

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/01
Controlled Test

General Comments

The questions on this year's paper provided a broad range of subjects, opportunities for observation, personal interpretation and experimentation. Genres included landscape, figure, still life, fantasy, textile, and fashion and product design. Opportunities for primary observation underpinned all the questions, whatever the outcome was, and was incorporated to a very high standard by those achieving the highest marks. Many candidates had used the preparatory period well to gather information and explore ideas, most approached their work with enthusiasm and some of the submissions gaining higher marks were equivalent to those found on first year degree programme.

The majority of works were figuratively based and either drawn or painted, although some experimented with pattern and printing processes as part of their supporting work, final pieces tended to be A1 paintings/drawings and textiles apart from one Centre which submitted some excellent product design sheets and resolved solutions. A few 3D responses were seen in the form of photographs together with one actual 3D piece.

There were also some excellent observation studies and paintings with coherent compositions and understanding of form, volume, texture and colour achieving higher marks whilst those with lower marks tended to struggle with perspective and scale. It was also noticeable that those achieving the higher marks either drew directly from their subject matter or from photographs taken by them rather than relying on copying downloaded images, which inevitably enhanced understanding of their own subject matter. Although rare, it was a pleasure to see sheets of research where one drawing/experiment linked to another across the whole sheet showing the progress of an idea or technique. Some candidates sent too much preparatory work with one candidate including 13 x A1 sheets.

Most candidates produced final pieces which filled the A1 supporting sheets. Greater consideration could be given to the size of the final piece as many of the preparatory pieces were more successful where the smaller size enhanced the content. Likewise, some candidates chose to use different media in their final piece, which lacked the confidence of that used in their research.

Where candidates had referred to other artists and applied what they had learnt to their own work well, it was a great way of understanding how other artists work and how they had resolved similar problems, ideas and used media.

It was noticeable that candidates proposing design solutions either had a very good grasp of the design processes and problem solving in the higher mark range whilst those gaining lower marks tended to be imitative of existing designs and showed little innovation.

About two - thirds of the responses came from **Section A**, suggesting that candidates preferred a more open ended topic to explore. Responses to **Section B** amounted to about one - fifth and overall, there were fewer responses to **Section C**.

Specific Comments on Questions

Section A

Question 1 Ageing

This question appealed to candidates who enjoyed ideas and had imagination. Subject matter ranged from beautiful and intense observation of natural forms such as animals and decaying fruit to family portraits and landscape. This was one of the most popular questions and responses came from across the mark range.

Higher marks were awarded where candidates showed imagination and creativity in their interpretation, one candidate produced some exquisite observational studies of tortoises whilst another used collage processes combined with drawn and painted imagery of clocks, hourglasses, cracked earth and sections of faces to produce a composition that incorporated all manner of ageing. This particular candidate had looked closely at the cubist work of Juan Gris for inspiration of how to combine images and had applied that knowledge well. Another had candidate had combined sliced sections of old and young faces together changing the colour palette in each section to emphasize the difference.

Middle range work was also ambitious; one candidate had linked three generations of their family by wrapping a significant locally patterned blanket around three generations. At this level materials had been explored and used widely, though the rendering demonstrated some technical weaknesses in suggesting tone and form.

Candidates achieving **lower** marks tended to opt for more predictable solutions with less observational support and the work contained little research and little scope for development. Candidates would have been wise to sustain their preparatory work. Images tended to be unconnected and displayed less technical ability and final outcomes were uninformed and unresolved.

Question 2 Exploded

This question enabled candidates to take a more interpretative approach and some imaginative ideas were explored at the higher level including one pop-up photography based piece combining the candidate's self-portrait with a skull.

This question tended to attract more literal solutions such as war scenes, exploding grenades and body parts, much of which was derivative and based on film or computer games. These candidates, although enthusiastic, tended to like the ideas rather than the process of conveying them and generally achieved marks in the **lower** range.

In the **middle** range there were some imaginative and emotive exceptions though, such as the spread of Ebola and the role of health workers or personal identity crises where a candidate portrayed herself as if in a light bulb that could explode at any moment.

Question 3 Performance

This question attracted responses from the whole ability range and there was a tendency to attract those whose passion was performance, so there were several ballet and dance based submissions which were all of a high standard. These candidates knew and felt their subject matter; they had photographed and drawn either dancers or their accessories such as ballet shoes with understanding. However, there were few references to the work of Edgar Degas which was surprising. There was also a photographic submission exploring the performance of dance and movement. The outcomes showed good personal qualities and included a variety of photo shoots and locations. Another candidate that achieved **high** marks submitted an excellent range of ambitious and imaginative supporting work, used a variety of media, and combined different scales effectively so that in the final composition a dancer was performing in another's hand.

At the mid to lower levels there was too much reliance on the use of secondary images which were copied and sometimes attempts were made to amalgamate disparate images into a meaningful composition unsuccessfully. Intentions and the development of ideas were often unclear, leading to unresolved final outcomes.

Question 4 Building or constructing

This question attracted a surprising range of responses from building sites to body building to the construction and influence of natural forms. Marks awarded covered the entire mark range.

The very best work displayed individual and imaginative interpretations of the topic, thorough research, analysis and a high level of manipulative skill.

A candidate that gained marks in the **higher** range had approached the question with intelligence and curiosity showing how natural form has underpinned so many inventions such as airplanes or how the zebra has influenced heating and cooling systems in contemporary buildings such as the Horton Rose building in Johannesburg or a kingfisher's beak to the bullet trains of Japan, in their supporting work. The final piece combined the imagery in a collage like way linked by the use of black and white only.

In the **middle** range there were some good photographic references to building sites, which were then manipulated digitally. Often the supporting work was more exciting than the final submission which tended to be more safe and conventional photographic images.

Candidates achieving **lower** marks, although obviously interested in this question by making first-hand site drawings, were hampered by little understanding of perspective and scale or if reliant on Internet images and poor photographs, experienced difficulty when trying to enlarge their imagery.

Question 5 Tangled and twisted

This was a popular question with responses across the whole mark range. Candidates were provided with the opportunity to explore individual ideas resulting in many interpretations.

Again, there were some imaginative responses including twisted bodies rising out of a primordial soup, twisted hair, this was one of the few questions where candidates produced abstract work and patterns.

The best candidates gaining **higher marks** explored several alternative aspects of their theme looking at viewpoints through photography, use of media and painting techniques. Excellent use was made of research into other artists work; the more able candidates were able to build on techniques studied and use them to interpret their own ideas. One excellent painting was of a body rising out of a sea of bodies, the paint was well handled, the supporting work extensive and the whole piece had a 'Goyaesque' feel, and it was certainly done with passion. Another strong submission had a political theme, looking at street demonstrations and tangled people, and relating this to tangled undergrowth. There was also an innovative garment constructed from twisted pieces of fabric.

Others in the **middle** mark range examined hairstyles, twisted ribbons of pasta, rope and purely abstract patterns. Whilst all were interesting they needed to be developed a bit further conceptually in order to gain higher marks. A number of candidates took interesting photographs of tangled objects such as chains, ropes, nets, hair and fabric. Some candidates developed their photographs and drawings by digitally manipulating them and twisting them to distort the image, and then experimented with different media to change these images further still.

At the lower range the work contained little exploration of ideas with little consideration of composition or other formal elements. Some final pieces were purely copies of secondary images from magazines or the Internet, which indicated a lack of engagement with the topic.

Question 6 Collections

Marks for this question were awarded across the whole range with the majority being in the middle. Subject matter included collections of cultural artefacts, portraits, collections of personal items and shoe designs.

Two memorable submissions gaining **higher** marks were notable for their ingenuity and imagination. In one, cloth had been pinned up with map pins allowing the candidate to really study how cloth is draped, its form and tension. This piece was rendered sensitively in coloured pencils. Another candidate produced lively sheets brimming with enthusiasm for shoe design both past and present from several cultures. These influences were combined in the design of a shoe, which in a series of three images metamorphosed into a dress. Shoes proved to be popular subject matter with some candidates referencing the work of Lisa Milroy.

Those in the **middle** mark range were no less enthusiastic and were often interesting but often lacked sufficient development or supporting work. For example one candidate submitted a series of pastel faces each in the same format, which was aesthetically pleasing but lacked sufficient supporting work or development. At this level a range of sources were often included which bore no relation to each other resulting in confusion about the intention of the work.

Those achieving **lower** marks tended to produce poorly thought out compositions, i.e. the collection was either spread very thinly over the background leaving lots of empty space or the objects did not really work as a composition.

Section B

Question 7 A crumpled towel, pair of trainers and two tennis balls are on the seat of a chair. A tennis racquet leans against the chair, and a shirt hangs over the back.

This was a fairly popular question and submissions fell into all the mark ranges. Candidates showing competence had selected appropriate objects and explored alternative arrangements and viewpoints of their subject through a series of studies and photographs, demonstrating a successful manipulation of materials. Some candidates only produced finished drawings or paintings for their preparatory work, mostly in the same media and often from similar viewpoints, therefore failing to understand the importance of research. This work, although technically competent in many cases, lacked personal qualities and experimentation.

Most candidates that answered this question showed a good understanding of form, space and colour. One submission gaining **high** marks was both powerful and witty making use of dramatic lighting, colour and form. A red tennis ball was reflected in the green leather of the seat, the shirt draped around the chair appeared to be holding a tennis racquet and the whole ensemble worked well against a black background. A good piece of work in the **middle** range had made excellent use of reference to David Hockney and Cubism in their supporting studies but sadly did not follow through into their final piece which was much more conventional. Several candidates from one Centre had developed their drawings into etchings. However, the ability to select the most appropriate image varied between the candidates. More experimentation with composition would have helped.

At the lower level, candidates' preparatory work lacked engagement and was often repetitious, showed little experimentation with media and made no references to other artists. Candidates had difficulty in rendering different surfaces and textures as well as understanding space and form.

Question 8 A glass vase containing water and four long-stemmed flowers stands on a newspaper on a table. More flowers, some leaves and a pair of scissors are placed around it.

This was the most popular question by a long way, marks were awarded across the whole range and there were some delightful pieces in every category. Roses and Bird of Paradise flowers were much in evidence both offering exciting colour possibilities.

There were some remarkably sophisticated submissions in the **higher** mark range but one in particular was memorable. This candidate had given considerable thought to their work and developed ideas throughout on some excellent worksheets. The standard of observation was outstanding, the roses, which are challenging structures to draw and paint, were exquisite, the metal of the scissors and texture of newspaper were very convincing but what made this submission stand out was the imaginative interpretation of the subject matter. This candidate had cut up the flowers then cut up a preparatory study and combined this with cut and whole flowers into a final piece. The whole submission was supported by well-chosen references into four artist's work whose ideas were then applied by the candidate to their own work.

Work in the **middle** range included many lively and strong submissions, which showed a generally confident handling of media; watercolours, acrylics and oils, understanding of form and space. Work in this range tended towards a more literal and less imaginative interpretation of the subject matter, some repeated the same image several times in their preparatory studies however there were also many with well observed elements of the composition including reflection in the glass vase. Difficulties arose either in combining their studies into a strong composition or candidates had run out of excitement and energy by the time it came to produce their examination piece.

Although those achieving **lower** marks had tried hard, the complexity of the still life had overwhelmed them. Flowers looked rather wooden and often there was a poor understanding of space. A lack of analysis and understanding of different textures combined to make this question too challenging for some candidates.

Question 9 The whole or upper part of a figure sits in a stool while leaning against a wall. The model's arms are folded and one leg is extended.

The higher achieving submissions included evidence of very strong painting and drawing skills and a clear understanding of proportion, perspective and foreshortening. Preparatory studies included drawings in a variety of positions and from a range of viewpoints. Some candidates made good use of personal photographs to research compositions

This was a challenging question with many elements to be understood in order to produce a successful piece. Perhaps this explains why there were not so many submissions, which spanned the whole range of marks. One outstanding submission gaining **high** marks had used this question as a meditation on their love of reading and the ideas to be gained from that. The background was a faint stenciled text from the opening paragraph of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, the figure was viewed from a low viewpoint, the composition united all the elements. The preparatory studies explored different compositions and closely examined individual elements such as the position of the hands or how to paint books.

Work awarded marks in the **middle** range showed a less confident understanding of space, the proportion of the figure and how to integrate the background. It was a pity that viewpoints were generally at eye level and compositions were predictable and un-thought out. Nevertheless all candidates had either worked from direct observation of the figure or from photographs that they had taken of friends.

Lower level work often displayed conceptual ideas, perhaps to disguise a lack of ability with figure drawing. The origin of sources was unclear and the expression and development of ideas was confusing leading to a lack of communication.

Question 10 The corner of a garden including a table and chairs.

This was not a popular question and 60% of marks were in the **lower** range largely due to lack of understanding of space and perspective. This was exacerbated by reliance on second-hand source material and consequently lack of any development work in the preparatory studies. One candidate had set up a miniature garden, table and chairs, using wire and fake grass, then photographed this and digitally placed it in a frame in a living room. Although the idea was innovative, the work demonstrated limited technical ability and the preparatory studies showed little development of ideas or thorough exploration of media.

A candidate achieving marks in the **middle** range had done some very good pencil sketches in their preparatory work but the final piece in less confidently handled paint did not allow their sensitivity to come through.

There was a beautifully executed charcoal drawing in the **higher** mark range. This candidate had made full use of light and shade to add drama to their composition and drawn the wrought iron garden furniture with confidence and understanding.

Question 11 extract

This question proved a puzzler to candidates, there were very few submissions but the question had many possibilities due to the experience that candidates witness on a daily basis at School.

All submissions demonstrated the manipulation of first hand source material and at the upper level was clearly documented with candidates' photography of figures engaged in role play, as well as experiments with different compositions and viewpoints through smaller drawings. At this level the work was very well researched and developed and showed a depth of personal engagement, and an empathy and connection with the topic.

Mid-range work was not so well researched with candidates tending to settle on their first idea which was then repeated, although these candidates displayed an understanding of how to use and manipulate their chosen media.

Section C

Question 12 Design the façade of a café called 'Expresso', that sells a variety of coffees and cakes. In addition you should also design the front cover of the menu.

75% of the submissions were disappointingly derivative, lacked any design process or imagination and completely ignored either the inclusion of cakes or the façade or menu! Very few candidates tackled all three elements. Candidates also relied on Photoshop to make their work look more sophisticated. Consequently these candidates achieved only low marks.

A much stronger piece which gained marks in the **middle** range included much more thorough research and a problem-solving approach to design. Preparatory work included architectural studies of façade, Photoshop experiments with colourways and fonts, awareness of existing designs and alternative solutions. This candidate was involved in with their work. There were no marks awarded in the **higher** range.

Question 13 Design a repeat pattern for wallpaper based on kitchen utensils. In addition, adapt your design for use on a circular tablecloth.

Marks were awarded across the **lower and middle** ranges for this question. Candidates gaining marks in the **lower** range experienced similar problems to those attempting the 'Espresso' question, i.e. lack of understanding of the design process, problem solving, development of ideas and not responding to both elements of the question. Weak primary research resulted in weak design; the utensils were clumsily drawn or based on poor Internet imagery and the resulting patterns were predictable.

Submissions from one Centre followed the same formulaic process of working containing very similar work of different levels. The work in the middle range contained research and recording from direct observation, with strengths mainly in the manipulation of materials and in the representation of subject matter. There was evidence of initial explorations of design compositions in black and white media. However, the translation into the final repeat pattern experiments contained weaknesses in the technical skills, particularly in the manipulation of printing. The printed designs were also repetitive with little development other than changing the colour of the ink. Consequently, the work became a series of repetitive and unfulfilled repeat patterns which lacked the vitality, quality and potential of the initial design ideas. The work at the lower level followed the same process, though the levels of work were defined by the amount of evidence of initial research and recording which was mainly limited. Overall, submissions from this Centre lacked personal qualities.

There was however, some ambitious work in the **middle** mark range, one candidate produced a lovely tablecloth with a batik background and hand stenciled cooking pots, which had been based on direct observation. Another tried out many alternative compositions and hand painted their final piece. It was evident from this question that many Centres had only basic textile equipment nevertheless the candidates' enthusiasm had enabled some good submissions.

Question 14 Design a container for five eggs. Your design should indicate what the contents are and also aim to promote sales. Consider how the container (s) will stack together when displayed in a store.

Although this was not a popular question it attracted submissions at an excellent level.

The work demonstrated a serious and mature response to package design with thorough and well considered research. The submission contained recording originating from direct observation and from the investigation and analysis of other designer's packaging, text and logos to inspire ideas. There was a clear demonstration of problem solving with good consideration of proportion, measurement, composition, form, pattern and aesthetic judgement, within the process of designing for a specific purpose. The work was well documented with drawings, alternative ideas, branding and logos. Experiments had been explored with skill using a range of 2 and 3 dimensional media, with evidence of critical thinking in the selection of appropriate techniques and design when considering the construction of the final form.

In another example at this level, the preparatory sheets were filled with information including beautifully observed watercolours of eggs and their containers, many alternative designs each one exhaustively evaluated, 3D paper maquettes and mock-ups, computer aided designs and resolved models of the final solution photographed in a shop to show its scale and how it would look within the context of grocery shops. This work was a real pleasure and delight to mark; it was equivalent to first year degree level in UK universities.

Question 15 A local arts and music festival is presenting a contemporary musical called 'Neptune the sea god'. Design two costumes, one for a male and one for a female, including headwear.

This question attracted a wide range of candidates and marks were in the poor to excellent range. There were some very strong submissions in the **higher** mark range, the enthusiasm of the candidates shone

through their work and approaches. Common factors were exploration of lots of alternative ideas; strong observation drawing that was used in design, enjoyment of materials, historical research, freedom to stylize and application of influences such as Art Nouveau. Sheets were lively, colourful and involved.

The work at the middle range provided evidence of some research into the background of the characters though this was descriptive with little creative analysis of aesthetic forms. Candidates had made some observations through first hand studies of fish and underwater life at local aquariums and this partly informed the design development which illustrated a range of ideas and sometimes included inspiration from fashion designers. However, the development into the final idea sometimes lacked the influences and vitality seen in the preparatory work resulting in an unresolved set of final costumes.

Those in the **lower** range did not explore alternatives, were less imaginative and struggled more with the form of the models wearing the costumes. Candidates relied more on secondary sources for developing ideas and research and the development of personal ideas was limited. Although there was some control of media this was not always used effectively in the development of the final outcomes, which at times seemed disconnected from the costume ideas in the initial studies.

Conclusion

It was apparent that candidates in the higher mark ranges had made effective use of their preparation time and had searched well beyond the literal interpretation of the question, demonstrating creative, innovative and personal responses. Often, the strengths lay in the first hand observational research, interpretation of the subject and in the development of subsequent ideas. There was evidence of good investigation and depth of analysis, with appropriate research into other artists and designers. The more successful submissions demonstrated a sophisticated, sensitive and confident rendering of a wide range of materials. Many of the responses at this level were inspired by questions from **Section A**.

Work in the middle range was mainly inspired by questions from **Section A** and **B**. The work often featured observational studies from first hand which were of a good standard with thoughtful consideration given to detail and composition. However, in other cases the origin of the sources was unclear. Preparatory work contained a variety of studies exploring different media and focusing on alternative viewpoints with varying amounts of detail. The main focus of starting points of achievement was on the recording and observation, with less seen on the development of ideas, contextual references, personal evaluation and critical judgment.

Candidate's responses at the lower level lacked engagement and consideration of personal involvement and investigation. There was insufficient preparatory work with little investigation of the topic, exploration of ideas or experiments with a range of media. The production of an informed response was less likely especially when developing from the fragmented research, random images and unfulfilled ideas. Candidates at this level relied on the use of secondary source material and did not explore the potential available to them within their chosen topic.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/02
Coursework A

General comments

Some very mature submissions were seen at the very top end of the mark range where development and exploration were thoroughly focused and effective. The best submissions had clearly come from well-structured courses that had encouraged candidates to develop individual themes on a variety of subjects. However, even in these better submissions, there seemed to be less drawing from direct observation. There were some good photographs as part of the research but ideally there needs to be both drawing from first hand sources and photography as a sound starting point.

However, there was still some outstanding and highly original work submitted, where candidates had selected individual themes or specific subjects to base their work around. In the main these provided a rich source of research material from which candidates could select, experiment, and develop their own visual language. This was especially so when candidates could investigate such themes from first hand observation and experience. When this had been encouraged within Centres, whatever the levels of ability, the work was always of an individual and personal nature.

The most frequent comment made in Centre reports for work seen in the mid and low ranges was 'insufficient evidence of exploration of ideas or experimentation with media'. Although some candidates' first hand studies were competent, the development of ideas was often limited and had not been informed by researching the work of other artists. Some candidates remained heavily reliant on secondary sources. Poor choices of theme restricted some candidates. Competent skills were evident in some of the work but there was an inconsistency due to a lack of clear purpose and direction in the development of experimentation. In other words, there was limited evidence of candidates taking responsibility for their own work and making independent decisions. The development of compositional ideas was a particular weakness.

Most of the submissions were well presented on sheets of card or in spiral bound folders. In the best submissions the sheets were well laid out in a logical sequence where the progression and development of ideas were obvious. In the weaker submissions, candidates did not understand that layout, lettering and annotation are a part of a total visual presentation. In many submissions there was too much writing. Good research and analysis could all be done visually. Annotation should be succinct, pertinent and legible.

The generous nature of teacher assessments remained a problem and was widespread. In many cases teacher assessments bore little relationship to the evidence presented in candidates' submissions. Technical qualities, in particular, were overvalued especially where this was the candidates' main focus, and the submissions consisted of finished pieces.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

The majority of submissions were from this Area of Study. Portraiture tended to be the most popular subject but other genres such as still-life; animal studies and landscape were seen.

The better candidates used a wide range of 2D and 3D media including collage, mono-print and resist techniques. Their use of colour had benefitted from the study of other artists and cultures and was more expressive and inventive. The use of digital photography was used as a means of gathering information, manipulating imagery and exploring compositional arrangements and different viewpoints.

Candidates who had experimented in a variety of media were often the most successful. Within these better submissions there was evidence of research and recording from first hand observation. Ideas had been explored and developed and these candidates had not been afraid to experiment and take risks, or even to make mistakes.

Most submissions fell within the mid-levels of achievement. Initial research and investigation of chosen themes was limited, leaving little information from which to develop ideas. Images created in one medium were often repeated in a different media without showing any evidence of further development. There was a lot of copying from photographs with very little supporting exploration or personal development, even when they were the candidate's own. Whilst good levels of competence within the assessment objective of Manipulative Skills could be rewarded there was little evidence of critical judgement or imagination to develop original ideas. Consequently the evidence of meeting the objectives in Personal Qualities and Critical Knowledge and Understanding was much weaker.

There were many very weak submissions that did not meet the minimum assessment criteria. Such work showed little or no first hand research. Folders consisted of a few unrelated studies of copied images or of compositions created from imagination.

Graphic Design

The most professional looking and innovative Graphic submission presented original computer generated artwork depicting a range of typefaces and several layouts. These drawings showed a maturity of design, composition and technical expertise.

Several submissions contained a wealth of designs for print, such as letter-headings, posters, CD/DVD covers, logos, etc. of varying standards, which were produced digitally then each design copied painstakingly by hand, quite unnecessarily and to no good effect.

Less successful submissions were let down by a lack of design skills, poor hand drawn lettering or inappropriate computer fonts. Also, the relationship between image and text had not been sufficiently considered.

Photography

A few Photography submissions were presented with some excellent results, the most outstanding of which was very well researched, and well planned. It consisted of a wide range of experimental photographic ideas that were taken in numerous environments and light. These were then edited and computer manipulated into an innovative presentation with a personal narration in type. Photos were montaged onto page layouts with the type – screen shots of the layouts in progress were shown in the supporting work – and made into a glossy professionally finished book. The aesthetic qualities and critical understanding of this submission were outstanding.

An interesting series of photos showing 'Decay' through the disintegration of an apple and leaves was also well developed and produced. Another well focused and sustained body of work, with an excellently artistic selection of superb colour prints, was a time lapse study of the skies at dusk, night and dawn, tracking the movement of the stars and clouds.

Other successful submissions exploited the dynamics of light to reveal a sense of place. Some candidates demonstrated a mature ability to empathise with the people that they were photographing.

These were many examples of snapshots of markets, people in the street and light and shade. There was some evidence of different viewpoints, shots at different times of day and night and limited exploration of light and shade. There was little understanding of the use of lenses and viewpoints and no reference to the work of others.

Fashion and Textile Design

There were a few Printed Textiles submissions seen but recording ability was not transferred into effective development. There was little consideration of positive or negative space and real engagement with media experimentation in many of these. Exploration or investigation of pattern was often ignored and the focus remained on technique.

A small number of fashion submissions were seen. Most of these were at the lower end of the mark range, where the candidate's work lacked in-depth investigation and much needed first hand research. Observational drawings of bags, shoes or clothed figures would have assisted their designs greatly.

In all these submissions, although the fashion drawings were lively and sometimes inventive, there were not complete fashion projects. There was little evidence of starting points or sufficient research and investigation at the start. Ideas came fully finished and showed little evidence of experiment or exploration. There were no alternative colour schemes, details of the design accessories, colour swatches or sample trims.

Weaker submissions demonstrated an over reliance on fashion images from the internet, often with no information as to which designer was illustrated. Designs were poorly drawn or painted from the imagination and presented untidily and there was a lack of informative labelling or description.

3D Design

A small amount of ceramics was seen which used simple slab and coil construction techniques. Whilst there was some evidence of experimentation with forms and surfaces, the work lacked sufficient development and refinement of detailed skills.

Some had used cardboard to construct a series of simplified figures which were then decorated with coloured patterns based on doodles. The result was rather superficial and lacked real research and understanding.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/03

Coursework B

General comments

The most successful submissions seen showed a good understanding of how to produce a project from an initial starting point, through successful development, and culminating in a final outcome. It was clear that they had built on skills gained from their experience in Component 2, and this had given them the confidence to produce work of an ambitious nature, both in scale and complexity of concept.

Unfortunately, a significant number of submissions lacked focus; for example, some candidates had submitted several painted studies related by theme but also included a number of completely unconnected graphics projects. Whilst some of these candidates demonstrated technical competence, the work lacked evidence of critical awareness and had not been developed or sustained into resolved outcomes.

There were also a number of much weaker submissions where it was difficult to see very little difference between the work produced for Component 2 and that submitted for Component 3. These folders consisted of sheets of unrelated studies with an over reliance on working from secondary sources.

There were a few very personal and well developed sketchbooks which had really informed the development of the candidate's work. However, the majority had little relevance to any of the work seen in the folders. In these cases they were not genuine sketchbooks, instead they were just a collection of class based exercises cut out and pasted in.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

There were a large number of candidates, throughout the mark range, that explored figure drawing or worked from still life. Self-portraits and portraiture were the most popular subject presented with painted, drawn and photographic portraiture all fully explored.

Those candidates in the higher range produced some excellent drawing skills and showed a mastery of a range of painting techniques. When other techniques or processes were explored, candidates at this level used them intelligently to enhance their submissions or develop them for their final outcomes. There were some excellent still life paintings where composition and design skills were well developed and the use of paint was sometimes technically outstanding.

Work in the mid mark range contained pleasing final outcomes but tended to lack in-depth research or the technical ability to see their ideas through to a successful final piece. It was noted that a few candidates in the mid-range produced submissions containing several pieces of finished work to the same standard, but often did not choose the most aesthetically pleasing one for the final outcome.

In the weaker submissions there was little evidence of drawing from observation but a great deal tracing and copied images from the internet. The weaker candidates' use of line, tone, shape and form was inconsistent and showed lack of practice with, and understanding of, the media. The use of colour was often very literal and lacked experimentation.

Graphic Design

There were very few submissions for this area but a few reached the higher achievement levels. Those that did worked from clear design briefs.

The majority of submissions were process driven with an over reliance on computer technology. There was little evidence of hand drawn imagery based on direct observation. The relationship of text and image lacked considered judgement, and there were few experiments with colour, layout and fonts.

There were weak submissions comprising simply of the finished design for a specific product.

Photography

The themes in photography were mostly reportage style projects focusing on trips or visits to local places of interest. Portrait studies were also popular.

The best work developed personal qualities due to the candidates making their own informed critical judgements throughout the process of researching and exploring skills and ideas. The work always had a clear purpose and was informed by contextual references and demonstrated a genuine process of enquiry rather than preconceived ideas.

In general, most submissions lacked sufficient research and investigation and any sustained development of the idea. These were little more than snapshots although they had used simple effects in Photoshop. Candidates at this level need to show more understanding of photography through use of lenses, lighting and viewpoints, compositions and eventually photo editing techniques. A number of photo-shoots should be organised and ideas developed by looking at the work of other photographers. Unfortunately, candidates often relied too heavily on applying simple photo editing filters to poor quality starting points.

Fashion and Textile Design

Only a few candidates chose to work in textiles. There were very complex, multi-screen seven colour prints submitted, showing clear evidence of first hand research and development into abstract patterns. Unfortunately, most designs were too ambitious and complex to realise successfully.

Other weaker stencil and block printed fabric designs had no evidence of first hand studies. They demonstrated a poor sense of aesthetic awareness and a limited understanding of a repeat pattern using negative and positive shapes.

Fashion designs were limited in sources of reference. These were mostly cut outs from catalogues, with final outcomes confined to fashion illustrations copied from these secondary sources.

3D Design and Sculpture

Very few submissions were seen, these were lively, inventive and personal: a relief in papier mâché, an installation of faces in boxes and a layered mixed media 3D piece. All had sound research, experiments with media, showed competent skills and good photos illustrating the work in progress.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/04
Personal Study

General Comments

There were some really inventive, interesting and successful studies seen. Topics were often engaging and relevant with work seen from the whole ability range. The majority of submissions fell in the mid-range level of achievement.

Where encouraged to start work on their studies as early as possible, students had clearly made best use of their time. Rather than an afterthought at the end of the course, they had used the time for thorough research, visits to galleries; local artists, designers or craftspeople. All of which not only played an important part of their preparation for the Personal Study but it also benefited their other work. The very best submissions were clearly well informed, stimulating and focused. Students who had selected an area for study that was personal and interesting to them were fired with enthusiasm and produced work that was engaging and full of vitality.

The most common presentation was an A4 file or plastic folder, usually consisting of a combination of digital images and word processed text. Several submissions were presented as sketchbooks or scrapbooks of various sizes. Whilst this form of presentation is acceptable, some students would have benefitted from further guidance on alternative methods of presentation. There is scope to present the work in a more exciting and dynamic form and students should consider alternative methods of presentation in order to support and enhance their work. A1 is the largest format but it is possible to work on A3 or A2; or use double spread, concertina, pop-up, overlays and so on. Students should carefully consider possible alternative forms of presentation in order to make their work exciting and stimulating whilst maintaining clarity of communication. Students should be reminded that all secondary images must be correctly referenced.

High level

Amongst the very best submissions seen were some exceptionally well executed and sustained pieces of mature research and analysis. Here, students had demonstrated clear evidence of first-hand research, presented highly personal evaluations which proved to be both revealing and informative. These studies presented a clear 'journey of discovery' with some highly personal themes that included related practical-based explorations. A particularly perceptive example was seen where the selected works of two photographers were compared and contrasted. The candidate had then used the findings of that investigation to develop some very individual and clearly informed photographic responses.

The strongest submissions contained clear evidence of first-hand sources from which research and experience had been gained. These included visits to artists' studios, galleries, museums and workshops. Well planned interviews with the chosen practitioners were often carried out. The best of these had resulted in some revealing and informative studies.

Mid-level

The selection of an individual and appropriate topic is crucial for the success of this component and the majority of submissions seen in the mid-level had selected relevant and appropriate topics. On the whole students had carefully considered their choice of study and had gathered appropriate first-hand information.

Students demonstrated the ability to visually analyse images and limit the need for additional text. Some very good examples were seen from Centres where candidates had produced their own studies which were clearly informed by a developing understanding of the work of their selected artists. Relevant connections made through visual and practical-based explorations, which were clearly informed had enhanced and benefited studies at the mid-levels of assessment.

The development of themes and topics has the potential to be enhanced and informed by the qualities demonstrated by the chosen subject. This was particularly apparent in a number of studies which had explored the works of one (often local) artist. A comparison made with the works of at least one other relevant artist could have opened up more possibilities for exploration. A few candidates had focused on a process such as printmaking, woven textiles and industrial ceramics. These were improved where the candidate had included some practical-based responses clearly informed by their investigation.

Lower Levels

Some submissions made no references to the work of other artists. These candidates saw examples of their own coursework as evidence of first-hand experience. At the lower levels of achievement submissions showed little evidence of any personal views or independent judgements, often consisting of mostly unrelated descriptive accounts combined with unnecessary biographical details.

Work often included material which was not relevant to the chosen topic, downloaded and presented as text with little selection or any consideration of art works.

There were some weaker submissions where the research topics were not relevant to any area of Art and Design. Activities, such as cooking and beauty therapy without any links being made to works by artists or designers, were simply not appropriate. The completion of a proposal form would have helped to avoid such inappropriate choices being made.