printing. Mid level achievements usually offered rich colour and surface relationships, but the designs would have benefited from further exploration and development during the preparatory period. The less successful prints used crude shapes and an arbitrary distribution of tone and colour.

Question 8

Photography

Just four candidates submitted work for this question, which was focused on themes relating to urban renewal. One response for the theme of *Building Sites* reached a high level through varied investigative recording, selection and presentation of ideas. The remaining responses were adequate to competent, but lacked a concern to adopt particular viewpoints to create interesting composition or produce photographic prints with clear tonal gradations.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/04

Critical and Historical Study

General comments

Candidates performed to a very high standard, with Centres effectively applying the aims of the course. The engagement and understanding in evidence go well beyond the rather timid approaches and rote learning of some years ago. Centres and teachers are to be commended.

As was the case last year, real contact with art works and exhibitions was a major factor in many of the more highly successful outcomes.

Projects were generally well researched and presented. Continuing good use was made of local resources such as public buildings, visits to art galleries and interviews with practising artists and designers. Candidates often made good use of their own photography and supported ideas and themes with sound internet research. It is a good idea if all resources such as books, web sites and CD ROMS are named in an appendix as this gives the project a more authentic feel and is good academic practice.

Interviews with artists and designers and photographs taken at these sessions were also used to good effect and these experiences gave excellent insight into how artists think and work and this proved to be a very strong feature in some of the work with mature written responses and analysis. Some weaker submissions talked to artists but did not always develop the experience into further aspects of the study.

The balance of text and images should be maintained throughout the study and presentation needs to be well organised. Some projects undercut the word limit and did not allow for an in depth study. Given the time allowance for this submission, 1500 – 2000 words are expected. There was less of the untidy cutting, sticking and labelling of past years so the general appearance of most submissions was good. In strong Centres a formula for presentation worked well. There is enough time allowed to ensure good presentation.

In Centres who wish candidates to develop some of their own practical work as an adjunct to the study it is possible to develop answers with a more practical presentation and this can work well. However, candidates should not just be copying a work for the sake of it but trying to find out how an artist actually used colour or brushwork. Such submissions must still include a commentary or some annotation which shows the thinking and critical awareness of the candidate.

There was a heavy dependence on the internet for research, and this can be a very positive aid to study, but materials need analysing and not just printing off verbatim. Some interaction and evaluation by the candidate are expected. In some weaker submissions there was little attempt to relate images to text or even label images correctly and one or two of the poorest submissions were in the form of last minute essays, roughly hand written with no images at all.

Many candidates illustrated their projects with their own photography and sketches and this often gave a personal touch to the work. Where photocopies are used these should be as clear as possible as poor reproduction gives a project a weak impact.

Overall most submissions worked to the rubric with care and efficiency and the general standard was effective, well thought out and engaged, with a clear idea and aims. Selection of a good topic with sound resources and support materials is vital and those Centres which related their work to museum visits, visiting artists and local designers gave themselves a head start in organising and focusing the study.

The strongest submissions were those where candidates had built up a body research materials and visual evidence for their projects and then refined it for a final write up and presentation. Higher outcomes showed engaged involvement and development. The weakest work lacked focus and often made use of really well presented work but in a way in which no theme or clear idea was evident.

Handwritten submissions are equally acceptable as digitised projects but the writing and presentation must be clear and edited for crossings out and poor spelling. Candidates should be encouraged to revisit submissions to make them look as good as possible.

IGCSE ART 0400/04 CRITICAL STUDIES ART PROJECT NOVEMBER 2007

Paper 0400/04
Critical Studies Art Project

General comments

A growth in the number of candidates and more participating centres than in the last session. Projects were generally of a high standard and well researched and presented. Good use was made of local resources such as public buildings, visits to art galleries and interviews with practising artists and designers. The actual subject matter varied depending on the environment so that candidates work had quite a distinctive feel.

Interviews with artists and designers and photographs taken at these sessions were also used to good effect and these experiences gave excellent insight into how artists think and work and this proved to be a very strong feature in some of the work with mature written responses and analysis.

The balance of text and images should be maintained throughout the study and presentation needs to be well organised. Some weaker candidates use very untidy cutting, sticking and labelling and this gives projects a worn and uncared for appearance at the outset. This is art so good presentation should be expected. In strong centres a formula for presentation was often organised and this was clear and gave the appearance and general feel of the work some substance. There is time allowed to ensure good presentation is maintained.

Some centres show a tendency to make more of the element of practical art work to replace text and analysis. It is possible to develop answers with a more practical presentation and this worked very well in a number of cases. It should not just be copying a work for the sake of it but trying to find out how an artist actually used colour or brushwork and therefore this can be sometimes be more effective as details. These submissions must still include a commentary or annotation which shows the thinking and critical awareness of the candidate.

Images and general presentation were often very clear when carried out on digital art and design programmes but in weaker submissions there was little attempt to relate images to text or even label images correctly.

Many candidates illustrated their projects with their own photography and sketches and this often gave a personal touch to the work. There were some problems with candidates who submitted their own art work which bore no relation to the chosen theme and this did not help to clarify the objectives of the project.

Where photocopies are used these should be as clear as possible as poor reproduction gives a project a weak impact.

The strongest submissions were those where candidates had built up a body research materials and visual evidence for their projects and then refined it for a final write up and presentation. Higher outcomes showed engaged involvement and development.

Handwritten submissions are equally acceptable as digitised projects but the writing and presentation must be clear and edited for crossings out and poor spelling. must be clear and written without endless crossings out. Candidates should be encouraged by teachers to revisit and make submissions look as good as possible.

As was the case last year, real contact with art works and exhibitions was a major factor in many of the more highly successful outcomes.

This examination is now operating to a high standard and centres have effectively applied the aims of the course and there is considerably more engagement and understanding which goes well beyond the rather timid and rote learning of some years ago. Centres and teachers are to be commended.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/05
Coursework

General comments

This year thirty two Centres submitted folders of work from nearly five hundred candidates. Most submissions were for Painting and Related Media. Some 3-D work was seen as well as Textile Design. One Centre submitted some Graphic Design Work. There was very little photography seen, but more Centres had encouraged the use of Printmaking, both as an area of specialist study and as an additional process within painting and drawing.

In the majority of cases candidates had pursued well structured courses. There was ample evidence of good teaching practice which had encouraged a variety of approaches and a range of media. These candidates' submissions had met all of the Assessment Objectives for this paper, and most Centre assessments were therefore fairly accurate.

There was a great deal of work that started from observational studies, or included work from first hand sources somewhere in their folder. Similarly there was evidence of relevant research into the work of other artists, designers or cultures, and this had a positive effect on individual outcomes. There were also significant efforts made to really explore media. Final pieces were based on excellent development and well founded evaluation of the work in progress.

Within the best entries supporting work was entirely appropriate. Candidates had selected sketches, their own photography, and experiments, and mounted these in a logical sequence so that their thinking, and progress could be clearly measured and rewarded accordingly.

Some Centres seem unable to grasp the idea of submitting one piece of work supported by studies that the candidate undertook to research and develop their ideas towards the final outcome. In some submissions a number of finished pieces of work were submitted with no supporting studies. It was difficult, if not impossible to see where ideas had originated, how they had developed, or what experimentation had taken place. In such cases it is also impossible to justify how the Centre has arrived at their assessments when so little can be measured directly against the Assessment Objectives.

Most Centre marking was within acceptable levels of accuracy and only slight adjustments were needed. Most frequently reductions were made because levels of investigation, research and development was often insufficient to properly demonstrate independence and personal qualities. In other cases lack of attention to adequate analyses of form and structure meant that outcomes were lacking in aesthetic understanding.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

The best submissions within this option had good evidence of observational studies, and there was a high level of experimentation with a wide range of media: pastel, paint, inks and collage were all seen. Some large scale final paintings were documented with good quality photographs. There was evidence of ambition both in the scale of work and in the complexity and maturity of ideas. Supportive teaching had directed candidates towards relevant first hand sources as well as the work of other artists, the influence of which could be traced through to the finished pieces. Good use had been made by some from working direct in their surrounding landscape. They had been well trained in painting skills, to both mix colour well and to apply paint in an expressive manner to convey atmosphere and space as well as to convey form and structure.

Some less successful submissions showed high levels of individual research but little evidence of analyses. Many did not really know how to develop what they had researched, and the experiments they had undertaken were not always relevant to their final ideas.

Some much weaker submissions were almost entirely lacking in relevant research. There were several finished paintings, often of entirely different subjects and with no relationship. It was as if they had been randomly selected for assessment. With some it was clear that the candidates had not benefited from a structured course of specialist study.

Printmaking

A few highly original and imaginative submissions were received within this area of study, this year. The best showed excellent control over techniques. There were examples of multi colours with careful over printing. Candidates had also experimented with their final printed images by cutting and reassembling and further over printing or even drawing into them. Some had combined the use of printed fabric into these multi layered works.

There were some more straightforward lino prints. Whilst the design development was very good and based on sound drawing skills, the craft skills of cutting and printing were rather traditional and lacking in an experimental approach.

3D Studies

Submissions using assemblage, ceramics, and architectural model making were received.

The best ceramic work was derived from careful studies of the human head that had been developed into a very impressive 3D modelled head. Other ceramics in mid ability levels showed highly developed technical skills to produce complex, if rather illustrative images.

The architectural models were all of a high standard, based on in depth research, and sound design development. The finished models, using card, plaster, plastic, sponge, and even plastic figures to give a sense of scale showed competent levels of technical skills.

The sculptures using assemblage techniques were less successful as candidates had failed to use chosen media with sufficient care or skill, and an overarching regard for the sculptural form and structure was not in evidence.

Textile Design

The most popular medium in this area was batik and submissions covered the full ability range. The best had a good understanding of repeat pattern and had very good technical control to achieve their desired outcomes. Folders were well organised and it was clear that many candidates had benefited from visits to craft workshops made as part of their course to stimulate research into their chosen subjects. Mid level achievements still showed good levels of technical competence with well thought through designs in terms of balanced forms and colours. Weaker work was much more derivative. Design content was often over complicated or lost in control of colour.

There was some excellent submissions using an integrated approach using screen printed motifs on ceramic tiles, of pottery which was presented alongside printed fabrics and curtains using similar motifs. These were highly individual, and were well supported with relevant research based on a fusion of two cultures.

Graphic Design and Photography

One Centre presented work in graphic design. Designs for DVD covers and logos were submitted. Projects were based on past examination papers for Paper 3 which was a very good idea from which to build a relevant unit of work. In most cases the work was of a very high standard, and even weaker candidates had benefited enormously from a strong course structure and teacher support.

A few candidates in one Centre produced folders of photography. They were mostly photograms and still life photographs. Details of their performance will have been included within the Centre Report.