

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01
Observational Study

General comments

Entries were received for all questions, although **Question 3b** (two figures posed together) had hardly any responses. **Questions 1b** and **2b** were the most popular. All questions appeared to appeal to all ability levels, and it was encouraging, this year to see a wider range of candidates willing to take on the rigour of figure compositions often with some effective and expressive results.

Candidates responded best to subject matter that directly related to their own experiences, and the scope of this paper seems to have provided suitable opportunities.

There is a noticeable trend in candidates adopting more creative interpretations of the questions. These more open ended interpretations are to be encouraged so long as the notion of working from direct observation is not ignored.

The majority of Centres are stressing the importance of candidates expressing their individuality, with candidates being involved in selecting the objects and arranging their own still life groups, organising their own poses and choosing the location for the interiors and exteriors section. Only a few Centres continue to adopt the more regimented approach with all candidates working from a single central still life group. Candidates at the periphery of such groups are often disadvantaged because of the difficult angles or restricted viewpoints that have been imposed upon them. Thorough explorations of different arrangements or viewpoints cannot be explored during the candidates' preparatory period, and the resulting sheets can often bear very little relationship or do little to inform the final examination piece.

On the whole there was very little really weak work submitted with the majority of work falling within the higher middle range with significant evidence of really accomplished and exceptional levels of achievement rewarded with marks at the very top of the range.

For such entries good use had been made of preparatory time in producing evidence of research and investigation which was relevant. Chosen objects and subjects had been explored using a variety of means of visual recording. Still life arrangements had been viewed from a variety of angles and different compositions tried. There were experiments with media to try and capture differences of texture or surface pattern and many also showed the influence of looking at the work of other artists relevant to their chosen subject or style of working.

Weaker submissions generally suffered through lack of thorough preparation. Preparatory sheets tended to contain lots of individual studies of single objects, all executed in the same manner and with little evidence of any degree of experimentation. Examination work was often a repeat of an earlier study undertaken during the preparatory period with little development of ideas.

A full range of media was seen and at best was used with confidence and a sensitivity towards the chosen subject. Some Centres are encouraging candidates to experiment with mixed media techniques, combining collage and printmaking and working into these prepared surfaces. When practised as part of preparatory work this does allow for a wider range of mark making techniques to be employed and for the evidence to be rewarded in the domains of Personal and Interpretative Qualities. Photography and particularly digital photography continues to be used to research, investigate, and collect visual material. Many had used the ease of producing such images to good effect in recording different arrangements, different poses, and different viewpoints. There were still many examples of candidates relying on a single 'snap-shot' which had been taken with little consideration of aesthetic values. It was also clear that some submissions had been simply copied a photograph for their examination piece. Teachers should stress to their candidates the value and importance of studying their subject from first hand.

Whilst most Centres take great care to label and present submissions clearly there are still a few who sadly attach little importance to this. It must be stressed that poor labelling, of sheets not being secured together, and of packages being received without an attendance register causes considerable delay and frustration for examiners. Centres should also ensure that studies attached to sheets must be securely stuck down, invariably studies come detached and sometimes it is impossible to determine whom they belong to.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Still Life Group

- (a)** A very popular question across all of the ability range.

The best managed to create a composition from a close up view of the iron, drapery and part of the top surface of the board. It was good to see that much investigation had gone into representing the form and textures of clothes, and into showing the contrasts between creased and ironed fabric. There was thorough research into the different types of irons, fabric arrangements and reflections in metal surfaces. Research had been undertaken by several candidates into the studies of drapery by notable renaissance artists.

Most responses in the mid to lower mark ranges encountered problems when attempting to resolve the complete structure of the ironing board standing in space. They were forced to work on a small scale which often exposed weaknesses in perspective and construction where the legs of the board met the floor. It also forced candidates to attempt complex backgrounds based on large areas of the surrounding room. Some of the weakest submissions showed that they had to resort to using their imagination.

- (b)** The majority of candidates had selected the obvious interpretation of a children's party. However there were several solutions to this question which provided interesting interpretations to the title: - The birthday party for an old person with strong references to loneliness achieved by including faded photographs in cracked picture frames. A birthday party that emphasised the traditions of the local cultures with use of artefacts connected with local tea ceremonies in the case of a Chinese birthday.

The open ended nature of this type of alternative question is designed to encourage such responses as they introduce a more imaginative interpretation and personal response to the question.

There was bold use of colour and texture in paint and pastel with some effective close up sections of cakes, and other items used for compositions. Many at this level were well informed by the work of Wayne Thiebaud.

Mid level achieving candidates had a tendency to study objects separately on preparatory sheets, which they then struggled to relate to each other or the to the table top during the examination itself.

Space was often a problem with the less able candidates, as was the depiction of elliptical forms of cakes and plates.

There were many images of cartoon characters in the form of cake decorations, balloons, and birthday cards. Most of the weaker submissions fell into the trap of depicting these figures as flat, formless images, thereby reducing the three dimensional objects to comic book illustrations.

Question 2

Natural and Man Made Objects

- (a)** This proved to be a very popular question resulting in some serious observation where the designs of the belts selected often reflected local fashions and traditions, or the particular interests of the candidate.

Excellent attempts were made by the more able candidates to render the surface textures of fabric, leather, and metal. The juxtaposition of these surfaces resulted in vibrant images. There were several instances of the use of frottage to capture the qualities of leather and fabric and this was most successful when drawn into to achieve integration with the rest of the drawing. At this level the spatial sweep of the belts had been carefully rendered with an understanding of the resulting negative spaces. There were some imaginative attempts at ways of folding and coiling. One had used the back of a chair from which to hang the belts which were also threaded through the back supports. Some showed belts fastened around a dummy's waist holding up a pair of jeans or a skirt.

Mid level work had more success with buckles than the straps, where they struggled to follow the edges of the leather or plastic material.

The weakest attempts focused on various aspects but could not cope with the negative spaces between strap loops and twists. Some ignored this completely or produced representations which remained flat with an emphasis on outline.

- (b)** The most popular question with some very effective and bold compositions in pastel, paint and pencil. Preparatory sheets were full of a range of investigation and accomplished analytical skills. Many candidates had adopted some imaginative approaches; some placed the vegetables within containers, boxes, baskets, or on old broken barrows; some had peeled and cut the vegetables to enhance the pattern quality; coloured lights had been used by one Centre to introduce colour to the cast shadows of the vegetables.

Mid level entries were rather conventional in composition, with worthy attempts at rendering form. There were some much better studies of individual vegetables but these were often seen in the preparatory work.

Similarly with weaker entries their strengths were seen when observing individual specimens but these were lost by an inability to convey objects together as overlapping forms on a surface and against a background.

Options in this section are designed for those candidates who prefer to work from a close analysis of objects and responses do not have to be treated in the same way as the still life options. It is perfectly acceptable to produce a series of individual studies within the ten hours of the examination.

- (c)** Only a few very good entries with competent and considered renderings in colour, or detailed pencil work conveying the foliage overtaking and almost disguising the form of the branch.

In the main candidates produced heavy leaves with crude and imprecise outlines. Whilst most candidates were able to represent the texture of the wood they failed to show the effect of light on such surfaces. The resultant patterns tended to flatten and not enhance the forms. Where colour was used the preponderance of heavy browns and greens resulted in rather lifeless images.

Question 3

The Human Figure

- (a)** Some very able candidates were attracted to this option which elicited a wide range of personal interpretations. The influence of Degas' ballerinas adapted to a classroom scene featured in many. The tying of fashionable shoes were popular starting points, as were football boots, athletics, and dance footwear.

Preparatory work was most thorough with candidates posing the figure in various viewpoints before settling on their final composition. The use of digital photography as a research aid was much in evidence and this had informed candidates' understanding with excellent representations of form and proportion seen by a large number of candidates at this level.

It was pleasing to see many less able candidates also attempting this option with clear enthusiasm. Most had made good attempts to relate the figure to surrounding space, even if the underlying structure of the model was not fully understood. Relating the figure to the chair also exposed weaknesses in this range.

- (b) Only a very few entries received. Most had recognised the compositional potential achieved by overlapping the figures.
- (c) Most entries were very successful producing work with a high standard of figure drawing and a mature understanding of composition and foreshortening. This was very much in evidence both in drawing the arm and the hand holding the brush, and also when showing the recession in the facial features reflected in the mirror. However only an exceptional few, right at the top of the ability range, showed an understanding of the subtle differences of colour and tones observed between the model and its reflection.

Mid level work resorted to representations of the reflection only, with a limited attempt to convey anything outside of the mirror frame.

Question 4

Interiors and Exteriors

- (a) Some very good painterly images with a sense of movement were submitted. Sunlight creating patterns on overlapping clothes lines had been used by a number of candidates in the upper mark range. All such compositions were seen against backgrounds exploiting the effects of aerial perspective.

One or two had included a figure in the process of hanging out the clothes.

Some very delicate watercolours recorded washing draped in lines on small balconies in blocks of high rise flats.

Some included personal items of sports clothing which led to some interesting decorative use of lettering and logos.

Less interesting or successful were those compositions based on a single digital image. Many had failed to take the photograph at close enough range to focus on the clothes. Such compositions had an excessive amount of unrelated background. Clothes were viewed from a frontal position with the line running parallel to the paper's edge.

A few very weak submissions seemed to have invented backgrounds.

- (b) Some very interesting locations were chosen for this option. The best had fully understood the importance of scale and had clearly defined this through attention to foreground detail; tonal values, and textural differences.

Mid level entries seemed to have combined elements from direct observation with imaginary imagery better suited to Paper 2. Fences and hedges had been rendered with an accuracy which could only have come from direct observation. However the views beyond were often copied from some fantasy sources or completely made up.

There were a few weaker entries with very crude and mathematical representations of brick walls totally lacking any sense of form, tone or texture.

- (c) This was the most popular option of this question with many well observed responses taken from views around the school. Some had explored further a field and chosen views with interesting architectural features of rows of columns and arches found in churches, temples, and palaces.

The best were aware of the importance of sound perspective and of the role of light and shadow to enhance a sense of depth and space. A few exceptional entries had also managed to evoke mood and atmosphere through a limited palette, or a dramatic interplay of light and shade.

Mid level responses faltered on correct perspective but were always based on a real place. Many in this range had simply transcribed from a photograph they had taken in their school corridor.

Weaker submissions showed some evidence of being taught the basic principles of perspective, but their results were reliant on a mathematical aspect of perspective rather than on any direct observation.

ART AND DESIGN

<p>Paper 0400/02 Interpretive Study</p>

General comments

The vast majority of Centres have a very good understanding of the objectives of this paper and promote work that is personal, well researched and genuinely interpretative. In the vast majority of submissions, individual candidates are well prepared and investigations into the themes set in the question paper are honest and genuine, and sometimes quite exceptionally personal and mature. This session, responses to each question were varied and only very weak candidates followed a formulaic or inappropriate path.

Use of drawing, photography and experiments with media in the preparatory studies provides evidence of development of personal ideas and journeys of imagination and exploration around the given themes. Generally speaking, candidates who included images from primary sources in their preliminary studies tended to go on to produce stronger outcomes. Drawing with pencil and other media is still the most secure foundation when investigating the themes. There is an increasing use of digital cameras, and these can be quite supportive when used judiciously. As an aid to visual recording, digital cameras do have something to commend as they allow candidates to conduct quick and often quite astute research, giving them fairly instant and cheap prints to stimulate their thinking. However, simply copying from photographic images does not necessarily allow for personal interpretation. Stronger candidates almost always use photographic images to give them visual information that provides opportunities for further investigation and development.

Some candidates still rely on magazine photographs or Internet downloads for sources and whilst this does have some benefit in widening their experience it should not be seen as a substitute for primary research. Internet research can help to extend a candidate's knowledge of artists and of the themes being investigated but the ready-made nature of the images found generally reduces less confident candidate's ability to produce a personal response.

The importance of the period leading up to the time of the examination itself cannot be over emphasised. When making assessments about the candidate's ability, the preliminary work can give solid evidence of what strengths there are in the assessment objectives of research and development of ideas, personal qualities and maturity. Sometimes the struggle to put down on paper the various possible responses is fascinating, as the candidate gradually hones their composition, experiments with media, colour and tone, and works towards a final outcome. The risk taking undertaken with experiments with different ideas, imagery and approaches in the use of media are enjoyable to see. Candidates are sometimes still on the cutting edge of what they can do, and still making decisions, as they undertake the examination.

This session, all the questions generated a reasonable number of responses. The most popular was *Repetition and variation* with around a quarter of the submissions. *The water's edge* was the second most popular, with around a fifth choosing it. The least popular overall was *Initiation* with less than ten per cent choosing it.

Some Centres had encouraged their candidates to give the questions an additional title to that of the question, which can be confusing to the examiner if the original question is not included. One such was a set of work labelled *Moon over the City*, which was clearly the candidate's title for *The water's edge* as the city and moon could be seen in the work reflected in water. However, sometimes one cannot make any connection between the work and any question on the examination paper.

Sometimes a Centres entire submission is based on the same question; the implication therefore is that the candidates are being inappropriately limited on their personal choice. It is perfectly acceptable to point out questions that are not suitable for candidates through subject matter, problems with ideology and so on, but it is very rare indeed that a question would be so specific to rule out any candidate, whatever faith or ideology is subscribed to. Indeed, the paper is always written to be free of any such bias and is intended as a vehicle from which anybody can work from whatever their background or circumstance.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Working together

The question produced a wide range of responses, although some were rather obscure. There were frequent religious and political themes, sometimes with the use of various symbols to denote different parties, countries or religions. The war in Iraq featured, with reference to the coalition forces. One or two candidates chose to work on the idea of revolution. A popular theme was of sports teams and gymnastics, and dancing featured in several submissions. Sometimes candidates focused on a particular part of the activity, such as dancers' pairs of feet or gymnasts entwined hands. The life in insect colonies such as ants and bees was seen, but generally the imagery was second hand and was not attempted by the better candidates. Another theme, not unexpected, was the idea of procreation, in evidence with several loving couples beginning to build families and a few birds nesting.

Industrial processes and scenes in factories made for interesting responses, and some quite accomplished abstracted pictures of machinery, cogs and production lines were produced. The references to futurism in the work were quite pleasing to see, with repeated lines, shapes and variations in colour and tone building a sense of movement and power.

Perhaps more obvious but still potentially interpretive were objects that work together such as a toothbrush and toothpaste. Carried out from first hand research, it was a perfectly valid response to the question even though it was often the type of work one might expect to see submitted for paper 1, Observational Studies.

As with all the questions, the least successful submissions were those from copied images, such as pictures cut out of magazines or downloaded from the Internet.

Question 2

Initiation

This was the least popular question, with fewer than ten per cent of candidate's attempting it. Most responses were fairly unadventurous with tribal rituals, kissing couples and a few births taking place: exclusively, thankfully with the latter two, from second hand sources. The 'first kiss' was accompanied by submissions of the 'first cigarette', graduation and birds leaving the nest as popular interpretations. Perhaps more original was the theme of initiation being linked with the first stirrings of democracy or the struggle for freedom: historically the Spanish Civil War featured and some candidates addressed current struggles in various parts of the world.

Question 3

The water's edge

A very popular question that seemed to appeal to the full ability range of candidates. Topic's ranged from cities by the water, bridges, beaches, rivers and swimming pools. The best studied the subject from life and were well developed with strong use of media. The development of subtle colour modulation often conveyed atmospheric effects and surface qualities to good effect; this was reminiscent of and was informed by the best of the impressionists. Some candidates developed abstracted ripples and reflections to create strong personal paintings and collages.

Middle range submissions sometimes employed fantasy elements such as mermaids and mermen that were not as successful. When done in a more straightforward way, say with animals by the waterside, there was more success with this level of candidate as the preliminary work was better informed.

Lower ability candidates tended to rely on sources such as postcards, calendars and images from geographic magazines that were slavishly copied. Even where the original image was not presented in the preliminary work, the evidence of copying was clear from the weaknesses seen in the final piece.

The few truly imaginative responses included an overflowing bath with a person in it, and with this was included reference to David's 'Death of Marat'. There were also some surrealist works that were very accomplished and had benefited from the study of relevant artists.

Question 4

Putting on an act or performance

This proved to be very popular, with nearly a fifth of the submissions opting for this particular question. It was good to note that most of the work was lively and imaginative. This question seemed to appeal to those who liked a straightforward approach. Figures predominated, with dancers such as flamenco and ballet being popular. One particular and successful candidate did a series of self-portraits in various stages of make up. Religious ceremonies were in evidence, as well as costume or fancy dress, with or without masks. A few submitted work that was predominantly related to the circus and to its rituals.

Interestingly original ideas can be exemplified by one candidate who did a series of photographs of people getting ready to pose for a photograph, inspired by photography by Diane Arbus. Another accomplished painter did a quite remarkable piece based on the idea of taking off one's skin to reveal the inner self, the outer skin being the act.

Question 5

In the square

This was a fairly popular question, with nearly one in five responding to it. At the two extremes, many used the title to develop observational studies from life whilst others used it as a starting point for out and out abstraction.

Some Centres took the whole class to the town square to do their work, with some quite successful results although one might argue that opportunities for personal interpretation were limited. Also seen commonly were board games such as chess, prisoners in confinement and jack in the boxes. Some quite good work based on bullfighting was submitted.

One quite striking and successful submission was a response based on the reportage seen in magazines and newspapers of the Taliban treatment of women in the football pitch in Afghanistan that served as a place of execution. This was an informed and articulate piece of work using collage, paint, ink and lettering.

There were many attempts at using artists' styles and more abstract approaches. Mondrian, Victor Vasarely and Hundertwasser featured as reference points as well as the cubists. All of these had mixed success depending on the candidate's understanding and experience of the styles. Some very basic abstractions were simply very crude arrangements of cut out squares of different coloured paper.

Question 6

Repetition and variation

There were some very good responses to this very popular question: over a quarter of candidates chose it. Abstractions were well represented, with the best full of movement, rhythm and colour. Other popular interpretations were based on the built environment such as terraced housing or city streets with a focus on the patterns and rhythms slightly different windows, doors and rooflines and other architectural details. Where done from life these could be quite sensitive and well observed.

Some attempted work based on still life arrangements of similar objects such as dolls, paint tubes, liquorice allsorts and other sweets. Books, shoes or fruit and vegetables were also seen set up, in each case to emphasise their similarities in shape, colour and pattern.

Printmaking featured in a handful of submissions with repeat patterns done with variations in colour and arrangement.

Unusual responses included exploration of the Fibonacci sequence in shells and other natural objects, as well as variations in the style of Escher. The work of Warhol influenced a few candidates.

Quite impressive from one candidate was the use of repeat pattern wallpaper with photo-realistic images of flowers and insects superimposed onto it. Not so impressive was a plethora of poorly copied flower, animal and insect patterns.

One candidate explored the idea of fingerprints and enlarged selected parts of prints to create quite strong large abstractions. Another quite successfully developed work based on movement using Eadweard Muybridge and Marcel Duchamp's 'Nude descending staircase' as inspiration.

Administration

Centres are generally very careful in the way that the work is presented, and everything is labelled and joined together in a clear and practical manner. The best way to join preparatory work and final piece together is with a hole punched in the top left corner and string securely tied in a loop so that the work can be turned easily. Final pieces should be on the top. Labels should be on the front, preferably on the top right as long as this does not obscure anything.

Work presented in folders is an unnecessary expense. If work is delicate then a simple piece of greaseproof paper or newsprint is quite enough to protect it in transit – and there is no need to tape it copiously with multiple strips of tape, or, even worse, cover it in layers of tissue paper, cellophane or plastic. Dry work that is delicate such as charcoal, pastel or even pencil can be effectively fixed with a cheap odourless hair lacquer. Obviously, give wet work plenty of time to dry before packing – much work is spoilt as it is not quite dry before sending it off and is found stuck together.

There is certainly no need to mount work on thick or expensive card. If small items such preparatory studies need to be mounted, it is best done on A2 sugar paper or other lightweight, cheap alternative. Strong glue is recommended such as PVA. Stapling preparatory work to the mounting paper is a hazard and must not be employed. It should also be remembered that items such as glass, ceramic shards, mirrors, barbed wire, chicken wire, and the like are also a serious hazard to those who have to unpack or handle the work.

Attendance sheets must be sent with the work and should be accurate and signed by the invigilator. Much time is wasted by Examiners in searching for work in the few instances where Teachers tick all the candidates as present even when some are absent and do not submit work.

It must be said, however, that the vast majority of Centres follow the syllabus guidelines in the administration and packing of the work. Finally, Centres are to be congratulated on the high standards reached in the work for this component, which continues to be a joy to examine.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/03
Design Study

General comments

Question 1 *Design using Lettering* and **Question 2** *Illustration and Calligraphy* received the most responses this session. **Question 4** *Interior Design*, **Question 5** *Fashion Design* and **Question 6** *Fabric Design* attracted large numbers of candidates, and were equally popular. There were also far more entries for **Question 8** *Photography* than in previous sessions. Fewer candidates submitted work for **Question 7** *Printmaking* and only a few responses were seen for **Question 3** *Environmental/Structural Design*.

Focused teaching for the specific design briefs continued to foster improving standards and an increase in the number of candidates submitting excellent examination work, following from thorough research and a sequential development of ideas during the preparatory period. The less successful attempts invariably resulted from confused intentions or a poor understanding of the design problems. Similarly, overcomplicated outcomes, in which individual elements competed for attention, showed a lack of discernment or refinement of potentially good ideas at mid levels of achievement. Clear graphic communication should be the main aim of all responses, but weaker results were often let down by a poor use of media and little concern for the selection and control of colour or tonal relationships.

Computer processes are increasingly used for both the preparatory and the examination work for this paper. On the whole, considerable expertise in the control of programmes was apparent and there was far less evidence of candidates simply downloading ready-made images. Personal photography and relevant references to design practice also informed the development of ideas. The cutting and pasting of images from the printed media as a means of collecting information was only effective if relevant and selective; candidates, whose preparatory work consisted of very little else, needed to be made aware that this approach attracted few marks from the Assessment Objectives for research and development.

The majority of Centres were concerned to advise their candidates to present their work correctly with the examination piece placed at the front, fastened to the preparatory sheets at the top left hand corner with labels on the top right hand corner. If this requirement is not respected the work has to be reorganised and relabelled before assessment can begin. Also, the practice in some Centres of wrapping individual sheets in tissue paper for protection is not advisable as the work can get damaged when this has to be removed before proper scrutiny can take place. The Examiners were, however, grateful that there were few cases of inappropriate mounting on thick card or the use of collage elements, such as glitter, which tend to become detached during transport and despoil other candidates' work.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Design using Lettering

Work covering the full mark range was seen for the logo design for a chain of opticians named PHOCUS. The opportunity to use the human face as well as combine the rounded letterforms with lenses, frames and eyes was generally well researched by the majority of candidates. In the best designs a refined integration of lettering and imagery resulted from thorough preparatory developments, which considered colour relationships for shapes, linear emphasis and borders. The stronger candidates also recognized the visual potential of distortion, refraction or magnification seen through various lenses. At the mid levels of achievement less concern was apparent for the relationships between the logo and the negative or surrounding space on shop signs and business cards, or designs became cluttered by attempting to include too many elements of the research. Weaker responses showed a limited understanding of the specific design problem, with letterforms often added as an afterthought. In such work colour and tone were rarely

well selected to enhance designs or add the necessary contrasts and clarity, especially for the smaller scaled business card.

Question 2

Illustration and Calligraphy

- (a) The cover design for an interactive video game entitled MONSTER MAZE attracted mostly mid to high level responses. Much of the work was developed through computer processes with the most successful ideas showing a good organisation of colour, tone and the placing of images and letterforms within the specific format. In the best examples mazes were well researched and geometrically refined to give an overall structure and impact to the final design. Mid level responses tended to give the monster more emphasis, sometimes at the expense of a considered placing of lettering. A number of poor submissions were seen which depended on attempting to reproduce existing illustrations of monsters downloaded from the Internet, with the title and production company almost entirely neglected.
- (b) Evidence of good training and practice was apparent for the calligraphy option focusing on the poem about an Ogre by W. H. Auden. Some very strong submissions were seen showing full integration of scripts with bold illustrations and effective borders. Less successful attempts, similar to option (a), were painstaking in reproducing existing images but treated the calligraphy as a minor element, usually handwritten later in some available space. Weaker responses added inappropriate borders of flowers, which did little to enhance the menace implied by the poem.

Question 3

Environmental/Structural Design

Although this was the least popular question, several candidates showed considerable expertise in presenting clear architectural drawings and plans for an artificial lake for sailing model boats at an amusement park. Others tended to confuse this design brief with **Paper 02** by creating a pictorial interpretation but neglecting to show the layout and the structures of elements in the preparatory work. Candidates choosing this question need to be advised that clarity of communication to a potential builder or landscape gardener is required. As with other questions, familiarity with the work of practising designers can only be beneficial.

Question 4

Interior Design

The design for a frieze for an area on the upper level of a wall in the rehearsal room of a music academy inspired some of the most inventive designs received for the whole of **Paper 03**. Most candidates rose to the challenge of the unusual 1 m by 6 m proportions of the design brief and good research was seen into the stylistic use of the frieze at key periods of design history. In the most successful work thorough studies of musicians and instruments informed the development of lively rhythmic compositions which flowed well across the format. Mid level responses showed some awareness of the problem but the extra refinement of shape, line and colour needed for the frieze to be seen from the distance was rarely considered. Less able submissions attempted to avoid the problem altogether by presenting a series of separate panels or a repeated pattern. Most Centres thought carefully about how to advise candidates to present the unusual shape of the work, and those who mounted or folded the frieze in two halves often include a photograph to show the effect of the whole.

Question 5

Fashion Design

Although work was seen across the ability range, many excellent submissions were received for the costume design based on the forms and structures of the Sydney Opera House, New York's Chrysler Building or the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur. Most candidates researched well from the building of their choice, but the ability to translate the three-dimensional architectural structures into textile forms which fitted the models proved challenging, except for those with competent figure drawing skills. At mid levels of ability a good fashion design sense was apparent in the overall rhythmic shapes and in details, such as headdress and footwear. Less able candidates, however, tended to develop flat patterns rather than forms. A number of

outcomes at all levels of ability approached the problem by including the chosen buildings as a backdrop in the final design. In some cases this obscured the actual ideas in the costumes and added an unnecessary task; the most successful results followed design practice by isolating the posed models to communicate greater clarity.

Question 6

Fabric Design

For the repeat pattern for the furnishing fabric of an exclusive Jewellery Shop many strong submissions were seen, the best of which offered an exquisite refinement of colour and intricate rhythms. Strong teaching of repeat, pattern techniques was apparent in the work from several Centres from which all candidates focused on this design brief. There was evidence of a sequential development of counter-changes and a deliberate selection and control of colour, tone and surface qualities. However, a thoroughness of research with observation from first hand sources of jewellery also informed the most advanced work. Mid level achievements showed a competent understanding of repeat pattern grids, figure-ground and positive-negative relationships, but less concern for mixing and experimentation with colour. The weakest submissions were limited in research, employed colour straight from the tube and resulted in very simplistic and static designs.

Question 7

Printmaking

The theme of *Insects* attracted the most responses. These varied in quality with the better outcomes resulting from thorough research, which informed some good designs, competently executed in linocut. Less successful prints were based on thin diagrammatic information with very little development of ideas, and then printed in monochrome. Some sensitive etchings of riverside views were seen for the theme of *Reflections*. A few face and building studies led to some mid level interpretations for the theme of *Facades*. Some candidates made no attempt to create a print, offering instead a painting more appropriate to **Paper 02**.

Question 8

Photography

Of the three themes offered, *Markets* was the most popular, but many interesting images were also seen in response to *Heritage* and *Transparent*. Apart from a few Centres, which run specialized courses with all candidates choosing this question, most submissions came from two or three candidates in the many other Centres from which responses to all questions were received. The best work showed a refinement of selection and presentation of the main prints, as well as technical expertise in the preparatory developments. Consideration of points of view, depth of field, lighting and tonal contrasts informed the production of some stunning prints with strong cultural or social contexts and aesthetic qualities. At mid levels of achievement prints showed a satisfactory technical competence but far less interest in or evaluation of the visual content of what had been recorded. Weaker outcomes lacked any real intention to set out to record anything of visual interest in response to the chosen theme and were let down by a poor use of technical processes, as well as an inability to understand the idea of viewpoints or notice a particular distribution of light and shade.

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDY

Paper 0400/04
Coursework: Critical and
Historical Study

General comments

The number of candidates and Centres was similar to last June. Most projects were well researched and thoughtfully planned. The actual subject matter varied depending on galleries and artists working in the local environment so that Centres submissions had quite a distinctive feel which in most cases was very individual and effective. Some candidates followed a course of study based on internet research and this is quite permissible but the material must be sifted, studied and assessed, not just downloaded and presented verbatim.

Many candidates made excellent use of first hand resources and visits which helped to inform and inspire some really good submissions based on the experience. Interviews with artists and designers were also used to good effect.

The majority of projects showed real understanding in the written aspects of the work and the use of personal opinion and subject terminology was generally very pleasing and well judged.

Weaker submissions were sometimes untidy and poorly managed and visual display often haphazard where cutting out was random so that the overall look was untidy. Candidates have the time to ensure good presentation.

Some excellent work was often carried out using computer aided design programmes. Images were often very clear and well labelled but in weaker submissions there was little attempt to relate images to text or even label images correctly.

A personal touch was given by a number of candidates who effectively illustrated their projects with their own photography and sketches. Some candidates submitted their own art work within the project and where this was directly influenced by the artists and style of art work or design being studied this worked well in enhancing understanding.

Photocopies and downloaded images are perfectly acceptable as a source of visual materials and research but these should be as clear as possible as poor reproduction gives a project a weak impact.

The strongest submissions were those where candidates had built up a body of research materials and visual evidence for their projects and then sifted the material and refined it for a final write up and presentation.

If handwriting is to be the main form of the text then it must be clear and written without endless crossings out. There is time allowed for good presentation and most candidates showed encouraging positive steps in this aspect, mounting work clearly and applying clear labels to illustrations. Where cutting out was ragged and labels untidy it gave an unfortunate impression of rushed presentation or not caring about the final appearance.

The best work in this section revealed high quality research and some excellent themes ranging from architecture, folk arts, the style and development of single artists, visits to buildings and artists studios. As was the case last year, real contact with art works and exhibitions was a major factor in many of the more highly successful outcomes.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/05

Coursework

General comments

This option is becoming more popular, this session saw 116 Centres entering around 1200 candidates. As one would expect there is a wide variety of approaches and understanding of the assessment tasks. Generally the level of ability was of a competent to highly competent standard, indicating that most Centres have understood the syllabus criteria for this paper and have structured their courses to allow their candidate's access to all of the Assessment Objectives.

The best submissions not only had evidence of high levels of knowledge and understanding of craft skills but could demonstrate research and investigation of subjects and themes; the development of ideas; experimentation and exploration of use of media and of the judgement that candidates had used in completing their final nominated pieces. These candidates were given appropriate reward using the section of the mark scheme relating to Personal Investigation and Development (which accounts for 50% of the total marks).

This was in contrast to a number of Centres where the work tended towards a less thorough approach, with candidates presenting a selection of unrelated pieces with little or no supporting work. Accompanying portfolios consisted of a more or less random selection of work from the year, with little to connect the work coherently or to relate one piece to another. There was often evidence of technically highly competent work, but often standing alone without any evidence of a process of exploration or development.

Where candidates had been encouraged to investigate from first hand sources which could be easily accessed then this allowed for some very personal development to evolve. In addition where candidates had made references to the work of other established artists and when the choice of artist was particularly appropriate to the nature of work undertaken by the candidate, these candidates were particularly successful.

Candidates achieving the mid levels expressed a competent level of skills which expressed personal ideas, but these were often limited in their research skills, both in range, depth and from primary sources.

Less successful submissions showed a reluctance to undertake first hand research of any kind or to investigate a theme in any depth. These often consisted of little more than three or four scrappy, disconnected drawings or paintings and where supporting work was submitted, it was usually a few sheets of cut and paste imagery taken from magazines or the Internet.

Overall the presentation varied enormously, the best were highly selective, well organised and clearly labelled. These submissions provided a clear sequence of evidence of investigation, observation from specific sources, experimentation into media, exploration of visual ideas in terms of aesthetic qualities and resolved final pieces.

A few Centres sent in too many projects. In these cases candidates were clearly not encouraged to be selective and organise their submissions to show research and development towards a final outcome.

At worst there were folders containing a jumble of unselected and non sustained studies, copies of existing works or magazine and Internet images, disconnected set exercises and little or no evidence of any development for a final piece. A lack of labelling to indicate this made it difficult for CIE moderators to establish how the Centre had arrived at their marks.

Centres' orders of merit were mostly accurate. Any recommended changes to these were to raise the marks of a few candidates placed too low in the order of merit. However the accuracy of Centres' application of the Assessment Criteria was more varied with about 30% of Centres requiring no adjustments. Levels of marking tended to be generous by about 5 to 10 marks, particularly at the upper end where the Centre's

perception of what constituted work of the highest calibre was unrealistic. In a few cases reductions were made of over 20, and also in a few cases marks were raised in cases where the Centre had undervalued strengths which were seen in certain areas of the Assessment Domains.

The only advice to Centres on this important aspect of coursework is to thoroughly inform themselves of the syllabus guidelines and to make repeated references to the IGCSE Standards in Art and Design CD rom (available through CIE Publications).

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

This area accounts for more than 60% of entries. Based on the work submitted, there would seem to be many examples of well structured courses encouraging an experimental approach with media in the mixing of colours, varying surface qualities and in developing personal styles and themes. Reinforced with sound observational skills these approaches can only lead to positive results whatever the ability levels. Much of the best work was also informed by relevant references to similar themes or working practises in other artists' works. Printmaking and the candidates' own photography (particularly digital photography) were extensively used as part of the research and development.

Mid level work showed enough evidence of some serious and engaged research, but candidates' knowledge and understanding of compositional ideas and an aesthetic awareness was weaker.

Lower level submissions were full of superficial techniques, easily learned tricks, or imposed set exercises. In one or two cases Centres' entire submissions consisted of work which appeared to have been done under exam type conditions, with all candidates being set the same question. This approach is clearly not in the spirit of the coursework element of the examination. At this level of achievement work tends to be based on copying of existing images from magazines, the Internet, or other works of art.

3D Studies

Submissions for this area covered a wide range of areas of work. Some Centres entered all their candidates, others just a few who had shown an interest and aptitude. There were a number of examples included in workbooks through photographic records alongside other 2D projects and because no main piece had been identified it was confusing as to whether this area of study counted for their assessment.

Interestingly there were some complex fibreglass sculptures from plaster casts of clay models submitted. The finished works had been entered with clear photographs of the work in progress and additional supporting drawings gave evidence of research and investigation skills. All the submissions met manipulative skills to high achievement levels, but the weaker submissions had less aesthetic awareness. Other modelled forms tended to be rather conventional usually based on the human head or animal forms.

Very few examples of ceramics were received which was disappointing. Whilst most had made good use of their sketchbooks in documenting their research and the development of ideas, not enough time had been spent in practising craft skills to successfully carry through personal ideas.

There were a number of abstract sculptures seen which had been constructed from large sheets of painted cardboard. The process from initial observation, mostly from figure drawing, towards abstraction had been comprehensively documented in supporting sheets. There was also some interesting work which had used 2D and photographic images which were presented as installations on furniture such as tables and chairs. All showed an awareness of contemporary influences and this approach was received positively.

A few Centres had encouraged a design based approach submitting architectural models. In most cases the scale, design and construction were very competent but the supporting work was much weaker. The strongest planning involved direct observational drawings of buildings, but most candidates were content to present collaged photographs of buildings from magazines or the Internet. Unfortunately a few of these had very little relationship with the finished models.

Graphic Design

Very little was seen this session which was disappointing, as a carefully worded design brief can really focus even the weakest candidate's mind and can generate the best from a stronger candidate who enjoys the challenge of a design based piece of work.

Some interesting printmaking was submitted demonstrating excellent technical skills matched with a creative response with overprinting, cutting and reassembling images.

There was evidence of computer programmes to produce logos, letterheads, and book covers. Centre assessments for these were generally fairly accurate, but the work tended to be very similar with little evidence of anything really distinctive or original.

Some calligraphy was submitted. Whilst there was proficient technical skills in hand formed lettering the candidates' abilities to integrate these with illustrations was often less successful.

Most other work seen had developed ideas but source material was very derivative and ability levels fell within the mid range.

Photography

This is a popular option with a few Centres now specialising and submitting all their candidates for photography. The range of work covered black and white photography, colour, and digitally produced images.

Some outstanding work was produced which fully justified near maximum marks. Submissions were well informed by an awareness of 20th century practitioners and it was good to see some excellent colour photography that had been effectively used to capture and create mood and atmosphere.

There were also many rather ordinary and dull prints, which lacked tonal clarity and an aesthetic awareness. Often candidates are just clicking and processing and there is a real lack of selection, very little cropping of images and very little attention paid to presentation.

In a few cases Centres had indicated what were the main pieces of work and also what were the development of ideas leading up to it.

Textiles

Batik, fabric printing, embroidery, and fashion design were the main areas of study submitted here.

The best batik work had a strong sense of exploration and research. Ideas had been developed through experimentation; unfortunately the craft skills were often less proficient.

Some much weaker work was seen which was pleasant enough to look at but the work showed very little other than the use of very basic techniques. All too often there was little if any supporting work.

The few attempts at screen printing were severely hampered by a lack of preliminary design work and also a poor understanding of printing skills with smudged and poorly registered images.

On a positive note there were some quite successful fashion designs. Original themes had been explored through observational drawing leading to the development of finished work which showed evidence of sound design skills. In some cases finished garments had been created, some with found materials woven into the fabrics. It was interesting to see that some candidates had submitted photographs of the garments being worn.

Weaker submissions showed a very poor understanding of design and how it relates to the human figure.