

ART & DESIGN

Paper 0400/01 Coursework Assignment
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Key messages

- The majority of candidates chose to explore painting and related media, with some examples of photography, printmaking, 3D, graphic design and textiles work seen.
- Stronger candidates used a combination of recording approaches, including from direct observation and photography and did not rely just on the internet.
- Several submissions consisted of conceptual ideas that were not easily backed up by visual research. This negatively impacted candidates' ability to demonstrate understanding and skill across all of the assessment objectives.
- Candidates should label their own photography to clearly distinguish it from images that are taken from secondary sources.

General comments

Many candidates submitted a thoughtful and sustained body of work that was generally well presented. Where work for the portfolio had been carefully selected and edited candidates were able to present their studies and images directly onto the A2 sheets without the need to use flaps. This led to a body of work that clearly demonstrated intentions, and ideas were communicated well, directly informing the final outcome.

Candidates researched a range of personal themes and ideas including identity, food and the environment. Stronger candidates researched their theme from a wide range of sources that included primary-source material. However, there was a noticeable increase in relying on secondary sources and many submissions included studies and images that did not clearly relate to each other. Some candidates had not been able to demonstrate ideas visually and often relied on a large amount of annotation.

A range of media was explored and stronger candidates made intelligent reference to the work of other artists to inform and develop their technical skills and media experimentation. Where candidates choose to use digital drawing tools, it needed to be clear where the initial images were from and the technical process used needed to be documented, for example by including screenshots of the progress.

Some candidates presented a range of projects rather than one single project. This had a negative impact on the overall marks because the studies in the portfolio did not relate to each other and did not demonstrate how the candidate had developed their ideas and use of media to present a refined final outcome.

Higher levels

At these levels, candidates 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. Submissions included a wide range of relevant observational studies that informed the final outcome. Studies from direct observation demonstrated candidates' understanding of the subject matter including form, colour and texture. Other subject matter was also researched, as was the work of relevant artists and/or cultures. This research clearly influenced the development of ideas.

Themes explored were often personal and candidates were able to take an imaginative and inventive approach to their chosen theme. Recording and research were carefully selected to reflect this and submissions showed a high level of commitment and involvement. Many candidates had visited museums, art galleries and local buildings and structures of interest to select relevant artists' work.

A range of materials and techniques were seen in these submissions, mostly paint and other 2D media. These had often been explored in inventive ways, combining different media, such as collage, printmaking

techniques and digital manipulation of their own photographs and studies. Artists' work was used to inform candidates' own media exploration. Thoughtful self-analysis meant that these candidates were able to make good decisions on how best to use their media choice. This in turn led to high levels of technical skill shown with the handling and manipulation of their chosen media in producing their final piece.

A range of ideas and alternative compositional possibilities were explored before a final idea was selected. Many candidates displayed a sense of confidence and freedom in their deconstruction and manipulation of imagery, with thoughtful adjustments being made as the work progressed. Candidates made intelligent use of their artist research to solve problems and move their ideas forward.

Final outcomes at this level demonstrated coherent conclusions to the exploration of the themes chosen, with well-considered compositions and excellent use of media. These outcomes also displayed very personal ideas and a high level of personal qualities.

Middle levels

These submissions showed more varied levels of ability across the assessment objectives. Some candidates were able to show thoughtful observations which were effectively recorded using a range of media but were sometimes less able to fully develop these into focused outcomes. At other times, candidates had explored and developed their initial recording into interesting ideas but were not able to refine or develop their technical skills to produce a fully informed final outcome.

Recording from first-hand sources was seen, often taking the form of copying from own photographs. These studies often showed a lack of ability to demonstrate a real understanding of the subject matter or of the visual elements such as form and texture. Candidates also relied more heavily on secondary images taken from the internet and in some cases unconnected imagery and drawings were included.

Although candidates had explored a range of media and techniques, they often lacked the skill and refinement seen at the higher levels. The quality of rendering from observation was generally weaker. Artist research was often included in the portfolio, and this was usually relevant to candidates' own work. However, the research did not always inform the development of ideas or progression of the media used.

Most submissions demonstrated evidence of a coherent journey but would have benefitted from a much wider range of initial observations and exploration of media. Many submissions showed interesting ideas in the early stages of the project but at times these were not recognised and their potential was not realised. Further development of ideas from the research would have helped these candidates to make better decisions regarding composition and use of colour in their final outcomes.

Lower levels

These candidates often relied on secondary sources as their visual research. In some submissions there was no evidence of any research at all and candidates worked purely from their imagination. Some included photography but this was usually of a poor quality. Candidates often went directly into an idea without any studies from first-hand observation. In several submissions, candidates presented a random collection of images where the connections between them was not clear.

Exploration of materials and media was often very limited at this mark range and candidates would have benefitted from more practice with media, learning how to use materials to express their ideas. When making artist copies some candidates demonstrated skill in controlling their choice of media but were not able to work at this same level in their own work. Often media use was inconsistent throughout the portfolio.

Submissions showed limited evidence of a progression of ideas based on the research and instead repetitive images or a selection of random unconnected images were presented in the portfolio that did not relate to the final outcome. Some final outcomes appeared to have been copied directly from the internet.

More sustained drawing studies from direct observation in the initial stages of the project along with more experimentation of ways to manipulate their drawings to generate ideas would have helped these candidates present a portfolio that led to, and informed, a more resolved final outcome.

ART & DESIGN

Paper 0400/02 Externally Set Assignment
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General comments

- Most submissions were well presented and demonstrated candidates' engagement with the creative process. This sustained projects that were thoughtful, explored and diverse in their interpretation of the starting points.
- Some candidates presented their work on oversized and heavy boards or protected with clear plastic, making them difficult to handle and view. Unnecessary, flaps and pull-out sections were also often included. Considered editing is strongly advised.
- Annotation must be relevant and concise. Many examples of lengthy written work were seen, mostly biographical in relation to artists or explanations of processes used by candidates. Many were difficult to read, handwritten with coloured pens and very few added meaningful insights to the development of the work.
- 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.
- The strongest work was developed from first-hand observation, in conjunction with self-taken photographs and used relevant artists and secondary-sourced material. Ideas were naturally developed from this visual investigation to inform the final outcome.
- Some conceptual ideas were seen, not always backed up with visual research.
- Many submissions included the use of digital images. Artificial intelligence was also evident in a few submissions. These practices were most successful when used alongside candidates' original studies or photography to develop and present ideas. The use of these programmes had been credited correctly.
- The most successful work referred to relevant artists for inspiration and the development of ideas as well as prompting media use and application.
- Centres should not submit QR codes or USB sticks.

Higher levels

At these levels, submissions were thoroughly cohesive demonstrating a strong creative journey, from the initial starting exploration, through to the development of ideas and onto the final outcome. There was with an obvious personal connection that flowed throughout the work.

Candidates demonstrated valuable first-hand recording from a range of source material, with recorded observations contributing to their intentions. Personal research included photography and observational studies, with links to relevant art practitioners and other cultures. Some candidates created very detailed work in the timed examination which was fully supported by preparatory studies. This reflected mature decision making. Most notably, these candidates continued to extend and reevaluate 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 complement and progress their ideas. Some excellent, sensitive and detailed work was seen alongside bold and expressive use of media by candidates. These candidates demonstrated the confidence to be inspired by their chosen artists and experiment with ways of working in a similar fashion while often manipulating these skills with their own personal perspective.

Extending and re-evaluating their research helped these candidates to discover unusual and creative solutions to their starting point. Self-analysis enabled them to refine techniques and composition planning,

prior to producing their final outcome. The presentation of work was clear and candidates carefully selected and edited their work. This made a positive impact on the communication of intentions.

Middle levels

Submissions seen at these levels often demonstrated strong personal qualities. Ideas were often original and inventive. However, the technical skills had not been so extensively developed, explored or refined when compared with those working at higher levels. Candidates either demonstrated competent technical abilities with little evidence of working from direct observation or original ideas, or the work was personal with creative ideas but lacked development and technical ability to carry the work to completion.

Attempts were made to develop ideas from photography and media studies, but this seemed rigid at times. Decision making was less focused, and the work did not always progress coherently. Some ideas did not develop beyond the initial research material and simple studies, with the supporting work and planning often stronger than the outcome. Idea development seemed to be limited, resulting in a disjointed body of work without a strong resolution.

Artist research was often included in the supporting studies and was mostly relevant to the candidates' own work. However, the research did not always inform the development of ideas or progression of the media used.

Although candidates showed a committed approach to their chosen question and often expressed their ideas clearly through annotation, some were less able to visually communicate their intentions.

Final outcomes did not always reflect the technical potential achieved in the supporting studies. This was sometimes due to poor judgement in relation to media or technique selection or sometimes due to a change in scale. More planning and self-evaluation would have helped these candidates.

Lower levels

These candidates were heavily reliant upon secondary-sourced imagery and there were many copied ideas and images from internet sources. Other candidates relied upon their imagination and showed no relevant research of actual items or relevant sources.

Manga and copied cartoon imagery were often included. As a result, there was little evidence of understanding of the visual elements and a lack of foundation from which to develop ideas.

The ability to select and control media was limited. Often studies consisted of simple line drawings in pencil or coloured in, copied images. Alternative compositions were not explored, and very little planning was evident. The development of ideas was often the weakest area for these candidates who were unable to show a logical progression of ideas. The journey through the assignment was short and lacked cohesion.

Some evidence of research into the work of artists was seen but often it did not relate to candidates' own work and therefore, did not inform further progression.

Candidates often lacked the focus to analyse, reflect and refine their work effectively. This resulted in outcomes that lacked technical development and sometimes were unrelated to the supporting studies. Overall, candidates would have benefitted from spending more time trying out a range of compositions and planning for the final outcome before the exam.