

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01 Coursework Assignment
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Key messages

- Candidates used a combination of recording approaches. Those that included recording from direct observation often demonstrated an in-depth investigation of their chosen theme for the coursework.
- Stronger submissions included research of other artists or cultures to inform the candidates' own development.
- Candidates should label their own photography to clearly distinguish it from images that are taken from secondary sources, such as those downloaded from the Internet or from books.

General comments

Preparation, organisation of work and appropriate use of media overall was good and most candidates presented coursework on A2 sheets which were correctly labelled. However, some submissions included more sheets than the total permitted, and a few did not clearly identify the final piece. Centres are reminded that any work that is fragile, three-dimensional or larger than A2 should be photographed and these photographs presented on A2 sheets.

Candidates explored a variety of themes and many demonstrated personal qualities. Most candidates explored their chosen theme through painting and related media. There were also examples of photography, printmaking, 3D work, digital manipulation, graphic design and fashion design. The majority of candidates included photography within their submissions as a means of recording information or developing ideas.

While many candidates had carefully selected their work for assessment, the editing in some submissions had not been well considered. Candidates should use this selection process to identify work that best communicates their intentions, from the starting point to the final outcome and present all images directly on the A2 sheets. This demonstrates their ability to refine and evaluate their work as it progresses to a final conclusion.

When presenting the work, it is important that candidates make it very clear which of the images are their own work and which are secondary sourced or that of another artist, especially regarding photography. Some candidates referred to images that were “self-clicked” but it was not always clear what this meant. Annotation should be clear and concise to identify when the candidate had actually taken the photograph or produced the image.

Higher Levels

Candidates working at the higher levels demonstrated in-depth investigations from primary sources, including observational studies and their own photography. These drawings, sketches and studies were thoughtfully selected and relevant to subsequent ideas. Candidates made observations from a good range of objects, people or places, all of which were relevant to the chosen theme. 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 valuable, encouraging 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.

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. Candidates were able to select relevant materials to express an idea or create a specific mood or atmosphere. Texture, line and form were explored and candidates were able to make informed decisions regarding their use of techniques and processes within their chosen media. Media studies were focused and this thorough exploration and practise 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 to make informed decisions through perceptive 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 their artist research was clear.

Middle Levels

Submissions seen at the mid-level demonstrated varying levels of ability in their responses to the assessment objectives. Some candidates included thoughtful and carefully observed recording using a range of media to investigate a theme but were less able to develop these initial studies into an individual outcome. Others were more able to demonstrate their ability to develop individual ideas through manipulation of images but included less evidence of recording from a range of sources, including from direct observation. Some candidates would have benefited from working more consistently to make sure they provided evidence for each assessment objective, in order to produce a fully resolved, successful final outcome.

Candidates at this level had explored a range of media and processes but sometimes lacked technical skills or the ability to reflect on their work in order to identify their strengths in media use. 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.

Where candidates' interest was in digital graphic media and the creation of characters for a digital idea or design brief, they would have benefited from showing the progression of ideas, for example by including simple screen shots at certain stages of the development of an image. While some technical skills were evident, candidates did not always demonstrate how their ideas evolved. Exploration from first-hand sources such as figures or street scenes would have been beneficial before developing the images through software.

Artist research was often included in the portfolio at this level and this was usually relevant to the candidates' own work. However, the research did not always inform the development of ideas or progression of media use.

Lower Levels

Candidates at the lower mark range often demonstrated limited research skills as they gathered images to explore and investigate a chosen theme. There was often a lack of recording from direct observation and an over reliance on gathering images from the Internet or from their own imagination.

Many submissions lacked exploration of a range of media and the technical skills seen at this level were often of a limited ability. Candidates would have benefitted from more focused and sustained drawing from a range of sources in the initial stages of the project, using a variety of media. Although there was evidence of research into the work of other artists and cultures, this research was often not related to the candidates' own work and it did not help to develop ideas or develop candidates' media use and technical skill.

Candidates working at this level often lacked the ability to apply self-analysis techniques to their work as it progressed. This may have helped these candidates to identify areas of strength regarding media use and perhaps would have led them to practise their chosen media more thoroughly. This may have resulted in submissions that demonstrated a development of technical skills and a better understanding of how to use the visual elements to produce a more resolved final outcome that related to the work in the portfolio. Candidates would have benefited from planning their work more carefully and exploring their ideas with more purpose.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/02 Externally Set Assignment
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Key messages

- Submissions were generally well presented in the form of A2 sheets fastened together with the 8-hour exam piece clearly labelled to distinguish it from the supporting studies.
- Some submissions would have benefited from more thorough editing so that the work contained only relevant supporting material. Often multiple flaps, layers and pockets were included to fit a larger quantity of work onto the allocated number of pages but were not relevant to the development of the overall project.
- The majority of candidates chose to work with painting and related media. Other approaches explored photography, graphic and fashion design, 3D work and printmaking.
- Candidates should annotate their work to make it clear where research material originated. It was often difficult to tell if imagery was from a first-hand or second-hand source.
- Most candidates included the study of an artist. However, the choice of artist was not always relevant to the project or of personal significance to candidates' way of working. In order to inspire and help to develop the work, the selected artist must connect with the work or the concept being developed.

General comments

Each question inspired examples of imaginative responses both in a traditional or observational approach to the more conceptually based ideas.

Question 1: Opened box provided opportunities for both types of approach. Observational studies of different types and sizes of boxes were common, sometimes set up as a class still life and they provided a solid grounding in the application of visual elements. Sometimes, the development of more imaginative and experimental ideas about what the boxes contained or symbolised resulted in more original outcomes.

Question 2: Junctions elicited a range of responses from the literal studies of pipes, roads, branches and map formations to the idea of the junctions of ones' life. **Question 3: Through the trees** generally attracted those candidates wishing to create a representative approach with observed forest and tree views. Photography was popular with this question and often literal starting points were developed into more obscure or abstract imagery. **Question 4: Shoppers** inspired comments on both consumerism and material worth with scenes of busy shopping malls and market places with shoppers in motion and money exchanging hands. Weaker submissions tended to focus on bags and shop logos. **Question 5: A pile of washing up** encouraged a range of interpretations. This included literal observations depicting compositions in and around sinks with washing of crockery and utensils, to clothing and even the figure. These showed personal insight and a connection to the chosen subject matter.

A clear intention to respond to a chosen question was evident in all of the work regardless of its level of achievement. Relevant source material was found, (within the weaker submissions, this was heavily secondary sourced). Topics were explored through a range of media and an artist explored to help further development.

Most responses contained evidence of each assessment objective with the stronger submissions maintaining a balance between all four. Many candidates demonstrated the ability to develop ideas from initial observed studies into original and resolved final outcomes.

Higher Levels

Candidates working at the higher levels were focused, self-motivated and connected to their chosen subject matter. An investment into researching the chosen theme and developing it in order to reach a meaningful and comprehensive conclusion was evident. Initial approaches were often systematic and logical, gathering

relevant information from a range of sources with thoughtful consideration to how this was recorded as well as why. Confidence and maturity were applied to initial observational drawings highlighting an understanding of the visual elements and an acknowledgement to their importance to further build upon.

Many candidates explored their own photography both as a means of recording and to develop ideas. Often scenes were composed with attention to lighting and viewpoint, subject matter and atmosphere resulting in successful stand-alone images as well as forming part of the integral body of research and development. Digital media was often used as a tool to further develop ideas. There was evidence of candidates demonstrating their manipulation skills.

Evidence of personal engagement was often presented in candidates' experience of visiting and recording at relevant locations, including galleries, local markets and their own gardens. Finding relevance in a variety of places indicated the level of connection and enthusiasm for the topic.

Within the strongest work, candidates developed their conceptual understanding alongside their practical skills. This meant that both streams of activity fed on and encouraged the other. Technical ability and material use were demonstrated at an excellent level with skills being refined as new developments were made.

Artist influences and cultural referencing were sophisticated and relevant. Connections made were thoughtful and progressive. Often a variety of differing compositions and ideas were trialled before the final exam element commenced. This gave the opportunity for critical evaluation and for decisions to be made regarding the final outcome. The strongest work demonstrated a culmination of ideas and skills in the final piece, striving further as opposed to a repeat of a supporting idea.

Middle Levels

Work submitted in the middle levels differed in its approach. Many projects were not well balanced and so reflected greater skill in one or two assessment objectives than in the others. Often great effort in gathering initial source material from observation was evident and a strong technical ability shown, but a lack of concept and depth of thinking restricted the possible growth for the work. Alternatively, other candidates demonstrated a unique and personal line of enquiry but did not possess the necessary skills and experience to render their findings convincingly.

Candidates at this level did not always annotate clearly to show the origin of some source material, particularly in the case of photography. The inclusion of appropriate artists was inconsistent and rarely informed development with the depth of connection expressed in stronger submissions.

Copies of artists' work were often competent and produced in a range of media with skill. However, they did not always encourage ideas and candidates lost the confidence to replicate or adapt the style when applied to their own, original imagery.

Exploration of different compositions and trials for the final outcome were sometimes attempted but these tended to be repetitive and focused on the difference of a solitary element such as colour change. Unlike the higher-achieving candidates, an understanding of strengths and weaknesses was not apparent. Critical thinking and self-evaluation were lacking. Often the final outcome did not reflect the potential seen in the supporting work. Reviewing and editing each element of the supporting work before presenting it as a whole body of work would have enabled candidates to see where any imbalance occurred.

Lower Levels

Work submitted at the lower levels characteristically relied upon secondary-sourced material or ideas from the imagination at the initial stages. This imagery was often repeated and lacked exploration and development of personal ideas. Studies often expressed a limited understanding of the visual elements and focused on simple line drawings which were often coloured in without consideration of form.

Working from observation would have encouraged a deeper understanding of the chosen theme and would have promoted a personal connection to it. It also would have provided the opportunity to study and understand unique properties which can ultimately help to refine technical skills.

There was a limited ability to reflect on the work of other artists to inform the candidates' own ideas. Often, little or no connection could be found. Finding a relevant artist may have inspired further exploration of media and the development of ideas.

Final outcomes did not always relate to the overall theme and so did not demonstrate a relevant conclusion but rather a disconnected, static image. Although the range of technical ability at this level was limited, there were examples where a clear indication of enjoyment was evident and some playful and humorous entries were seen.