

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9479/01 Coursework Assignment
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Key messages

- The most successful presentations contained strong intentions and carefully organised work which clearly communicated ideas. Some candidates would have benefited from selecting and editing their work more effectively to show their ability to refine their work as it progressed.
- The assessment objectives inform a complete part of the creative process and many candidates had responded to each one with consistency.
- Successful candidates demonstrated recording from a thoughtful selection of primary sources. Detailed observational work explored themes in depth using a range of media, including photography.
- Some submissions lacked development. These candidates could have benefited from challenging their ideas through critical reflection. Investigating the works of others to inform the direction of study could have enabled exploration of alternative compositions.
- Those candidates who had clearly labelled their own photography and cited other references communicated their achievement more effectively.

General comments

Many candidates demonstrated a sustained body of work. Most portfolios were clearly labelled and presented in an appropriate manner, on A2 sheets. Some portfolios exceeded the recommended size, while others were presented on sheets of varying sizes. Many candidates had carefully considered the layout and organisation of their portfolio. As a result, achievement was communicated and intentions were clear.

The editing of some portfolios was less considered. Excessively layered flaps were seen in an attempt to include more work, preventing a clear picture of candidate achievement. Selecting the work for the portfolio demonstrates an ability to edit the work to show a clear progression of ideas, while also adhering to the quantity requirements of the syllabus.

Clear responses to the assessment criteria were seen at each level. Many candidates selected a topic which suggested scope and depth, with investigation of a wide range of sources leading to imaginative portfolios. These sources encouraged observation from first-hand study, including referencing the works of art practitioners and cultures, galleries and exhibitions. Past question papers provided the stimulus for many starting points, which were then adapted to encourage individual investigation. Portraiture, particularly self-portraiture, was a popular and accessible subject, providing opportunities for self-analysis and discovery. Other work included topics based around local places of interest, family, friends, local festivals and religious ceremonies. Relevant issue-based themes such as human conditions, social media addiction and global warming were also explored. Some submissions lacked intention with little evidence of a personal response. Other portfolios were incoherent, without clear direction.

The strongest submissions were serious in intention and demonstrated full engagement with the theme. First-hand study prompted investigation through a range of media from each area of study, but most candidates realised their work within the area of fine art. Art practitioners informed effective decision making, and insightful annotation illustrated critical thinking. This encouraged the development of ideas and led to resolved outcomes.

The lack of clear intentions prevented some candidates from producing a cohesive body of work. These submissions contained disjointed ideas, based on insufficient meaningful source material. Limited

investigation from first-hand study prevented personal responses and made it difficult for candidates to show their ability to develop creative ideas. This resulted in portfolios that did not build on an idea or demonstrate a sense of purpose.

Higher Level

These candidates coherently combined original ideas with skilful media manipulation and sustained development. Portfolios demonstrated clear understanding of the assessment objectives to show mature and consistent journeys. In-depth study from thoughtful source material supported the final work. Visits to local markets, buildings of interest or places and other primary sources informed the candidates' choice of visual research, demonstrating an excellent level of enquiry. Investigation from first-hand experience was extensive and continuous and informed the subsequent development of ideas. Intelligent references enabled candidates to reflect on achievement and to refine their work.

Creative links were made between the candidates' own observational recordings and the works of other practitioners. These candidates were able to take inspiration from this contextual referencing to enable the modification of ideas. Artists' works were not copied but changed, adapted and used to inspire further imagery and media exploration. Development was focused and committed. Supporting pages were organised to reflect the flow of ideas, illustrating how the initial research had evolved into a relevant final outcome.

Media rendering was original and inventive. These candidates were able to recognise the potential, and experiment with the qualities within their selected materials. They thoroughly explored and combined processes and techniques to create original effects. The artwork evolved with a sense of commitment and enjoyment, while demonstrating a fluent understanding of the visual elements. Some candidates chose to work in an interdisciplinary manner, incorporating photography, mixed media and sculpture to explore ideas for installation development. Others explored digital processes, either as a tool for developing ideas, or as a creative method of working throughout their submission. Sculptural and assembled artworks demonstrated a high degree of creativity and accomplishment. At this level, materials were used with imagination, reflecting understanding and creativity.

Middle Level

Candidate intentions at this level were often less clear, but many demonstrated good ability to gather their visual research from a range of thoughtful sources. Strong observation during the recording stage was often apparent. Consideration was given to the arrangement of objects, set up of figure work scenarios and other creative exploration of subject matter. The work was often purposeful, but it lacked the sophistication of ideas at the higher level. There were inconsistencies, particularly in the depth of investigation and manipulation of materials. While some portfolios were personal and involved, other work demonstrated less engagement with the subject, showing an insufficient depth of enquiry to support a fully sustained and resolved body of work.

Many candidates effectively researched the work of other art practitioners to encourage different perspectives and new directions for exploration. The most successful responses reflected candidates' ability to analyse their contextual research to inform the choice of sources. This enabled engagement and considered development. Other portfolios did not connect to the concepts shown in the works of others. Insufficient analysis of artists' imagery prevented the understanding of ideas being explored. Deeper investigation of contextual referencing could have led to deeper understanding and the ability to self-reflect, enabling the recognition of strengths and potential for development in their own work.

Skilful rendering of materials was sustained and committed but sometimes less experimental or innovative. These portfolios frequently contained explorations of various media, but the possibilities within these materials were not always realised, or carried through to the final outcome. Many candidates relied on what they felt confident in working with rather than taking risks. As a result, these portfolios often contained more vitality than the final outcome.

Some portfolios were coherent and well developed but were less refined than those at the higher level, and sometimes lacked aesthetic judgement. Candidates did not always think critically about their work or recognise their most powerful ideas. Some created many images related to the theme but these did not always progress. Others carried out visual research from a range of related subjects and sources, but were unable to develop this work into an informed response. Some candidates attempted to move their ideas forward through the exploration of different compositions, but often these were either repetitive or reflected only minor differences. Ideas were sometimes developed too quickly without alternative exploration, with the final work remaining unresolved.

Lower Level

Many portfolios at this level lacked coherence, direction and personal connection. The intentions and focus were unclear, often with little evidence of a theme or initial idea. Many candidates relied on either their limited photographic skills, found images or secondary-sourced material as a starting point for recording. There was little indication of observation from first-hand sources and sometimes the origin of a reference was vague. Where observational studies were included, they were usually underdeveloped and lacked detail.

At this level, the exploration of media contained technical inconsistencies. While some candidates demonstrated competence in the rendering of materials, often this lacked purpose and experimentation, often due to the incoherent selection of sources. Most exploration of materials was either limited or repetitive and many candidates chose to work in one media, with little experimentation of alternatives. References to other art practitioners was often insufficient to inform the selection of materials and processes. However, when making copies of artists' works, candidates were able to skilfully render their media to show texture, colour and marks. Unfortunately, few were able to transfer these skills when creating their own imagery.

There was a limited ability to reflect on the works of other artists or cultures to inform the candidates' own ideas. Sometimes this contextual referencing had little connection to the candidates' theme or ideas. Annotation lacked meaning, and analysis was mainly descriptive or biographical in nature. However, in some examples, exploring the works of others enabled candidates to expand their ideas and to develop their use of visual language.

Candidates were often prevented from developing alternative ideas due to the lack of in-depth investigation during the initial recording. In order to sustain their ideas, they would have benefitted from clarifying their intentions to inform purposeful recording. At times, either the final work did not relate to the ideas in the portfolio, or the journey from idea to final outcome was brief. Planning a series of compositions before completing the final work could have drawn the work together to present related and relevant outcomes.

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Paper 9479/02 Externally Set Assignment
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Key messages

- Many candidates submitted over the stated number of supporting sheets or had layered the work with multiple flaps. This indicates that these candidates had not been able to edit their submission effectively. Demonstrating the ability to select and display the creative journey is an important aspect of Assessment Objective 4 that candidates need to carry out.
- Submissions should conform to the size stated in the syllabus (maximum A2). Work on a larger scale or examples of sculpture or fashion garments should be submitted through good quality photographs, indicating some idea of scale and qualities of texture.
- Work should be submitted on paper or mounted on thin card.

General comments

The responses to the questions were varied and produced a diverse range of work. Submissions covered all of the given stimuli, which allowed most candidates to research and express their own personal responses. Whatever stimuli was chosen, images of candidates themselves or distorted faces were common.

All submissions showed evidence of supporting material. The most successful submissions demonstrated carefully edited work presenting a clear journey from initial recording of relevant subjects, exploration of media and processes, through to the development and planning of final outcomes. However, some candidates would have benefited from being more selective with the material they choose to present.

The majority of candidates had explored their ideas through traditional media such as painting and drawing. However, there were some candidates who focused on developing their work through a range of print media and there were some examples of sculptural works. A variety of disciplines was explored for this syllabus allowing candidates to be explorative within their area of interest.

Not many candidates responded to the questions as a design brief. There were a few repeat pattern examples, garment design, packaging and graphics but most submissions had a fine art focus.

Most candidates had appropriately submitted their work onto A2 sheets. However, a small amount of work was presented on oversized sheets. Most of the supporting work was well organised and presented with care, with related final outcomes.

Higher levels

Candidates at this level were able to explore more complex concepts and responded in a mature and individual manner. They gathered a range of visual information from various sources, using a combination of observational drawings and photography to record their ideas. The local environment and the use of friends and family, as well as themselves, provided good starting points for research from first-hand observation. Research into the work of other artists and cultures had also informed their own studies.

Extensive use was made of the candidates' own photography, supported with accomplished sketches, drawings and colour studies. This formed a strong body of work from which to explore and develop.

At this level exploration of media was original and inventive. Candidates used media sensitively and selected appropriate techniques and materials to convey ideas. Candidates often demonstrated the ability to combine processes and techniques to create unique ways of working with any given media. They used their artist research to inform their own media use and selection.

The development at this level was highly accomplished and focused, leading to very well-informed practical studies. Candidates explored different ways of arranging the composition through thumbnail studies in the supporting studies and this led to carefully considered and planned final outcomes in the timed test.

These candidates understood the true purpose of artist referencing to inform their research and original ideas. This was apparent through intelligent decisions that were evident in the visual imagery and in the supporting annotation to reflect relevant critical understanding. This process underpinned inventive and creative development. Initial images and ideas from the recording stage, along with artist referencing, was manipulated and explored to progress the direction of work. Development was meaningful and enhanced the visual journey from purposeful research, into a creative final conclusion.

Middle levels

Candidates in the middle achievement level produced good responses to their chosen topics. The work generally demonstrated candidates' understanding of how to use visual stimulus to generate ideas and to develop a range of responses. Many submissions seen at this level used a combination of observational drawing and personal photography to inform the ideas. The photography was purposeful but not as well considered as at the higher levels. There was less evidence of candidates reviewing their progress and recording further visual information to develop their ideas.

Experimental use of media was evident at this level with mixed media being popular. Imagery was layered up with paper, fabric, collage and multiple disciplines within one piece. Development of media was often strong, and its evolution evident throughout the supporting material, but sometimes conceptual development was less strong. Skills were refined but the imagery became repetitive. There was a reliance on copying a single image from their research material without combining or manipulating with other material.

As with the candidates at the higher level, purposeful investigation of the works of other artists inspired the use of materials and assisted in the progression of imagery. However, such studies often focused on style as opposed to concept.

Photography submissions demonstrated purposeful recording and reflected strong images. In some work, original interpretations of the question led to inventive ideas. In other work, idea development was less apparent, but technique and understanding of the visual elements were strong. The final outcomes in some submissions did not always reflect the strengths seen in the preparatory work.

Lower levels

Submissions at this level generally showed an unevenness in meeting the assessment objectives. At best an adequate or satisfactory standard was achieved, but there were many examples which demonstrated limited or basic abilities.

There was evidence of some engagement with the chosen question and some candidates made a satisfactory effort to gather a range of images exploring the question in a personal and creative way. Although this provided a range of images in the supporting studies, candidates working at this level often found it difficult to know how to develop their images into a final outcome and simply copied an image to present as a final outcome.

The weakest work was characterised by the lack of variety in the initial source material gathered. Recording consisted mostly of internet imagery which was subsequently copied. Candidates' own photography was sometimes included which provided a more genuine connection to the work.

Materials handling was occasionally more skilful in some submissions but the lack of developed ideas meant that the work did not progress. Candidates at this level would have benefited from investigating the works of other art practitioners with greater purpose and intention. This could have encouraged the selection of relevant and personal research, informed media manipulation and inspired the development of ideas. Where there was some inclusion of artist referencing, the content was either unrelated or biographical, which did not inform the direction of study.

Ideas were limited to 1 or 2 responses and the final outcome was developed through limited reference material. Often the final outcome was a copy of a photograph taken by the candidate or in some cases an amalgamation of different secondary sources that the candidate had rearranged.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9479/03 Personal Investigation

Key messages

- Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of Component 3 by developing practical, visual, creative work in response to focused research and analysis of an aspect of Art and Design.
- Some oversized submissions were included which often contained repetition of imagery. These would have benefitted from better editing to reflect progress in practical work and analysis.
- The majority of investigations were coherent and presented in a logical manner. The presentation and range of work reflected the candidates' level of engagement and interest in their chosen area.

General comments

The work was generally well presented in the form of A2 sheets fastened securely together, clearly labelled and work was placed with care and consideration.

Many candidates had visited artists' studios, exhibitions, or museums to inform their investigation. Some had undertaken workshops in a number of disciplines including ceramics, street art, mural painting and textiles. This was, in most cases, highly beneficial to the development of the investigation.

Most submissions contained evidence of all four assessments objectives to varying levels. The most obvious and clearly identifiable were Assessment Objective 1: Record, and Assessment Objective 2: Explore with many candidates struggling with Assessment Objective 3: Develop.

Candidates explored a range of media and considered several ways to communicate their ideas and refine their outcomes including drawing, photography, design, sculpture, textiles, fashion, installation but most submissions were carried out using paint. There was some effective use of digital media.

Although all candidates included imagery or notes on the work of others, the choice of artist was not always relevant or helpful to the chosen theme. This stopped candidates from developing their work more personally.

Most candidates were able to use basic art language when reflecting on own work and that of others, mainly focusing on the visual elements. This could have been developed further through the introduction of broader vocabulary, developing opinions and use of analytical terminology.

Higher levels

Work at this level reflected the candidates' ability to balance conceptual, visual and contextual elements showing an excellent level of understanding and an ability to communicate ideas effectively.

Initial gathering was varied and personal, and inspiration was found and recorded from a variety of sources taken from the candidates' local environment, current affairs and personal experience. Candidates were able to identify and create visual resources to develop ideas from. This included making direct observational drawings, using photography and selecting appropriate secondary material.

Candidates demonstrated the ability to critically reflect on their work and progress as the work developed, making connections to their chosen artists. Candidate reflections on their own work and the work of others used specialist language and terminology to express opinion and showed understanding.

In most cases, the media use was highly accomplished and also experimental. Candidates demonstrated excellent skill in the rendering of the visual elements through traditional painting techniques as well as through mixed media and photographic submissions. There were some examples of candidates working across 2D and 3D, producing large scale installations to present their work. Candidates working at this level were able to select and apply media demonstrating a sensitive relationship between concept and materials.

There were some cases where the technical ability was outstanding but the investigation lacked substance in its subject matter. Conversely, there were some examples where candidates explored a sophisticated concept showing maturity and originality in ideas but lacked the skills to achieve their full potential through their use of media.

There was a high level of connectivity between the written elements and the candidates' ability to articulate ideas using visual language. Candidates were able to use analysis to develop ideas and approaches within their own work and applied the visual elements effectively to communicate ideas.

Research was carried out into different contextual fields to support the development of the work and candidates made personal and individual connections between their ideas and the work of others to develop original responses.

At this level candidates investigating local crafts were able to make broader connections to their experience and a range of other contextual material. This provided a strong sense of identity and integrity to the work. The investigations benefitted from links made with a broader range of art, artefacts, context and function to develop personal creative work.

There were some very strong examples that developed a body of focused work and these candidates were often able to present their conclusions in context. Some were able to install the work within a specific environment or on location.

The work demonstrated a mature understanding and highly committed level of engagement and independence in all aspects of the investigation. This was clear within the depth of visual and written exploration of ideas and selection of material used to support individual development.

Middle levels

Candidates working at this level had clear ideas and were able to realise their intentions through informed research and recording from relevant sources. There were examples of candidates using a combination of first-hand and secondary material to support the development of personal work. Candidates were able to record using a range of approaches and media but the written language and visual language were inconsistent.

At this level, the media use was either skilful and controlled but lacked experimentation, or it was expressive but candidates were less able to recognise the strengths within their media use to refine ideas. Candidates were also less able to recognise the essential qualities of materials and processes to communicate ideas effectively and to make links between the aesthetic and concepts.

There was a heavy reliance on making artist copies rather than using visual and written analysis to create a personal response to the imagery. Making copies showed some understanding but it would have been more beneficial to use this information to generate own imagery that has been influenced by the artists' application of the visual elements, use of colour or use of media to communicate clear intentions.

Most submissions demonstrated an obvious link between the candidates' own work and their artist research. There were some examples where the artist research was relevant and candidates were able to use ideas from this to inform their own development using composition, colour use and subject matter.

At this level there was evidence of effective integration of written and visual elements, consideration was given to how the text related to the practical work across the page. There were some examples where the written aspect was presented separately as an essay. In most cases this was clearly presented with a title, introduction and conclusion and included visuals of the artists' work within the body of text as well as that of the candidate.

Within the written work there was evidence of candidates applying art terminology to record their observations and some were able to analyse the work they were discussing. Candidates reflected on their

progress but this was often in relation to how well they managed to render the work of their chosen artist rather than evaluating their achievements regarding their question or focus for the investigation.

The work within this band was personal and engaged but at times lacked refinement either in media use, clarity of ideas or ability to critically reflect on achievement. Candidates working at this level demonstrated potential in some areas but this was not carried through all aspects. They were unable to resolve practical issues and use their understanding of the visual elements to produce a fully coherent body of work.

Lower levels

At this level there was less evidence of recording from a range of sources, combining first-hand observational studies with research into related material and the work of others to support the development of personal ideas.

Source material was often collected from the internet, magazines and other secondary sources. Visual research was mostly copied from existing imagery using limited media to record observations.

Some candidates within this range had visited a local artist or craftsperson and had clearly learned valuable skills by engaging in workshops with them. The process of learning these practical skills was often documented by photography and an end product was produced that showcased the newly acquired skill set. This could have been developed further by making links with another artform or the work of a relevant artist as this would have provided further resources to develop ideas from. Applying the skills to realise their own intentions would have generated a more thoughtful and thorough body of work.

Most candidates at this level included little analysis and relied heavily on descriptions of the work with limited reference to the visual elements. Some investigations consisted purely of work carried out by the candidate without any reference to the work of others or a tenuous link made to a single image by a local artist. The written element was often descriptive of the making process rather than focusing on how this related to or was developed from the work of their chosen artist.

Other submissions within this range consisted of images by others and written descriptions of the work and how it related to a question or theme but contained no visual or practical response by the candidate. Artist research at this level included little analysis and was mostly of a descriptive nature focusing on biographical detail.

Media use was often of a limited ability or repetitive and candidates used media in the same way throughout the submission and lacked the ability to explore and experiment with a range of techniques and processes. The media use was not influenced by their artist research either, through selection or exploration and therefore did not progress.

There was a limited ability to reflect on the work of other artists to inform their own ideas. Often this was due to a lack of in-depth thoughtful analysis of others' work at the recording stage. At times candidates working at this level included artist research that did not relate to their own observational studies or practical work and this restricted their ability to achieve. The written element and the practical work were often unbalanced, showing different levels of understanding and ability to articulate thoughts through written language and visual forms.

The submissions at this level often contained gaps either in the research into others' work or in the development of personal responses. Candidates were unable to develop a thoughtful response or to show personal engagement due to their limited resources and reliance on secondary material.