

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01 Coursework Assignment
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Key messages

- Most candidates presented a coherent project and the work in the portfolio directly led to, and informed, the final outcome. However, some submitted unconnected coursework and classwork that did not constitute a focussed project.
- Some candidates would have benefited from editing the presentation of work. This would have shown their achievement more effectively.
- Submissions that included observational studies from primary sources tended to demonstrate higher aesthetic qualities than those that relied more on secondary sources for their investigation.
- Candidates should make it clear which of the images are their own work and which are secondary sourced or that of another artist.

General comments

Most submissions were well presented with careful thought given to the organisation of the work, alongside supportive annotation.

Candidates explored a wide range of materials, but most realised their ideas in painting and related media. There were also examples of fashion and graphic design, 3D, digital media, printmaking and textiles. Across the mark range, many candidates appeared to demonstrate a genuine enjoyment of experimenting with their materials.

Photography was often used to record initial ideas and assist with development. The demonstration of skill in some of the photography work would have been more effective if candidates had edited and selected the most relevant images to present. At times, there was an excessive amount of very small photographs which were difficult to see clearly and which were not always identified as the work of the candidate. Candidates should take care to make it clear which are their own images and which are secondary, identifying the source of the images.

A wide variety of themes were explored, demonstrating independent thought and engagement. Some candidates worked with similar themes as the initial starting point but developed their work with independence, while others lacked a personal approach and this work was sometimes formulaic. Portraiture was popular within a given theme and was often used to portray a range of emotions. Many candidates explored themes relating to the environment and climate change, exploring the weather and waste within their environment. Research material from around the home was also used to influence ideas.

Many candidates across the levels recorded from direct observation through a range of media, including photography. Stronger submissions referenced other artists and/or other cultures, informing the development and direction of the work. In other submissions, the selection of contextual referencing was not always relevant to the topic or the candidates' ideas. Sometimes the work was fragmented due to a lack of critical understanding. Reference made to the works of others could have influenced media or idea development and added coherence to the work.

Higher levels

Submissions at this level demonstrated clear intentions throughout the body of work. Personal ideas were explored from a range of sources, with clear evidence of direct observation as well as research from secondary sources. Photography was often used as a means of recording and at this level the photographs were well composed and selective, exploring viewpoints, light source and composition. A wide range of imagery was investigated in depth in order to produce a body of ideas to work from.

These candidates thoroughly explored a range of media, trying out different ways of applying paint, mark making and creating texture, for example, informed by research into relevant artists and other practitioners. This demonstrated the ability to look for unusual and creative solutions and the ability to manipulate materials and processes was excellent. This thorough investigation into media use led to a personal and insightful development of ideas which candidates were able to use to demonstrate a critical understanding of the processes and techniques used. Written comments were clear and insightful, emphasising candidates' analysis of their progress.

The depth of understanding gained from the initial observations and exploration of media was used to explore alternative ideas in response to the themes, prior to realising their final outcome.

Candidates working at this higher level were able to successfully review and reflect on their work to make informed decisions and find creative solutions through their development, leading to a portfolio of work that directly informed the final outcome. An excellent level of skill was often shown with the handling and manipulation of their chosen media in producing their final piece.

Middle levels

Submissions at this level showed more varied levels of ability across the assessment objectives. Primary sources frequently included photography, but it wasn't always clear that these were the candidates' own images. It is important that candidates identify their own photography and include information regarding the source of all images.

The exploration of media at this level was generally less confident and consistent than at the higher level. Appropriate media was explored but, in less depth and lacking the broad explorative approach seen in the stronger work. In many cases media was explored but not used in the development of ideas. Many candidates demonstrated skill in copying the work of other artists but lacked the ability to use this artist research to develop individual ideas.

Some evidence was seen of the ability to explore alternative ideas and there was evidence of good development of ideas, using the initial research as a starting point. However, some interesting ideas seen in portfolios were not always pursued and their potential was lost. The work of other artists was explored, but in many cases the information that this generated was not reflected in the final outcomes.

In general, at this level submissions were coherent and lively, but some candidates presented a final outcome that did not always reflect the quality of the initial research seen in the portfolio.

Lower levels

Lower-level submissions demonstrated limited research skills, often relying on secondary sources copied directly from the Internet. More thought given to the theme of these projects would have helped to make sure that relevant primary sources could be easily obtained. In some submissions seen at this level, subject matter was invented or drawn only from imagination, and therefore the work demonstrated little understanding of the visual elements such as structure, form, colour and texture.

Some photography of primary sources was included, but the use of viewpoint, light source and composition was less well considered at this level. Candidates would have benefitted from drawing from a wider range of sources in the initial stages of the project, as this would have furthered their development and understanding of the visual elements.

There was less evidence of the exploration and experimentation with a range of materials at this level. Many candidates chose to use media which they were familiar with rather than opening up creative possibilities by exploring new media. The handling and control of materials was often tentative and weak, and candidates often lacked the skill to convey their ideas.

In most cases, the lack of in-depth recording and research had a negative effect on the development of original ideas. A few candidates included research into the work of other artists, but this was often not used in a thoughtful way to inform their own ideas and final outcome. Ideas were not explored or developed in sufficient depth to enable the presentation of a coherent outcome.

Candidates working at this level often did not demonstrate the ability to analyse, reflect and refine their work effectively. This resulted in final outcomes that lacked technical development and sometimes were unrelated

to the portfolio work. Overall, candidates would have benefitted from more care with planning, exploration and development of their ideas from the beginning.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/02 Externally Set Assignment
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Key Messages

- The strongest work was developed from first-hand observation, in conjunction with self-taken photographs and used relevant artists and secondary source material. Ideas were naturally developed from this visual investigation to inform the final outcome.
- The most successful work referred to relevant artists for inspiration and the development of ideas as well as prompting media use and application.

General comments

Candidates explored a wide range of media in response to the starting points. These included traditional wet and dry media, photography, printmaking, design, textile design, digital manipulation and a small amount of sculpture. Some candidates created digital images working with a variety of programmes. This was most successful when used alongside the candidates' original studies or photography to develop and present ideas.

There were imaginative responses to each of the starting points. **Question 1: A matching pair** was a very popular choice which inspired a diverse range of subject matter, such as shoes, hands and figures. This topic allowed for observation drawing to be easily accessible. **Question 2: Uniform** inspired the obvious study of school and professional uniforms but also suggested a sense of pattern in stronger candidates who found a uniformity in design and explored the idea through various processes. **Question 3: Stretch** inspired many portraiture studies which were manipulated and pulled out of proportion and recognition. Surrealism helped to elevate these ideas and the distortion of people, foods and other items were investigated.

Question 4: Boxed in appealed both to the literal thinkers who presented items studied within boxes but also to those who used it as a metaphor for a feeling of being trapped, relating this to some aspect of their lives. **Question 5: Land and sea** gave the opportunity for more obvious landscape imagery, the most successful being from those candidates that observed directly from life.

A wide range of supporting work was submitted and the strongest submissions were presented clearly with consideration given to editing. These candidates made good use of at least three sides of A2 sheets to inform the final outcome. However, some candidates presented their work on oversized and heavy boards and framed canvasses making them difficult to handle. These often included additional, unrelated work, with multiple layers and flaps. Considered editing is strongly advised. Inappropriate materials were included in some submissions, particularly broken glass. This was hazardous during assessment and centres should refer to the Cambridge guide to check what constitutes inappropriate material.

Higher levels

The strongest submissions demonstrated a clear understanding and application of the assessment objectives. Candidate engagement was high and intentions were both clear and met. Recording was focused, purposeful and always from first-hand study. The works of other art practitioners and or cultural references were used with insight and informed the development of ideas and the direction of the work. Most notably, these candidates continued to extend and re-evaluate their research, to progress their ideas in depth whilst exploring individual solutions in response to the chosen starting point.

Mature and accomplished material manipulation was evident. Candidates recognised, used and explored their strengths with particular media in order to compliment and progress their ideas. Some delicate, sensitive and detailed work was seen alongside bold and expressive use of media by candidates who were not afraid to take the lead from their chosen artists and experiment with ways of working that had inspired them.

Understanding of the formal elements was clear and the gathered insights from other artists' and their own research was effectively integrated into the project.

The ability to critique their own work and evaluate their progression set this group of candidates apart from candidates working at the other levels in terms of development. Self-analysis allowed them to refine techniques and compositions before creating their final outcomes. This allowed the most relevant ideas to be taken forward to realise intentions.

Coherent, thoughtful and personal bodies of work with a refined outcome, were often presented.

Middle levels

Throughout the mid-range of submissions, candidates showed some evidence of first-hand research but generally relied more heavily upon the use of secondary-sourced material. In many of these cases, the research lacked the depth seen at the higher levels and candidates made choices without exploring a range of possibilities. This effected the subsequent development of ideas.

There was satisfactory evidence of skills in a range of media. However, often the rendering was inconsistent through the project. Sometimes the experimentation and execution of media was more successful in the preparatory work and so a disparity with the final outcome was evident. Further exploration and practise of scale could have benefitted such examples.

Where engagement with artists was evident at this level, investigations were often superficial and did not always demonstrate critical understanding. This did not help candidates to present a coherent journey, realise intentions and demonstrate a good understanding of visual language. Research into relevant artists' work can help to inspire ideas for manipulating the initial images gathered in response to the question. It can also generate ideas for exploring a wider range of media, materials and processes.

Some logical progression of ideas leading to the final outcome was seen but inventive and original development was lacking. A wider range of initial observations would have given these candidates a greater choice of development opportunities.

More experimentation with composition, background and content would have supported these candidates in concluding their findings in a more effective way. However, overall candidates in the mid-range were able to submit a final outcome that showed a satisfactory progression of ideas into a resolved outcome.

Lower levels

In the lower mark range, candidates were heavily reliant upon secondary-sourced imagery. Many copied ideas and images from Internet sources. Other candidates relied upon their imagination and showed no relevant studies. As a result, there was little evidence of understanding of the structure and form of the chosen subject matter.

The range of materials and techniques used by these candidates was limited, often to just pencil and felt tips and very little manipulative skill was achieved. Some more experimental work was seen but the range and quality of mark making was weak.

The development of ideas was often the weakest area for these candidates who were unable to show a logical progression of ideas. Artistic influence was often basic and not used to inform investigation. Little planning for the final outcome was evident and often a copy of an early image was repeated during the timed test.

A lack of in-depth research, development and limited technical ability left candidates unprepared for the exam and this was evident in many final outcomes which lacked any form of personal connection or original thought.