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AS

# Art and Design

7243/C & 7243/X – Graphic Communication  
Report on the Examination

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7240  
June 2017

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Version: v1.0

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**Portfolio (7243/C)**

Most teachers provided introductory projects or a short taught course which introduced students to the visual language of graphic communication. A series of tasks or assignments provided students with opportunities to develop skills and their knowledge and understanding of the formal elements of graphic design. As an aid to learning, many students were introduced to the work of historical and contemporary designers and illustrators which they responded to in short personal tasks. Other examples included focused tasks in which students explored media, techniques and processes.

The majority of teachers provided interesting and challenging briefs or a choice of starting points for the extended personal project. Externally Set Assignment starting points from previous years were used or adapted. Some teachers provided students with a single set brief. Others provided a choice of focused and open-ended starting points. Most students produced a single extended personal project. Some students produced more than one.

Teachers recognised the importance of providing students with opportunities to demonstrate analytical and critical understanding by making informed choices and decisions in their work and in making connections between images. Most courses provide students with a breadth of experience and opportunities to investigate and develop ideas in depth.

Ideas and finished outcomes were seen in all areas of graphic communication. Popular areas of study included branding, advertising and design for print and packaging. There were many successful examples of illustration, book covers and magazine layouts, poster and brochure designs. Some very successful graphics for film and television included animated logos and opening title sequences. A number of students explored the possibilities of designing within the limitations of the tight frame of stamps, apps and playing cards. Traditional, electronic and electronic media were used, often with high levels of skill and understanding.

Successful students were discerning in the ways that they used electronic media and computer software to develop and refine their ideas and to produce finished work. In some schools and colleges, students were encouraged to produce sketches, drawings and diagrams, to explore ideas and layouts before utilising the computer. Evidence of the development and refinement of ideas was provided by printing images at key stages of the work's development.

In less successful examples, students produced a series of related outcomes in response to a particular idea but provided insufficient evidence of how ideas were developed and refined or improved as the work progressed. It was not unusual to see a logo design accompanied by a wide range of applications but in which there was little evidence of reviewing and refining of the logo. Although showing how the logo might be applied is important, it does not necessarily provide sufficient evidence of the development and refinement of ideas.

There were many examples in which students used photography and local resources to record source material and relevant contextual material found in the environment. These included examples of logo and livery designs, vehicle wraps and graphics for cafes and restaurants. Adshels, hoardings, advertising and signage systems were photographed and referred to. Contextual material, including contemporary and historical examples, often genuinely informed students' ideas, helping them to consider different approaches and informing their understanding of relationships between graphic elements.

Successful students demonstrated their awareness and understanding of the characteristics of typefaces and the importance of considering appropriateness to the design context and fitness for purpose when choosing them. There were many examples where students produced thoughtful

compositions and layouts in which the balance between titles, body text, image and space was carefully considered and managed effectively.

Sketchbooks, folders, transparent sleeves, mounted sheets of studies, electronic sketchbooks and PowerPoint presentations were used by students in presenting their work. High standards of presentation were seen in most schools and colleges.

### **Externally Set Assignment (7243/X)**

Students were resourceful and imaginative in their responses to starting points which provided flexibility for them to respond in their preferred area of study. Most students made effective use of the 10 hour period of supervised time to produce finished work.

### **Leisure and sport**

Responses included a wide range of ideas many of which related to students' own interests. Many students saw potential in exploring ideas that related to outdoor activities such as walking, climbing and camping. Specialised sports including cycling, mountain-biking, surfing and snow-boarding were more often seen than examples of branding for football boots. One successful example included a series of initial ideas and logo designs then carefully refined and improved the chosen idea based on mountain peaks. The final logo was used in a variety of applications each of which was explored, developed and refined.

### **Festival**

Both imaginary and real music, dance and sports festivals provided inspiration for many students. A number of responses were based on local or international festivals. Some students produced graphics to promote a cultural or religious festival. A festival of games and gaming was the topic in one submission. Other work was based on a fashion festival. Contextual references in the question provided helpful inspiration and useful examples which informed investigations and the development of ideas.

### **Waterfront Maritime Museum**

Contextual material in the question provided a stimulus for interesting and rewarding responses which included convincing investigations into the design language used in graphics for museums. Investigations included research of museum websites and visits to maritime museums. In successful work, students narrowed down their investigations to a particular aspect. Interesting images included water and reflections, masts and rigging, and carefully cropped images of ships. Successful work showed evidence of selection and that students understood the importance of visual communication.

### **Kettle's Dairy**

Photography contributed to many successful responses. A number of examples included accomplished illustrations incorporated into logo designs and promotional material. Students referred to sources in the question and other examples of packaging and advertising. Interesting examples of graphics for artisan cheeses provided inspiration for work that was personal and imaginative. Work seen included successful logo designs, packaging, advertising materials and shopfronts. Convincing examples of stationery, loyalty cards and webpages were seen.

### **Vintage Coach Co.**

Images of vintage coaches and buses were resourced from the Internet. Students who visited transport museums and other collections, or contacted companies that operate vintage vehicles used their own photography skills to resource their work. The starting point prompted a range of responses. Some examples focused on an aspect of the company business such as film work or fashion shoots. Several successful investigations vividly expressed the nostalgia associated with vintage coaches, tours to the countryside and excursions to the seaside. In one example, a student produced illustrations of coaches with human characteristics.

### **Use of statistics**

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.