

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01 Coursework Assignment
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Key messages

- Stronger submissions included research of other artists or cultures to inform the candidates' own development.
- Many candidates used a combination of recording approaches, including from direct observation and did not rely only on the internet.
- The development within some of the portfolios would have benefited from being more focused. It sometimes remained unclear how work seen in the portfolio had informed the final outcome.

General comments

The coursework submitted explored a variety of themes and often demonstrated personal qualities. The majority of candidates choose to explore painting and related media, although there were also some photography, graphic design, textiles and 3D submissions. Centres are reminded that any work that is fragile, three-dimensional or larger than A2 should be photographed and these presented on A2 sheets.

Sometimes candidates would have benefited from editing their research to show their ability to refine and evaluate their work as it progressed to a final conclusion. Candidates should carefully select their work and present all images directly on the A2 sheets to avoid the need for layering and using flaps, as this improves the communication of ideas.

Many candidates were able to demonstrate their ability to successfully develop ideas from initial observational studies leading to a resolved final outcome. Where candidates struggled to develop original ideas they may have benefited from more research into the work of relevant artists to inspire different approaches to their supporting studies.

Stronger candidates used a range of media to record their ideas, such as drawing or painting, digital processes, photography and use of the internet. It was sometimes difficult to determine which images were the candidates' own, especially when a lot of the work was printed in some way, either because it had been produced digitally or because the candidate had photographed their original work. It is important that candidates make it very clear which is their own work and which is secondary sourced or that of another artist. Simple annotation will achieve this.

Higher levels

Many candidates at this level demonstrated their intentions within the portfolio, and their work showed a clear journey leading to the final outcome. Candidates made links to relevant artists and designers which helped them to develop their own work.

Submissions included a range of media and there was evidence of considered and informed experimentation with a range of media and techniques that led to some strong and individual outcomes. There were several digital art pieces, which were printed and submitted as hard copies, where candidates had focused on designing characters for game design. At this higher level the development of these submissions benefited from initial in-depth recording from direct observation of elements such as figures and facial features, to inform the development of their characters.

Candidates used a variety of approaches to gathering initial images, looking to explore and investigate the theme in depth. For example, recording from different locations/viewpoint/scale/changing conditions/ times of the day, and using a range of media and approaches, such as quick sketches and own photography as well as more detailed observational studies.

It was clear that candidates were able to successfully review and reflect on their work to make informed decisions through perceptive evaluations at each stage of development. Candidates' own evaluations led to focused media experimentation and enabled the development of appropriate skills. This in-depth self-analysis allowed candidates to refine techniques and compositions before producing the final outcome. The presentation of the work was thoughtful and candidates had carefully selected and edited their work, which made a positive impact on the communication of their achievement.

Middle levels

Some submissions at this level did not demonstrate the same consistency of skill and engagement seen at the higher levels. Often submissions either demonstrated good technical abilities with little evidence of working from direct observation or original ideas, or the work was personal with creative and exciting ideas but lacked technical skill.

Several submission were seen at this level where the candidates' interest was in digital media, creating characters for digital games or illustrations. While there were some good technical skills evident in the portfolios, candidates often did not clearly demonstrate where their ideas had come from and submissions lacked evidence of looking at first-hand sources such as the figure or street scenes, before developing and exploring their images through digital software. When using digital software it is important to show the progression of ideas, for example by including simple screenshots at certain stages of the development of an image.

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

Lower levels

The submissions in the lower mark range often demonstrated limited research skills from either primary or secondary sources and there was an over reliance on images from the internet. There was often little evidence of recording skills and some candidates did not submit any research or preparatory work at all. This prevented them from achieving the full range of marks across each of the assessment objectives.

At this level, candidates were less able to select and use a wide range of media, often only using pencil or paint for example, restricting the exploration of materials and limiting access to marks for Assessment Objective 2: Exploration and development of ideas. Submissions often lacked a logical development of ideas and in a number of examples a final outcome had not been included. Some candidates presented portfolios that consisted of finished pieces of work from different genres, which had no connection to a theme at all.

Many candidates have would benefitted from more sustained drawing studies from direct observation in the initial stages of the project. Referring to the work of other artists would have helped them experiment with ways of manipulating their drawings and would have generated potential ways to develop ideas as well as providing ideas on how to explore a range of media and materials. These approaches would have allowed these candidates to present a portfolio that led to, and informed, a more resolved final outcome.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/02 Externally Set Assignment
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Key messages

- A reliance on secondary-sourced research material can hinder the personal vision and development of ideas. The strongest work utilised direct observation in combination with other forms of gathering to ensure a varied and original foundation.
- Candidates should be encouraged to discover artists that inspire and relate to their own interests to develop ideas beyond the literal.
- Only work related to the theme or which enhances the project need be submitted. Considered editing would have benefited some submissions where it was unclear how preparatory work informed or related to the final outcome.
- Annotating where original work has been included within the submission, particularly with reference to photography, is critical to assess achievements. Sometimes it was difficult to distinguish between original work and secondary imagery sourced from elsewhere.

General comments

The majority of submissions were well presented on A2 sheets and labelled correctly. Care had been given to the careful selection and presentation of work. However, in some submissions where editing had not been so well applied there was excessive work presented with multiple layering, pockets and flip out sections overloaded and this complicated the overall presentation. The selection and arrangement of how work is presented is critical to understanding its progress and therefore, selection of work that is relevant and best demonstrates the journey taken should be carefully considered.

Most candidates chose painting and related media to realise their outcomes but there were also examples of textiles, digital manipulation, graphic design, photographic and 3D submissions. Most candidates included photography within their submissions as a means of recording information or documenting large scale work. Most was well considered, in focus and enhanced the submission.

Responses were seen for all questions and all starting points provided examples where candidates had approached the topic with imagination and original concepts. **Question 2: Fruit and vegetable patterns** encouraged a design process with repeat pattern which often developed into fabric designs for clothing, wallpaper, soft furnishings etc. using both traditional and digital media. **Question 3: A collection of cups** provided opportunity for direct observation, the honing of technical skills and the exploration of materials. Candidates arranged still-life compositions including stacked, broken or personally significant items. **Question 1: Workout** and **Question 5: Street signs** prompted design responses such as poster design, street art and graffiti. **Question 4: Half-open** usually evolved ideas from the literal to more conceptual interpretations including a focus on world issues or a narrative driven by moral or political issues.

Many candidates demonstrated the ability to evolve their ideas from the initial stages of gathering from first- and second-hand sources, experimenting and developing their ideas to inform the related and resolved final outcomes. Those who struggled with this process would have benefited from a more in-depth study of relevant artists to inspire and influence their progression and to encourage experimentation.

Most candidates had explored and utilised their local environments to gather initial research from visiting galleries, museums and local artists to finding inspiration within their own homes and families. Candidates managed to find personal and relevant connections to the world available to them.

Higher Levels

The higher level work demonstrated consistency throughout all the Assessment Objectives. Initial studies were varied, personal, imaginative and well observed. Enquiry and analysis were evident throughout the entire project leading to independent and mature development with realised intentions.

The inclusion of contextual influences was prominent at this level. Examples of how these studies influenced the forthcoming work were made explicit with annotation and a mature command of the visual language necessary to communicate understanding.

Exploration of materials at this level was accomplished and demonstrated the confidence to successfully select appropriate mediums and apply them with skill.

Candidates at this level showed a critical understanding of their work and were more likely to take creative risks with materials and techniques, combining mediums with a playful and experimental approach. Often traditional painting methods were juxtaposed with digital manipulation and photography.

Candidates explored alternative ways to present their findings, often experimenting with differing compositions, angles and viewpoints, colour variations and media before deciding on a final approach.

These engaged studies were critiqued and evaluated by candidates, who showed an awareness of the strengths and limitations within their work. This influenced their decision making regarding the final outcome which successfully reflected the potential seen in the supporting studies.

Middle Levels

Work at the middle level varied greatly in its content and methodology. Overall the depth of investigation and understanding was lacking. Often, a logical approach was adopted and a satisfactory process of working through ideas to a final outcome was followed but the understanding of how to work at a deeper level was missing.

Often a strong initial idea or successful way of working was formulated and recognised but these candidates lacked the confidence to deviate or expand upon this, often resulting in repetitive or stilted responses. Finding suitable relevant artists to investigate at this stage would have encouraged candidates to experiment with other ways of working or could have provided the courage to take risks with their own ideas. Similarly, the ability to critically analyse work would be beneficial to candidates at this level, who did not always recognise their strengths to develop for the final outcome. Sometimes a change in scale or medium for the final outcome was not acknowledged or practised sufficiently.

A competency in the manipulation and control of materials was evident at this level but there were inconsistencies in submissions. Examples of traced and reworked photocopies were presented alongside detailed and skilfully painted images without acknowledgement of intention.

Focused planning for the final outcome and a refinement of skills would have allowed candidates to more fully realise the potential often seen in supporting studies.

Lower Levels

At the lower level candidates relied heavily upon secondary-sourced imagery. A severe lack of direct observation limited both the scope of research and the technical skill with which to record it. First-hand observation allows a deeper understanding of the chosen theme and promotes a personal connection to it. This in turn promotes a broader, more interesting and inspiring response where a level of engagement can be sustained and explored.

Gathering from a narrow scope limited development and demonstrated basic intentions. Imagery downloaded from the internet was often copied without reference to any form of development either of content or rendering.

Technical skills at this level were limited and expressed little understanding of the visual elements. Where other artists' work was referenced, it often did not relate to candidates' own ideas or an attempt was made to recreate the artists' style. This did not enhance or lead to further development of candidates' own work.

Final outcomes did not always relate to the overall theme and were therefore confusing and static.