

ART & DESIGN

Paper 0400/01 Coursework Assignment
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Key messages

- Candidates should label their own photography to clearly distinguish them from images that are taken from secondary sources, such as those downloaded from the Internet or from books.
- Some submissions would have benefited from more editing and careful selection of work to present a cohesive and clear journey from the starting point to the final outcome.

General comments

Preparation, organisation of work and appropriate use of media overall was good and most candidates had presented coursework on A2 sheets which were correctly labelled. In most cases the portfolio work related to the final outcome, which was clearly labelled and easy to identify. Some submissions were less well organised and it was difficult to follow the visual journey from a starting point to a final outcome. Careful editing would have communicated ideas more effectively.

Some candidates presented work from a combination of separate projects, which did not lead to the final piece. The portfolio should be work that is relevant to, and informs, the final outcome.

Candidates explored a variety of themes and many demonstrated personal qualities. Media use included paint, pastels, crayon, pencil and ink, with the addition of some printmaking, ceramics work and textile experiments. Candidates' own photography was often included as part of the recording process, making a positive impact on recording and subsequent ideas. Some work included unnecessary photographs of the making process that did not inform the work.

Higher levels

Candidates working at the higher levels demonstrated in-depth investigations from a range of sources, including observational studies and their own photography. Often starting points demonstrated a personal connection and engagement, linking the candidates' own experiences or interests with their work, including local scenes such as markets and village life or cultural celebrations. Photography was often used to explore the subject matter in detail, recording observations from close up, different angles and exploring a range of light source and composition.

At this level candidates made links to relevant artists, designers and cultural research. These references were used to make personal and insightful connections between their ideas and those expressed in the works of others. Extending their research in this way encouraged candidates to look for more unusual and creative solutions. The strongest examples of idea development illustrated investigations of viewpoints and angles, close-ups and abstraction, to form alternative compositions through thumbnail drawings, collage and photography.

There was evidence of considered and informed experimentation with a range of media and techniques that led to some strong and individual outcomes. For many, the work was clear and communicated intention successfully. At this level many candidates were able to review and refine their media use, making informed decisions about which media was best suited to their purpose. This often led to an excellent level of skill in the candidates' handling and manipulation of their chosen media in the final outcome.

Candidates were able to successfully review and reflect on their work as it progressed to make informed decisions through thoughtful evaluations at each stage of development, leading to a portfolio of work that

directly informed the final outcome. Ideas were communicated effectively and links between their own work and artist research was clear.

Middle levels

Although there were many individual responses seen at this level, candidates' intentions were often less clear. Candidates selected appropriate sources to start their investigation into a chosen theme, including recording from first hand, but often the progression of ideas lacked focus and purpose. Sometimes the choice of what to record was too broad, impacting on the coherence of ideas. At other times there was not enough recording to allow for in-depth development.

A range of media was explored, often to a competent level and good technical skills were seen throughout the work. Media choice was relevant and was chosen to show purpose with care and control, but at this level there was less risk taking which limited the possibilities for creative exploration.

Where candidates had explored the works of other artists and cultural references, this influenced ideas and informed a personal direction. However, some candidates were not able to make the link between the references from contextual sources to their own ideas, and opportunities were missed. At times candidates struggled to develop ideas through image manipulation and experimentation for the purpose of progression and often repeated earlier ideas for the final outcome without moving forward to any kind of conclusion.

Lower levels

The submissions at the lower mark range often demonstrated a lack of recording from direct observation and an over reliance on gathering images from the Internet or from candidates' own imagination.

Many submissions lacked exploration of a range of media and technical skills seen at this level were often of a limited ability. Candidates would have benefited from more focused and sustained drawing from a range of sources in the initial stages of the project, using a variety of media. This would have built their technical skill and would have helped them to identify which media and technique best suited their intentions.

Candidates working at this level often lacked the ability to apply self-analysis techniques to their work as it progressed. There was some evidence of reference to the works of others, but this did not always inform their choice of what to record or their idea development and at times artist research was not relevant to the theme. Some submissions consisted of finished pieces of work from different topics, which had no connection to a main theme. The final outcome was not related to the portfolio work and did not evolve from a progression of ideas. Candidates would have benefited from planning their work more carefully and exploring their ideas with more purpose.

ART & DESIGN

Paper 0400/02 Externally Set Assignment
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Key messages

- Candidates should edit the work submitted to include only pieces that relate to the overall project.
- The strongest work included observational studies from first-hand sources.
- Candidates should indicate their own work clearly, particularly regarding photography.

General comments

Overall, the work submitted was of a good standard. It was labelled correctly and generally followed a coherent journey through the preparatory studies to the final outcome. Candidates responded to the various question choices with a range in approach from observational to interpretive. Design and abstract influences were also seen.

The majority of the work submitted was created within the painting and related media area of study and included printmaking and collage processes. However, there were also examples of photography, textile and some graphics work. Digital manipulation also featured within submissions and in most cases proved a useful way to develop ideas further.

Many candidates chose to include photographs of the making process. These did not help to inform the progression of ideas. Instead, examples of how the actual work progressed would have been more helpful to demonstrate candidates' intentions.

Many candidates had appropriately referenced the works of art practitioners or cultural sources, which made a positive impact on direction and encouraged personal development.

The most popular question was 'Preparing a meal' and this encouraged the most use of direct observation. Candidates tended to respond by exploring their own homes, local markets, cafes and street vendors. Personal insights and connections were expressed, and these were often captured with photography and sketched directly.

Another popular question choice was 'Handle with care' with submissions based on ideas of observed delicate and fragile items, recorded with skill and sensitivity. This also encouraged more conceptual interpretations. 'Climate Change' also offered the opportunity for some candidates to produce passionate and thought-provoking work, which reflected their views on current world issues.

There was expressive and exuberant use of colour throughout subjects and ability levels which enhanced the identity and energy of submissions.

Higher Levels

Candidates working at this level demonstrated a good engagement with their chosen question, which they researched in depth. Their supporting studies demonstrated a clear journey with thoughtful recording from a wide range of sources. Personal connection and genuine interest were sustained throughout the submissions. Some candidates visited a gallery or museum and reflected on artworks seen first-hand, which gave further depth to their research. These candidates explored and tried out new techniques and processes inspired by the artist research. Links between what they had seen and what they were discovering for themselves were consistently made. Recording from observation was detailed and relevant and demonstrated an excellent level of enquiry.

Media was fully explored and candidates were able to recognise qualities, which were then expanded further. Processes and techniques were combined to create unique ways of working with any given media.

Submissions at this level demonstrated candidates' ability to edit their work to present a sense of focus and maturity to the work as a whole. The supporting studies directly informed the final outcome produced in the timed test, ultimately realising intentions.

Middle Levels

Most candidates at this level also explored their chosen question with commitment showing individual responses but their intentions were often less clear. Relevant sources were selected for investigation with purposeful recording which was often from first-hand study, but the progression of the work sometimes lacked focus. In some submissions, the recording was either too broad and impacted on the coherence of ideas, or insufficient which prevented in-depth development. Ideas did not always fully connect to the recording and so logical visual links were often missing. The development of ideas at this level did not always follow a coherent journey as some candidates were unable to make effective choices when selecting the best imagery to try to progress further.

Media use at this level sometimes lacked exploration and experimentation. At times candidates were limited in their ability to select and use appropriate media because they were making copies of secondary-sourced images rather than responding to direct observation. Some evidence of recording from direct observation was necessary to demonstrate a consistent and confident ability to select and use appropriate media.

Referencing of artists and cultures was varied. Some candidates were able to identify and explore appropriate contextual references. They understood how to use these influences to inform a personal direction. Others were not always able to make such connections between contextual sources and their own ideas.

While many skilful transcriptions were made from artists' works or patterns and imagery derived from cultural sources, this did not always influence candidates' own original ideas and work.

Lower Levels

At the lower level some candidates did not include any recording from direct observation or included very little and predominantly relied on secondary-sourced imagery.

The development of ideas was often based on rearranging elements seen in these images from Internet sources rather than demonstrating their own observations and ideas in response to the chosen question. This approach meant that some candidates were unable to demonstrate the sufficient critical understanding required. Candidates who did not work from direct observation did not meet the necessary criteria for Assessment Objective 1, despite some technical skills being strong.

Where artist research was included, it was often biographical and showed little analysis or links with the candidates' own work.

Candidates worked mainly in pencil or coloured crayons and pastels. Sometimes paint was applied. There was some evidence of control in the rendering process, but some media use was limited showing weak technical skill and refinement. A limited understanding of the visual elements meant that the ability to represent the subject successfully was hindered. Few candidates explored alternative compositions or ideas. Consequently, the final examination piece did not reflect a progression of ideas built during the preparatory work.