

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/01
Controlled Text

General comments

Generally, the standard of presentation was very good and most of the work was well labelled. Some candidates however, had not been sufficiently selective in the inclusion of material for their submissions. This was particularly the case in the presentation of excessive layers, pockets and flip mechanisms which tended to overload and complicate the presentation of the work. More focus on the editing of their work would have benefited these candidates to communicate their achievement more clearly.

Some Centres submitted an inconsistent selection of different sized mounted sheets of card or paper which lacked continuity. Some used canvas to present their final outcomes. Other candidates had presented their work uniformly through the consistent use of black mount board to provide a professional finish and illustrate achievement.

Questions which were most popular often tended to encourage more literal and personal responses. These enabled candidates to easily access their appropriate first hand sources, from which to directly observe through drawing or photography. Starting points such as Hey diddle, diddle and Transformation may have discouraged candidates due to their more abstract context.

Once more **Section A** was by far the most popular area of the question paper, which emphasised candidates' preferences to express a personal and creative response, through an open-ended starting point. The most popular question in this section was **Question 1 – Memories**, which attracted a great many responses, **Question 6 – Grief** and **Question 2 – Vertigo** were also very popular topics.

In **Section B** the most popular questions were **Question 8 – Fish and shellfish on a large plate**, **Question 7 – A pile of toys** and **Question 9 – The whole or upper part of a figure**. Each encouraged a response from direct observation.

There appeared to be fewer candidates choosing to work from a design approach this time from **Section C**, so these questions were the least popular of all. **Question 13 – People Movers** was the most popular in the section.

Most responses were expressed through painting and related media. Final outcomes consisted mainly of drawings, paintings or mixed media on board or paper, supported by preparatory work in a range of 2D media. Conventional drawing and painting materials; or digital media incorporating other art materials were mainly used, then developed in the final outcome. There were a few fashion/costume designs, graphics and some textile/repeat pattern designs. The photography submissions once more formed a large proportion of the entries seen. Photography and digital media techniques were also used by many candidates to form elements of the research. Those candidates who used photography as a research method also used it to demonstrate recording and development, and to document changes to ideas and images. Connections were made between styles and approaches through the investigation of the works of other photographers or artists.

Most candidates understood the importance of first-hand studies and this was apparent in the photography, observational drawings, paintings and sketches. However, some candidates relied too heavily on the use of secondary sources. There were also several instances of candidates beginning their submissions with 'the principles of art' or a very brief history of an art movement – usually very tenuously linked to a candidate's own work and doing little to inform personal ideas or the progression of work. Occasionally some candidates entered whole sheets of downloaded or cut-out material, which although relevant, rarely added value to the development of a theme or an idea without appropriate critical analysis. Pasting secondary printed information onto many 'mood' boards added little to a candidate's engagement with a topic.

Work by candidates at the higher levels was usually distinguished by sensitive and perceptive drawing, evolving from the inspiration sparked by the chosen starting point. Sustained observational drawing from both primary and secondary sources provided the basis of focused developments, which demonstrated clear directions. Successful candidates had been exposed to a wide range of formal elements, and consequently their work displayed a sound understanding of tone, form and colour. Candidates who had been encouraged to build on these strengths produced work that was often highly persuasive. Creative and individual interpretations were apparent and connections made with the works of others had influenced personal direction. The preparatory work illustrated a depth of investigation and critical analysis, and an engagement with the topic and for some candidates which went beyond the course of study at this level.

The work at the middle level also contained study from direct observation, combined with copying from secondary sources. Inconsistent technical skills in the rendering of materials, and weaknesses in the understanding of the formal elements were apparent in the drawings/paintings. For example, the representation of form tended to be flat due to the incorrect placement of tone, or from the overworking of a surface. Other work however, could illustrate greater technical skill and accomplishment in the rendering of media, leading to some sensitive work. Some of the work at this level contained insufficient depth, and ideas were sometimes repeated rather than developed. These candidates had generally not explored alternative compositions or layouts for their ideas, or experimented sufficiently with colour or media to develop their work effectively through informed decision making. Generally, the supporting studies contained some sound pieces of work, though the final outcome did not always reflect the promise of this initial work.

The responses at the lower mark order often lacked personal engagement. Candidates would have benefited from sustaining their work and investigating their starting point in more depth. There was generally insufficient preparatory work at this level with a limited exploration of ideas. Little gathering of research or development of ideas was apparent and candidates demonstrated a poor control of materials. There was often an emphasis on secondary rather than primary sources, which compromised the quality and individuality of the outcomes. At this level the origins of sources were sometimes unclear and made-up images were more apparent. Fragmented images which were unrelated to the final outcome were common and the potential within the starting points was often unexplored. Ideas were less strong and the work tended to be less cohesive and disorganised.

Photography as an area of study in its own right was frequently seen. It was mainly submitted in electronic format through PowerPoint presentations on either USB or on discs and tended to be formulaic in approach throughout the levels. All work was clearly presented. Photoshop had been used greatly, but did not always enhance the work. It was sometimes crudely manipulated, due to a lack of technical understanding and a lack of aesthetic awareness. The better work demonstrated an awareness of the formal elements such as texture, form and tone, and displayed a good range of contact sheets, indicating that many photo-shoots had taken place. At this level there was also evidence of thoughtful lighting techniques and focal points. Some candidates demonstrated involvement in their recording through a wide range of media and approaches, and the results were reflected in the standard of the work. Intelligent and thoughtful connections with artists had been made, resulting in personal development. Interesting ideas were apparent, but the selection made for the final outcomes were not always as successful.

In the middle ranges there was evidence of some thoughtful and experimental work from well-considered sources and good focal points which were translated into successful compositions, but the technical skills were less strong. There was little meaningful analysis, merely descriptive annotations. Other work at this level demonstrated better technical skill but with insufficient supporting work which lacked sustained engagement.

Most candidates at the lower level produced their own imagery, usually from one photo-shoot of poor quality images. Ideas at this level tended to be obvious or incoherent and the final outcome was sometimes disconnected from the initial images. The work tended to contain tenuous links to artists. Simple and basic digital techniques annotated with unnecessary technical detail did little to add to the direction or development of the work. Other work at this level either contained disconnected or downloaded images, or replicated ideas from the internet. There was often the inclusion of inappropriate material, a lack of design and observation skills and re-workings of existing designs or images. Candidates who presented their hard copy photography on mounted sheets did not often present it well, with bad quality prints, cut haphazardly and mounted unevenly. The candidates at this level were also unable to form successful final compositions.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 – Memories

This was the most popular starting point by far and attracted a very large number of responses. Approaches to this question tended to combine both observational and imaginative ideas, where candidates worked from found objects integrated with ideas evolving from their personal memories. Candidates tended to work from still life objects and from their own photography or from sources within their locality. There were examples of inventive interpretations such as ideas on how memory works, to nostalgic tea stained vintage collaged photographs, trips to favourite places, old books and toys and photographs/images of childhood days.

The work at the higher level demonstrated creative compositions which combined detailed and figurative observational elements with imaginative backgrounds. These candidates fully immersed themselves in their studies and combined excellent visual recording skills through the observation of a thoughtful selection of objects and images, to represent well-considered narratives.

The work in the middle range demonstrated fewer successful drawing skills but displayed evidence of clear commitment to ideas. The work at this level sometimes lacked the attention to detail and the overall quality required, to do justice to their ideas. Work in this area often consisted of gathered objects, figures and the interiors, which had been recorded through drawing and photography and collaged together or superimposed to form an image portraying memories. Images were sometimes fragmented, where the inclusion of posed figures with books and bric-a-brac etc. within a room setting, had been forced to fit together, resulting in a final outcome that was not cohesive.

This was a challenging topic for the candidates at the lower level and they appeared to struggle to present their personal ideas coherently. Generally the work at this level contained limited investigation of the chosen theme and candidates had not sustained the development of their ideas. Some work tended to be descriptive and contained little or no analysis.

Question 2 – Vertigo

This was a popular topic. Some of the imagery in submissions was of street layouts seen from above and looking down, people falling, stairways, swirling and distorted images, movement of objects. At the higher level, images of street scenes, traffic, people and looking down onto buildings from a higher level, formed the basis for some ideas in response to this topic. Some candidates focused on the idea of dizziness which was portrayed through the distortion of images. Photography and drawing were used to record information during the initial stages of the work. At this level work was thorough and purposeful with an excellent manipulation of materials. At the top level work showed an engagement and individuality.

In the middle range of ability candidates demonstrated less of a purposeful direction. The research and investigation contained less depth and often only one idea was explored – which tended to be more predictable. Examples often contained repeated ideas with little evidence of initial recording, but demonstrated a competent manipulation of media. Other submissions demonstrated reliance upon digital manipulation from the outset to explore ideas, with weak observations of perspective and fore-shortening. There were some references to artists and film genres but few connections were acted upon.

The work at the lower level sometimes demonstrated some interesting ideas, but the effect was often hindered by weak technical skills, poor control of media and lack of refinement. Where the work of others was referenced, a limited understanding of the concepts behind the works became apparent through the responses. Other works was reliant on abstraction and pattern, which if well executed and supported by relevant first hand evidence would have led to some informed work. Other candidates with less skill attempted to use the figure to communicate the confusion of vertigo, but their weak drawing skills prevented effective outcomes.

Question 3 – Embrace

The responses to this question often showed figures embracing, using the camera to record poses from different angles, viewpoints and close-ups.

The work at the higher level demonstrated a good use of photography which documented different compositions, multiple angles and unusual perspectives. Poignant images were expressive and emphasised body language and emotion. This question enabled the stronger candidates to consider their contextual response such as, thinking about the generations within their family and conveying the passing of time.

There were some emotive narratives at this level and candidates demonstrated high levels of personal engagement.

The candidates in the middle of the mark range often chose to interpret embrace metaphorically such as embracing an idea. The concepts were thoughtful but these candidates generally struggled to do justice to their idea due to their inconsistent technical skills and their lack of artist references. Other work demonstrated good contextual influences, combined with much thoughtful research from direct observation. Sometimes however, the final outcomes would have benefited from a better selection of ideas, rather than the inclusion of all ideas. Images of embracing figures with no references to the origin of sources were also common at this level. These works often demonstrated aesthetic awareness and were stylistically painted with a confident control of media and washes of colour. However, the work often lacked meaningful research and development, with no analysis of ideas or intentions. Consequently, the final outcomes repeated rather than developed.

The work at the lower level demonstrated more obvious and literal ideas, but there was some evidence of recording from first-hand sources, through the candidate's own photographs of embracing figures, along with secondary sourced images. Some relevant references were made to the works of others and development was appropriate, but often the lack of technical skills hindered the development of an idea.

Some of the photography work at the lower level lacked research, with few contact sheets or work which lacked clear ideas. There was some evidence of technical experimentation but it was limited. Often photographs were crisp, well-lit and well printed, but this was insufficient to provide evidence of a sustained engagement. Other work at this level contained many snapshots of figures, and human figures embracing animals. The work was generally uninspired and images lacked technical skill, tonal contrasts, alternative viewpoints and focus. There was some manipulation of imagery, but generally the images tended to be repetitive rather than developed. Consequently, the final outcome did not progress further than the initial images.

Question 4 – Natural disorder

Responses to this starting point attracted both observational and metaphorical concepts, prompting responses from environmental issues to mental health disorders. The better work was often thoughtful and was supported by strong research work, with an appropriate use of media. There were some obvious responses, but those who had investigated, developed and experimented with ideas, produced the most successful outcomes.

Candidates were often inspired by the natural disorder of decaying buildings. Images had evolved from direct observation, incorporating a range of 2D media, through drawings paintings and mixed media work. Ideas were explored through an expressive and lively rendering of materials, creatively executed. Many compositions explored the textures of rubble and crumbling surfaces. The work demonstrated depth of observation, apparent in some of the detailed studies, whilst also representing tactile surfaces through expressive and creative mark-making. The use of colour was subtle and the work demonstrated a mature and sensitive response to the topic.

Some of the work at the middle mark order also displayed a personal engagement with the topic and individual ideas had been presented. A variety of first hand sources and visits to local places had been investigated through drawings, paintings and photography. Good observational skills were demonstrated with attention to detail through a sensitive control of media. References to the works of others informed development and inspired ideas through the production of successful compositions. Often there was much vitality in the smaller supporting studies, but unfortunately such qualities could be lost in the final outcome where the scale had been enlarged.

The work at the lower mark order tended to be mainly derived from secondary sources or from the imagination. Candidates often drew on research from personal experiences. However, their weak technical skills and the lack of refinement of ideas often stopped progression. Sometimes even with a personal connection to the topic, candidates were not able to portray a successful visual form. Other work at this level lacked a connection between first hand photographs/studies and idea development.

Some photography submissions in the middle level began with a very good range of contact sheets, of both digital and chemical production. There was a creative use of Photoshop which generated numerous interesting ideas, and an exploration of painting with photography with effective results. The selection of the final ideas for development were sometimes poorly judged with candidates choosing to select the least successful imagery, sometimes ill conceived and poorly executed. As a consequence, the development

could be disappointing. The final pieces could be slightly disconnected from the ongoing conceptual process and would remain unfulfilled.

The photography work at this level often made reference to the works of others but with very tenuous links. Simple and obvious ideas were expressed through art media to show connections. Work could be confusing and disconnected and any real connections between their own ideas and those of others were not reflected upon or developed.

Question 5 – Cycle

This topic stimulated a range of imaginative ideas, and work was derived from both observation and from the imagination. Some responses could be literal and predictable in intention, whilst others were more conceptual and drew on a number of sources for research.

The work at the higher level was literal in response and explored ideas from the observation of bicycles. These candidates focused on their observational recording and media manipulation skills. Studies were made of bicycles propped against walls within different environments, and close-ups of sections of wheels, frame pedals, seat springs etc. Detailed observational studies rendered with various 2D media along with photography were sometimes used. The decision making in the selection of images and materials to be used in the final outcome however, could sometimes be less effective which sometimes resulted in a less successful final form.

The work in the middle level was sometimes quite literal, demonstrating good technical drawing skills, with sound, compositional photography. These candidates were not always the most creative, but similarly to those at the higher level, they played to their strengths producing strong compositions and detailed observations of bike parts through alternative compositions consisting of different viewpoints, close-ups from wheels, spokes, pedals etc. The work contained good media exploration, and some made reference to the works of others. Other work was more creative and contained abstract interpretations through the exploration of positive and negative spaces within compositions. Photography was sometimes used to develop ideas from cutting and rearranging abstract images. Ideas included focusing on the cycle of life, rather than a literal interpretation, as a starting point for further paintings. Often in this type of approach, the final outcome was less successful due to weaknesses in the manipulation of materials and refinement of the final idea. Other outcomes could either take the form of an observed image of a bicycle, or an abstract representation of shapes and patterns.

The work at the lower level tended to lack sufficient research to be able to produce an informed response. Candidates selected to work on a more conceptual response such as the cycle of life and death, the water cycle, the baby in the womb etc. There was either little or no first hand supporting work with images deriving from secondary sources, which were merely copied. Personal qualities were limited with few independent thought processes. Weak technical skills suppressed the development of ideas and final outcomes. Work which progressed down the conceptual route emphasised the candidate's poor ability to analyse and express ideas visually. Candidates often struggled to progress from their initial starting point.

The lower level photography tended to include repetitive images demonstrating little observation of alternative ideas or development. Sometimes however, the final image could be edited sufficiently to show knowledge of Photoshop. Other work at this level contained many downloaded images of bicycles and other technical descriptions and diagrams. First hand research often consisted of photographs in a bicycle shop together with a few slight drawings. Many of the weakest works were characterised by the inclusion of irrelevant material and a lack of design and observation.

Question 6 – Grief

This was a popular starting point. The strongest candidates used a combination of accomplished observational drawings, paintings and photography to evoke the memories and emotions connected to this theme. Some candidates excelled in their ability to capture expression and emotion through their highly skilled manipulation of 2D media. Candidates choosing this question were generally able to engage with it personally, and expressed their ideas independently through their drawings and paintings. Relevant references were used appropriately to inform the continuous development of ideas.

The work in the middle level illustrated some exploration of sources through direct observation using photography, but often candidates relied on secondary sources and on repetitive photography documenting friends posing in various locations. Other candidates gathered their research from cemeteries using the camera to record the weeping stone angels. There was a lot of use of watercolour paint or drippy watery inks

to express tear stained and grief stricken faces. The work contained some exploration of alternative compositions but ideas tended to be predictable. Some submissions at this level were creative and well considered illustrating a narrative, whereas others were not so confidently explored. References to artists were made and the majority of the work made some attempt to present a personal response.

Candidates at the lower mark level demonstrated less imaginative and relied greatly on secondary sources, without expressing their own personal interpretation. They demonstrated only a limited collection of research and recording, and tended to rely on just a few images. The small amount of preparatory work often lacked a connection with the development of an idea.

In the photography work at the lower level, many candidates relied on existing interpretations of others from the start, therefore the personal qualities within the work were limited. Submissions also tended to lack any in-depth observational research by the candidates, direct or otherwise.

Section B

Question 7 – A pile of toys and two dolls

This was another popular question and stimulated a direct observation approach from various arrangements of toys, placed on different levels and explored from different viewpoints. Some toys were arranged on a blanket on a chair or on shelves. Studies were made from below, looking up, and others were arranged on the floor with work produced from a birds-eye view. The recording was usually constructed from either drawings, paintings or photography.

The work at the higher level demonstrated a depth of observation. This question enabled the stronger candidates to excel in their technical and descriptive drawing skills and demonstrated their excellent visual analysis. Detailed observational studies were produced through the sensitive rendering of materials, using a range of 2D materials. The use of mixed media to render textures and surfaces was often exceptional. Compositionally stronger candidates explored multiple viewpoints and combined collage and creative photography to bring their compositions to life. Many compositions were produced through the manipulation of a range of imagery, and appropriate artists' works had been selected to inspire ideas. The work at this level generally demonstrated accomplishment throughout the preparatory work, leading to a confident, individual and successful final form.

The work in the middle level displayed some very good observational work produced from direct observation. Some creative and lively preparatory studies were apparent at this level, though the final outcomes could be disappointing lacking the rich qualities and organisation of composition seen within the supporting work. Other work could take the form of photographs and completed paintings which lacked the development of ideas.

Lower level candidates produced very little supporting work, with limited research or gathering of information. Connections with the works of others and cultural links were generally not apparent. Those who produced drawings demonstrated very weak technical skills with little exploration of the development of ideas, composition or media. The chosen materials tended to be either pencil or colour pencils, and the work was lacking in confidence. Candidates with less technical skills or weak drawing abilities might have produced better work by selecting a question requiring research from a more observed approach. Many candidates at this level demonstrated a lack of personal engagement and would have benefited from sustaining their work.

Question 8 – Fish and shellfish on a large plate

This question inspired some exquisitely observed and rendered observational work in mixed media. Most candidates from across the ability levels approached the question through direct observation. Many candidates set up a still life, or visited a fish market, or other. Many of the images were rich and produced to good effect.

Submissions at the higher level, clearly demonstrated a sensitive and effective handling of materials and an understanding of form, with detailed and delicate observational studies within the preparatory work. Candidates at this level were able to skillfully record the detail of the patterns, markings and forms within the skin and surfaces of the fish and shell fish. The hardness of shell was contrasted against the delicate soft skin through sensitively controlled media. Where a glass plate had been selected, the distorted forms, colours and shapes through the glass had been explored through layers of subtle colour washes and patterns. There were subtle and sensitive paintings of fish through crushed ice on the glass plate, but occasionally paintings of the glass could be over highlighted, lacking subtle observation or rendering.

Candidates demonstrated technical expertise and were able to explore compositions and viewpoints to give their preliminary work a personal sense. Many compositions had been explored to express colour and pattern. Candidates thoroughly investigated their topic. Candidates' own photographs from a local fish market were sometimes used as a stimulus for the work. The best work responded to artist research in terms of media and techniques, although there was the reliance upon traditional skills and techniques as opposed to experimentation and risk taking. These candidates' demonstrated commitment and focus in their approach. The work at this level demonstrated accomplishment throughout the supporting work, resulting in a sensitive final form.

The work at the middle level also demonstrated a variety of observational recording but inconsistencies in the technical skills were apparent. The work often lacked the depth of investigation seen at the higher level. Less attention was given to the consideration of composition and background elements, though the opportunity to work from direct observation of real fish provided opportunity for a more personal investigation than if secondary sources had been used. The preparatory work at this level was generally not extensive but did include some sensitive drawing. A variety of media was employed. In some submissions at this level the final outcome could often remain undeveloped and lack the qualities evident in the supporting work.

At the lower level, more literal and unimaginative submissions were presented. The supporting studies were limited and significant research, development of ideas or exploration of materials was less apparent. Many candidates demonstrated only a basic knowledge of composition and control of media. Where recording from direct observation had taken place, compositions lacked depth and space, with little understanding of the relationships between the selected forms. The recording generally demonstrated weak technical skill with a limited ability to observe and record detail and the final outcome was often greatly unfulfilled.

Question 9 – The whole or upper part of a figure talking on a phone

There were some engaged responses with high levels of personal involvement.

In the higher ranges there was evidence of an accomplished investigation of the subject through the candidate's own photography, alongside thorough observations from first hand study. Candidates demonstrated their expertise through the manipulation of a wide range of materials, which were rich, sensitive, sophisticated and very accomplished. There were many examples of exquisitely painted and drawn studies of the figure and each was very well observed, with good attention to facial expression. Some candidates attempted to tell a story, to give a voice to the phone call through expression, body language and posture. Unusual viewpoints and perspectives were used to enhance atmosphere within compositions. Candidates set up their own scenarios to act out, set within various interiors. References to the works of others often influenced the setting and background colours at this level. Figures from different generations were used from teenagers to the more elderly, talking on their mobile phones or landlines, with the springy, twisted wires wrapping around fingers and coiled on table tops. The studies of phones were accurate and accomplished. A high level of engagement was apparent at this level.

The candidates in the middle range also worked from their own photographs, generally through pencil and paint. Inconsistencies in their recording skills were sometimes demonstrated through their drawing, painting and rendering of media. Their research and development of compositions was often creative. However, the challenges evident in their handling of media and their technical skills often limited the success of their responses. In some instances the recording could lack a depth of observation and engagement with the question. At this level there was less of a narrative and sometimes the development of an idea was unclear or disconnected. Some works were formulaic in approach where candidates worked from their own photographs and produced finished pieces of equal strength and similarity of image, demonstrating a lack of progression of ideas. Some candidates demonstrated sensitivity in the rendering of media to reflect form, skin tone and expression, but often these images were often not developed further than the initial studies. Sometimes the supporting work contained qualities that the final outcome failed to produce.

The work at the lower level often demonstrated fragmented imagery with weak drawing and painting skills. There tended to be little exploration of media or engagement with the topic.

Question 10 – Hey diddle, diddle

This was the least popular question. The recording from direct observation was less apparent and initial sources were not always clear. Candidates appeared to mostly rely on creating images from their imagination. They had either used the whole or part of the rhyme from which to illustrate a story through images. However, the development of ideas tended to be disjointed, demonstrating an unclear progression

of work. Images were often illustrative, informed by some artist referencing, but ideas were unfulfilled and led to inconclusive outcomes.

Section C

Question 11 – Contemporary art magazine

The work at the middle range of ability demonstrated good personal engagement with the topic through original concepts and the exploration of ideas. Some candidates at this level produced a digital magazine cover, with the preparatory work containing clear developments of ideas and alternative layouts, including references to the works of other designers. Some submissions tended to demonstrate little informed analysis of the progress of their work and the decisions made, and annotations only explained the process undertaken rather than an expression of their thought processes. However, generally the work in this range demonstrated a connection of ideas, leading to an informed and relevant response.

The lower level work often lacked direction and relied on the use of secondary sources rather than gathering research from direct observation. Research was often insufficient and there was a limited exploration of ideas, manipulated images and text or alternative layouts of text and image, for original designs. Candidates gave little consideration to important graphic features such as the exploration of alternative colourways, font styles or typography. Any information included of this nature was usually secondary sourced or poorly executed by hand. Layouts were often uninspiring and designs tended to be conventional in concept and lacked creativity or individuality. The manipulation of media was limited and the basic awareness of the aesthetic qualities often limited the communication of ideas within the final form.

Question 12 – Costume based on the theme of ‘transformation’

The better work displayed some successful manipulation of the household objects to form costume designs, through the illustration of some clever structures. Designs were inventive. Initial research had been made through successful drawings, painted studies and photography from first-hand study, and candidates produced some thorough research with many annotated alternative ideas. There was evidence of the consideration of ideas from fashion designers, which inspired some candidates to include actual scraps of material and other materials relating to their intended final outcome. Ideas were often personal. However some candidates struggled to select and simplify their best ideas which sometimes led to disorganised final results. In other work there could be a disconnection between ideas leading to incoherent development, though the manipulation could be successful. Most candidates at this level managed to execute their ideas towards an appropriate final form.

Very often, the responses of the least successful candidates lacked research in the form of first-hand studies, or the exploration of relevant fashion or costume designers as inspiration for ideas. Some interesting ideas were presented and the rendering of fashion designs were adequate. The research, observational studies and presentation however, were limited. Candidates were less adventurous while exploring ideas to form costume designs. Research into the works of other designers would have helped to guide and inspire them but this was not apparent. Some work demonstrated potential and engagement with the question, but were hindered by the lack of research and critical reflection. In other work the technical skills were weak which constrained the communication of the intended ideas.

Question 13 – PeopleMovers

Few candidates selected this question and in general were at lower levels of achievement. Although there were a few strong pieces much of the work produced was limited and uninspired. Little effective first hand research had been conducted and imagery taken from the internet was common. Technical weaknesses were apparent in the observation of forms where recording had taken place and ideas were mainly unrefined. Some candidates demonstrated more strength and engagement in the development ideas. While others offered limited research and little manipulation of the development of logo ideas, text or the images of transport etc. Consequently, typography was unoriginal and there was little sense of identity. In one submission of this type the research and development lacked depth, but the control of media and the aesthetic awareness were much stronger. Some candidates had downloaded a series of very simple logo type images and applied text over them. Other design proposals were re-workings of existing designs. There was some use of Photoshop filters but the overall impressions at this level were uninspiring.

Question 14 – Repeat pattern for a vegetarian restaurant

Stronger work included research from direct observation through photographs taken of interiors of local restaurants and through drawings and paintings of packaging, napkins, wallpaper and other such items within the restaurant. Other direct observation studies came from fruits and vegetables both in colour and in black and white media. The starting points for study and the design processes varied. Some began with the observation of interiors as the basis for development, while others began with drawings and paintings of fruits and cut up vegetables etc. Candidates had experimented with media and explored alternative design layouts and colour ways from their sources. The materials used tended to be printing methods such as screen printing or lino-cuts, or painted designs either using flat gouache or soft illustrative watercolour. At this level of ability, the execution of designs was confident, with an understanding of how to construct a repeat pattern. The best examples gave consideration to the placement of their designs onto the walls of the restaurant, onto tablecloths, napkins and logos and on packaging etc.

The work at the middle level also demonstrated individuality in response to the question with some individual and unique pieces. The candidates at the lower level demonstrated some research and observation from first-hand sources, but the weaknesses in their drawing and painting skills hindered their chances of producing effective results. Some reliance on secondary images was also apparent. In some work candidates demonstrated the exploration of layouts and designs through digital media which formed stronger effects than if they had used hand drawn media. In other work at this level there was little evidence that candidates had understood the process of forming a repeat pattern and the final work lacked the clarity of a developed design.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/02
Coursework A

General comments

The most popular areas of study were Painting and Related Media and Photography, with fewer responses seen for Fashion Design and Graphic Design. Some 3D work was submitted, mostly ceramics. There were fewer Printmaking submissions than previous years. Linocuts, stencils, etchings and screen prints were found in the experimentation with media. However, these techniques were not usually explored in detail with different images but copious numbers of prints taken of the same image in different colours.

Many submissions included visits to galleries and museums. It is especially encouraging to see candidates using their own environments for reference. The strongest, however, demonstrated fully integrated artists links within their own development and research.

Researching the work of others should be considered an important, integral part of many of the project. This session saw the same artists mentioned repeatedly, even though their ideas and techniques might not have been applicable. The three most popular were Lucian Freud, Jenny Saville and Frida Kahlo who were mostly referenced to the very popular theme of portraiture.

The majority of Centres enabled candidates to follow individual themes but a handful of Centres were very prescriptive where all candidates completed the same exercises.

Most entries reflected the course requirements for a wide range of experiments, exploring new ideas and processes in order to develop a personal aesthetic and good knowledge and critical understanding of the subject. Some remarkable work was seen with high attainment across all four assessment objectives.

Submissions in the highest mark ranges were generally from candidates who were able to balance the need to explore the subject in depth as well as breadth. Some Centres submitted really impressive entries, demonstrating courage and ambition in transforming and developing ideas through inventive and thorough manipulation of processes.

The most repeated comments on Centre reports of less successful entries was 'lacked sufficient exploration of ideas' or 'lacked sufficient experimentation with media'. Some candidates in the middle range had concentrated exclusively on developing their technical skills, often through still life, set tasks or copying. While skills levels in this group could be very good, the absence of any investigation and development of the candidates' own ideas or any connection with the work of other artists restricted the projects. Other candidates had explored ideas in some depth. These ideas were often personal and demonstrated a substantial cultural awareness but candidates did not go on to translate these potentials into substantial practical work through experimentation. In some cases skill levels were surprisingly poor and candidates were unable to refine their ideas.

The weakest submissions were usually a small amount of poor quality studies, lacking in development, technical skill and aesthetic awareness and often based on derivative, secondary imagery, downloaded from the internet or from magazines.

The presentation of the coursework was generally acceptable and most of the work was well mounted on thin card or substantial paper.

The better work was usually organised in a logical sequence to show the progression and development of ideas through to the final outcome.

The weaker work was often badly or scrappily mounted with little thought to layout or the quality of lettering used to head the sheets. Annotation was little more than information about the media used, or detailed descriptions of an artists' work and often not alluded to again.

Sometimes the decoration of the sheets superseded the actual work or was so complex that the artwork was hidden.

Candidates need to ensure that the method used to attach mounted sheets to one another is robust. It is not acceptable that the sheets come apart when the work is viewed during moderation. Double sided sticky tape is not adequate enough to securely attach work to mounting sheets. It is not acceptable that work falls off mounting sheets when they are being viewed. Candidates should ensure that sheets are not oriented in opposite directions when secured together. Combinations of landscape and portrait orientations are to be expected but complete inversion from one sheet to another is careless and should be avoided.

Some Centres used the assessment criteria accurately; however, the majority of Centre assessments remain unrealistically generous. Assessments must always be based on evidence within individual submissions and differentiate between a candidate's performance in each of the 4 assessment objectives. A failure to carry out these basic principles and responsibilities leads to incorrect assessments that necessitate large adjustments during moderation.

In some Centres that had more than one teaching group or where candidates had worked in more than one area of study, it was apparent that internal standardisation had not been carried out correctly which resulted in invalid order of merits.

Comments on areas of study

Painting and Related Media

A range of themes were explored including Childhood, Rooftops, Cakes, Distortion, Stress, Reflection etc. Portraiture and figurative work was the dominant theme with acrylic paint and watercolour the most popular medium. Also studies from natural form and still life; mostly developed from first-hand observational studies. Themes of violence and war, domestic violence, problems with body image, self-mutilation, being trapped or drowning, plus Third World troubles were more prevalent this year at all levels. Some approached their projects with sensitivity and intelligence but the weaker candidates often took a more literal, sensational approach with ideas copied from secondary sources and little thoughtful analysis.

Although few outstanding submissions were seen, it was common to all of the best painting candidates that their own ideas and techniques had been developed within a critical context. The work suggested a prior knowledge of a range of other artists with more specialised research being carried out as coursework projects progressed. These candidates' work was sustained and ambitious and was always informed by first-hand observation. Candidates had observed and drawn extensively throughout their projects rather than simply using this as a starting strategy and had used a variety of media. The work always had a sense of purpose and candidates clarified their intentions through perceptive evaluations at each stage of development. The candidates' own evaluations had informed increasingly focused experimentation and had enabled the development of appropriate skills. These secure foundations had given candidates the confidence to make their own imaginative leaps and produce personal, skilful work.

Some very inventive uses of media was seen from high level entries, including collage to add layering and transparencies, adding embroidery to drawings, use of glued cassette tape to draw with, use of print to explore mark making and awareness of positive/negative shapes. Own photographs complimented their supporting studies. Work varied from sensitive and expressive, to thorough and analytical. Some very painterly work was seen within this area of study where the medium was used expressively but the best work was not always seen within the final piece.

Candidates submitting mid-level entries revealed a competent level of use of media and analysis and exploration of ideas but often failed to develop aesthetic or critical understanding of their work and demonstrated a lack of confidence with handling of media. Many were less able to translate their research into credible responses. Refinement of ideas was often the stumbling block for those in this range. Occasionally it was simply a wrong choice of media.

Weaker entries demonstrated minimal effort to explore media and processes beyond the superficial and often irrelevant with an over-reliance on secondary sources and lacked a critical awareness of the work of

other artists. Some submissions were extremely sparse and lacked evidence of genuine investigation and development of ideas. It seemed that some of these candidates devoted very limited amounts of time to the production of their coursework. Skill levels were limited due to the candidates' lack of experience with media and processes. Evidence of experimentation was absent in some cases.

Photography, Digital and Lens Media

The greater majority of the photography submissions seen were competent in terms of technical skills. Most of this work was based on well chosen subject matter and submissions included a number of good quality images. However, few candidates progressed beyond this level due to limited development of their critical understanding. It was unusual to find candidates researching the work of other photographers to inform the development of depth in their own ideas. There was evidence of multiple shoots but in most cases these produced more images of a similar standard rather than revealing a deeper level of insight and understanding.

Some candidates had extended their experimentation into video. While some candidates had developed sufficient knowledge and skills in storyboarding and editing to realise some of their intentions, weaker submissions were very unresolved and muddled.

Weaker photography entries amounted little more than collections of everyday 'snaps' which had not undergone a process of informed critical review and reshooting to develop ideas and techniques. Critical judgements need to be informed by a knowledge of the subject rather than just a simple expression of 'likes'. The sparseness of some of the weakest submissions was astonishing.

Graphic Design

Few entries were seen for this area of study.

Submissions showed ideas for logos, labels, web pages, packaging, T-shirts, posters etc. Mostly, the company name gave a visual stimulus for the ideas.

Not all the candidates understood that a House style was a necessary component for a company's advertising. Designs were seen that had used different colour ways, images or typefaces for one company's advertising campaign. This was very confusing. Where the necessity for a style was understood the continuity was very successful in reflecting and emphasising the chosen company's image through a range of different point of sale designs or merchandise.

Often candidates presented one or two ideas for a wide range of publicity materials, far too many to be realistically produced, or lots of different ideas which became confused on the supporting sheets. All of the work had been produced digitally but mostly demonstrated only basic skills. Some candidates in the lower middle range had carried out a series of experiments during their projects and these had been evaluated. However, most of this experimentation was in response to directed set tasks rather than individually motivated and independent work was rare.

Weaker candidates had simply manipulated or rearranged pre-existing imagery rather than developed their own work from first-hand studies and investigations. These submissions lacked sufficient experimentation with media or exploration of ideas to enable the candidates to develop personal qualities in their work. Where candidates had attempted to create their own imagery, there was an over-reliance on simplistic cartoon styles. The lack of informed development and first-hand studies resulted in extremely poor drawing skills that seemed not to be recognised in Centre assessments.

Fashion and Textile Design

The better responses demonstrated knowledge of the work of contemporary designers which had informed experimentation and the development of the candidates' own ideas. The work consisted of concept drawings that demonstrated some invention and detailed thinking about surface, colour and pattern. Candidates demonstrated enthusiasm for the development of their ideas, and explored varied and imaginative alternative use of materials in costume design sometimes through drawing and painting, and sometimes through adding materials/fabric swatches and decorative accessories to their drawn and painted designs. These studies were often backed by well informed sources, e.g. drawings from natural forms, flowers/insects etc. However many did not progress into experimentation with actual materials.

Weaker submissions were lacking in imaginative development and revealed lack of confidence in drawing the models with any understanding of the proportion of the figure and relied on examples of fashions copied from magazines.

Unnecessary documentation of the practical process took up a disproportion amount of space in those entries for Textile Design. This could have been supported with documentation or annotation as to why one method had been chosen or what had worked or not worked so showing the level of engagement and thought-process which had also taken place.

Submissions lacked adequate research and development to the levels suggested by the Centres' assessments. More time could have been used in research into media and ideas rather than photographing the process.

While technical competence was evident there was a heavy reliance on secondary sources and pre-made printing blocks. It was a good idea to capitalise on local customs and Folk Art but without the thorough investigation it simply became a pastiche.

3D Design and sculpture

The best sculpture submissions featured keywords, such as Tension as the starting points and the supporting studies consisted of very well presented work including well observed first-hand drawings, painting, photography and sculpted studies in the form of clay and paper and card experiments. The photographs were technically proficient and taken from interesting viewpoints. The final pieces were large scale photographs of ceramic work and installations which were ambitious and well produced. Work had been influenced by artists but developed into highly personal and creative projects.

A small number of candidates had produced sculptural work. While these demonstrated adequate skills, the research tasks and outcomes were heavily directed and the work lacked sufficient personal qualities and refinement. Sculptural submissions included decorated plaques, pots and sculptural forms. While these demonstrated some evidence of creative invention and personal qualities in their ideas, the practical experiments and final forms were simply made and lacked sufficient detailed skills.

Some quite well-executed card relief was seen featuring paper maquettes but most submissions would have benefited from greater experimentation or development.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/03
Coursework B

General comments

A variety of approaches to this paper were observed, with drawing and painting the most popular. All candidates submitted finished pieces of work that had been supported by preparatory work. Most submissions included sketchbooks which gave candidates the opportunity to make immediate studies and responses that could support their work. The use of sketchbooks was variable but there was a larger proportion of genuine working sketchbooks than in previous sessions. The best sketchbooks evolved as the candidates' projects developed and clearly demonstrated the candidates' critical thinking and understanding through annotated experimentation and exploration. Unfortunately there were many poor sketchbooks that amounted to little more than a random collection of drawings that did not connect with work presented on the candidate's mounted sheets and tended to reinforced evidence of candidate's lack of critical thinking and independence.

Many of the high level entries were characterised by clear, confident, in depth, focused development of a personal aesthetic to a final outcome. Some mid-level entries showed much potential in the preparatory works but failed to confidently exploit possibilities in the final outcomes which were less successful.

Weaker entries presented work which was meagre in quantity, repetitive rather than developmental, and lacking in meaningful reference to the wider culture or any artistic reference.

Very few Centres controlled the themes the candidates pursued, but the majority of Centres encouraged an individual approach.

Comments on areas of study

Painting and Related Media

Figure and Portrait studies dominated the subject matter in this area, with some examples of landscape, abstract, still life and natural forms.

High level work was characterised by confident development using first-hand sources, intelligent and meaningful reference to artists to inform their work and convincing use of media to show mature analysis of form particularly of the challenging subject matter of the human head. Some stronger candidates exploited different emotional moods and situations, different ages, use of distortion e.g. underwater, transparent layers collaged onto surfaces. Some very large scale works that could not be transported were submitted as photographs, and there were examples of candidates undertaking the very challenging subject of large scale grouping of figures in space. Sketchbooks were seen to support skills and ideas and strong technical skills with drawing and paint application were seen.

There was a surprising number of component 3 submissions that did not resolve themselves into fully realised final outcomes or series of outcomes. These candidates had continued to approach research, exploration and experimentation in an open ended fashion, similar to component 2, rather than appreciating the different emphasis in component 3 that requires the work to culminate in at least one fully resolved outcome.

Some candidates had made copies from the work of other artists. While these candidates sometimes demonstrated competent skills, only a few went on to use acquired knowledge in their own work. There was little evidence that weaker candidates were able or intended to translate these technical exercises in the making of their own creative work, indeed, in many cases, there was no evidence of any of the candidate's own creative work.

Weaker entries relied as usual on secondary sources, lacked any investigation into development beyond a superficial level. Work tended to be repetitive, literal and unimaginative, with dull and monotonous use of processes. Some failed to make use of a sketch book, or if they did submit one revealed their lack of commitment to the subject, with only a few perfunctory sketches.

Photography, Digital and Lens Media

Candidates had explored many diverse themes including the city at night, shadows, light and shade, distorted faces, portraiture and reflections. These were accessible subjects, able to be revisited, allowing the candidates some control over the lighting and enabling them to explore different effects. Contact sheets were produced and well displayed; marked up with indications where they had selected and edited their shots. The work of other photographers was explored and their ideas and influences were used to develop a range of solutions. There were interesting experiments with Photoshop.

Some photography candidates had selected interesting subject matter and had sustained their investigation sufficiently for them to produce a number of competent images. However, the absence of research of the work of appropriate photographers restricted the development of these candidates' critical understanding and their work did not progress beyond this level.

The least successful candidates took simple snapshots of landscapes, street scenes and poverty. Little consideration was given to composition, a range of possible views or lighting. There were few experiments with enlargement or cropping and there was little difference between these submissions and those of Component 2. The sketchbooks lacked depth and engagement and needed to have more evidence that other photographers work had been studied. These candidates needed to explore different types of documentary photography to succeed with these themes and to expand their creative horizons.

Weaker photography submissions were characterised by collections of unrelated images with little evidence of the development of technical or imaginative ideas.

Graphic Design

Very few entries were submitted, although there were some fascinating examples of CGI submissions including designs for animated film characters and designs for emoticons, with candidates showing a good degree of skill in manipulating imagery. While these submissions impressed in terms of technical ability and knowledge of computing possibilities, they were less impressive in terms of imaginative subject matter, with imagery being very derivative and safe.

A few illustration projects were seen that were made digitally. There was very little evidence of researching the work of other artists or any first-hand studies informing the development of the work and skill level were very limited.

Fashion and Textile Design

Submissions included actual full scale garments, photographs of models wearing the garments using different poses and viewpoints, drawings and paintings of designs, sketchbooks bursting with studies, fabric swatches, experiments with material, designers' references.

There were some outstanding examples of garments which crossed the boundary between conventional costume design and sculpture, becoming highly expressive works of art, using fabric in an abstract expressionist way through folds and stiffening and shaping to represent emotions and/or states of mind and attitudes.

There were some very interesting examples of full size garments with modern interpretation of traditional designs drawn and painted straight on to the fabric.

The very few Textile Design submissions relied heavily on an excessive number of sewn cloth samples which were made in a wide range of materials but with no discrimination or critical analysis of the results. The supporting sheets consisted of these samples, with no first-hand reference – drawings or photographs, and some exact painted copies of a few other artists' work.

3D Design and Sculpture

Most entries consisted of photographs of final pieces. It was pleasing to see many examples of use of unusual materials in experimental work to test out possibilities.

The level of commitment and ability of the best work was outstanding. Own photographs and drawings were developed into abstracted ideas. Sketchbooks were hand-made and relevant, featuring studies, notes, ideas and artist research. Work was intellectually developed and final pieces were highly ambitious and well executed. Some noteworthy clay work had been imprinted and folded to look like fabric and beautifully photographed. Other candidates had made elaborate clay installations using tiles.

One candidate working in Painting and Related Media submitted 3D work as part of experimental work in their sketchbook. The subject was 'Body Image' and there were very good photos of 3D Modroc casts and sculptures of body parts. This was an in-depth submission. Another candidate began with research into architectural design, but very quickly established an association with Origami and began a series of experiments with folded paper maquettes. Very good use was made of the sketchbook to show the journey of a well developed project, full of thoughts, ideas and references to contemporary architecture. Different materials were used – card, ceramics, lightweight wood to make models based on the maquettes and a series of photographs presented of the final outcomes.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/04
Personal Study

General comments

There was evidence of the awareness for the importance of first-hand research and experience. A contributory factor must be the increased use of the proposal forms which enables the candidate to plan a suitable structure for the study, identifying some vital sources from which to carry out the essential first hand research. Teachers had made supportive and advisory comments on some of these forms which can be endorsed and supported by the adviser, and candidates had clearly benefitted from all the advice given. The sources of all the work submitted, text and images, must be correctly and clearly referenced.

A wide range of topics were chosen with more thematic approaches seen, such as 'blue', 'water', 'joiners' etc. These studies were successful when related practitioners were identified with visual connections being made. The areas of study seen to be explored included those of ; fine art, graphic design, fashion design, photography, sculpture, street art, textile design, 3D design, ceramics, architecture and interior design. Some very contemporary artists had been investigated, particularly involved with the practise of 'street art'. A few submissions were seen which consisted of pieces of coursework which was an indication that some teachers are not familiar enough with the requirement for the Personal Study.

The very best submissions were well informed, stimulating and focused. The candidates selecting an area of study that was personal and interesting to them were inspired and produced work that was engaging and full of vitality.

A wide range of methods of presentation were again in evidence, the most common being an A4 file or plastic folder, usually consisting of digital images and word processed text. Several submissions were presented as sketchbooks or scrapbooks of various sizes. Many exciting and dynamic presentations were seen in the form of hand-made books, some quite small, which had used a combination of IT and photographic processes with drawings and other practical, material based experiments.

High level

Many very creative and individual responses were seen which had benefitted from the first -and experience of visiting different artists and exhibitions, clearly informing and influencing the studies at this high level of achievement. The presentation of the visual and written material was appropriate and often very inventive. There was a greater inclusion of a variety of media used in presentations at this level and candidates often combined their own photographs with drawings and paintings. The visual material was very personal and highly impressive, reflecting the style of the chosen artists as well as developing an aspect of the theme. At this level there was a strong sense of sustained development throughout the study, from the initial ideas, leading to a conclusion that showed a real sense of understanding and awareness of the theme. The use of media was always appropriate to the subject. The influence of selected artists could be seen in all candidates work with some outstanding examples at the highest level. Candidates also incorporated text which revealed a high level of understanding and awareness of the subject being explored. The analysis was very mature and perceptive and went beyond looking at the style, to fully discuss the meaning and development behind the work.

The inventive use of media was very impressive. The articulate responses at this level containing detailed evaluative and complex comparisons were often outstanding, particularly where candidates had selected more conceptual and challenging practitioners. There were examples of some exceptional written and visual analysis.

Mid level

Most candidates were within this level of achievement. These submissions nearly always contained first-hand research. Sometimes this came in the form of an interview via email. This approach was improved when combined with photographic evidence of visits to studios/workshops and galleries etc. Most of these studies revealed a sense of purpose and some direction with the depth of analysis indicating a focused investigation. When discussing images some candidates tended to be more descriptive at the lower level while at the higher levels the exploration was sustained in a more thoughtful and considered way. Some studies demonstrated quite limited analysis such as those which were based on Fashion Design.

Stronger candidates at this level made some very good use of photographic images and/or drawings made on visits. A few architectural studies also made good use of photography combined with text to record and compare selected features. Some candidates had focused on a process such as printed textiles, factory produced ceramics and printmaking. Sometimes these submissions benefitted from the inclusion of some material-based responses which had been informed by their investigation. Students had generally demonstrated the ability to visually analyse images which did sometimes limit the need for additional text.

Within the lower to middle bands, the presentation and selection of material was more limited and a few candidates had included material that was not relevant to their chosen topic. At this level an interview was often included as a means to show some analysis, but usually just provided some biographical details and/or descriptions of works of art. The strongest of these had achieved a more personal response through direct contact with a local artist/artisan, although not exploiting the potential for further analysis.

It was very clear that in most cases research and experience from a first-hand source had significantly benefitted the stronger studies. In stronger works within this band of achievement, candidates had begun to develop more personal views supported by their research and were able to reflect this in evaluations made of their work and that of the artists selected. The research led the direction of the study and therefore had more relevance. Combined with some more careful planning and a wider range of references, candidates were able to discuss the themes and questions relevant to their intentions.

Lower levels

At the lower levels of assessment, candidates had included material which revealed a much more limited approach to selecting and interpreting information. Weaker submissions usually contained evidence of material taken from the internet. Stronger studies within this level often contained an interview by email and the material was organised into sections with the research consisting of secondary material which was more descriptive than analytical.

Some candidates had included a visit to an artist but the information gathered was purely biographical. Many candidates at the lower levels of attainment used IT but the standard of the text does not reveal a personal engagement. Evidence was often seen of text being directly downloaded from the internet. Interviews with the artist were often included which told us very little about the ideas and development behind the actual work. The questions often seemed to be quite random and were not carefully planned and considered as they should have been.

Many candidates used IT without considering how their topic relates to the presentation. Sometimes text was added in pencil or biro which actually detracted from any visual qualities the study might have had.

Some weaker submissions made no reference to any work by other artists, often presenting their own coursework as evidence of first-hand experience. There were a few other weaker submissions where the research topics were not relevant to any area of Art and Design. The completion of a proposal form submitted to CIE would have helped to avoid such inappropriate choices being made

Conclusion

More centres took the option of using the proposal forms available. Therefore fewer inappropriate topics were chosen with more suitable sources from which to gain the vital first-hand research and experience needed for the completion of a successful Personal Study. More candidates demonstrated outstanding and exceptional levels of achievement.

A few Centres have overseen a more prescriptive approach to the study with all candidates visiting the same artists/exhibition. This approach has a tendency to inhibit a more individual and engaged involvement with the topic which is essential for achieving the higher levels of attainment.