

ART & DESIGN

Paper 0400/01

Coursework

Key messages

- Many submissions were well presented and demonstrated a sustained body of work.
- Annotation or labels to indicate which pieces are the candidate's own work and which are secondary sourced (including photographs) should be used in all cases.
- Painting and related materials was the most popular area of study, with photography often included as part of the recording and development processes. There were also examples of printmaking, graphics and some textiles and fashion design.
- More successful submissions tended to reflect clear intentions with work that logically followed the creative process, in a personal manner. Carefully selected observations from a range of sources and media experiments often enhanced ideas.
- Less successful work was disorganised and lacked a focused response to a single theme. This work would have benefitted from more editing to communicate ideas and intentions more clearly.
- Candidates selected individual topics to explore, with many demonstrating good personal engagement.

General comments

Higher levels

Candidates working at the highest level presented a body of work that followed an original theme with a coherent journey. Submissions demonstrated thoughtful media experimentation and development of ideas which led to a resolved conclusion for the final outcome. Candidates working at this level were focused and engaged with their choice of theme and the portfolio included recording from a range of sources, including from direct observation. Use of family and friends as source material as well as local traditions, celebrations, festivals and foods were popular, enabling candidates to draw on a range of first-hand sources for investigation.

Other work at this level contained less evidence of recording from primary sources, but materials and media use were extremely accomplished. Greater depth of recording to show different viewpoints, angles, arrangements and close-up study could have conveyed a more authentic and personal response, enabling candidates to work to their full potential.

At this level, artist research combined with the candidates' own research, resulted in original and inventive ideas. Artist research helped inform ideas through composition and concept development, colour use and choice of media, and led to fully informed final outcomes. Candidates were able to use self-reflection and critical analysis to make appropriate decisions for moving ideas forward.

Experiments with media were generally carefully considered and candidates manipulated images while exploring the appropriate medium for their subject. The work was often clear and communicated intention, resulting in a resolved and informed final outcome.

Middle levels

Although submissions seen at this level demonstrated engagement and were often very lively, they were sometimes less focused, and intentions tended to be less clear and coherent. However, these candidates were able to identify and gather their visual research from a range of appropriate sources. While the recording could be personal and imaginative, and demonstrated an ability to record from primary sources, there was a greater reliance on secondary sourced imagery from Pinterest and other Internet references. At times, candidates included a large amount of very small photographs or images and it was difficult to see where these images had come from. These candidates would have benefitted from making it clear, with simple annotation or labelling, which were their own photographs. They could also have printed them slightly bigger, after selecting which ones to submit.

Most candidates included artist research which influenced ideas and personal direction, but others were less able to use this research to inform their own development. Candidates did not always realise the potential in their portfolio work and opportunities were sometimes missed. Sometimes the same images were repeated in different media, rather than developing new and different compositions from their existing research. More analysis of the chosen artist's work could help candidates to make connections and explore ideas within their own work and further the development of ideas.

A range of media was explored to good effect which was often a strength, but there was more reliance on familiar techniques and some candidates lacked the confidence to experiment and take risks with processes and techniques, which limited the scope for creative exploration.

Lower levels

The less successful work lacked focus and direction and often relied on second-hand sources as a starting point for investigation. Others attempted to record from primary sources using their mobile phone camera, but the images were of poor quality and purposeful investigation was limited. Many candidates working at this level struggled with the development of ideas and this was often because of a lack of visual research in the initial stages of the project. Disconnected recording, or submitting work from different projects, meant that ideas could not build. Some candidates demonstrated research skills but lacked the technical ability and understanding of visual elements to communicate their intentions. Responding directly to stimuli in response to their chosen theme would have encouraged greater awareness of the unique qualities of the subject matter as well as refining skills to represent the visual elements.

Some candidates included artist research, however, they were less able to make connections with their own work to expand ideas and inform development. Many candidates were less confident in exploring different materials and media, and relied on what was familiar to them. Submissions were often done in pencil or coloured pencils, with some paint or pastels. More research into artists could have helped to inform experimentation and exploration of media.

Candidates working at this level often lacked the ability to analyse, reflect and refine their work effectively as it progressed. This resulted in outcomes that lacked technical development. Candidates were unable to develop ideas from their initial recording and sometimes the final outcome was unrelated to the portfolio work. More time spent considering a composition, using thumbnail sketches to plan a composition for example, could help these candidates bring their ideas together into a more fully resolved final outcome.

ART & DESIGN

Paper 0400/02
Externally Set Assignment

Key messages

- Most submissions were well organised, labelled correctly and presented on A2 sheets.
- Painting and related media was the most common area of study, with most submissions including photography. There were some design-based responses and an increase in the use of digitally manipulated imagery.
- Many candidates developed meaningful ideas from first-hand recording but there was also reliance on secondary sources across the levels.
- Annotation or labels to indicate which pieces are the candidate's own work and which are secondary sourced (including photographs) should be used in all cases.

General comments

Exam question choices were clearly indicated, and this demonstrated an improvement on the previous years' submissions. Candidates presented their considerations of the question with the use of mind maps and annotation, with the majority of candidates communicating their intentions well.

Mostly coherent journeys through the preparatory stages to the final outcome were presented.

There were some scripts that included too many, flaps, layers, pull down sections and appendages that made the work difficult to handle and confusing to view.

There were examples of unrelated work within some of the projects which did not inform or enhance the project as a whole. Careful editing of work is advisable in order to present the best response to the chosen exam question.

Most of the work submitted was created within the painting and related media area of study and included printmaking and collage processes. There were also examples that focused on photography, textiles, and graphic work. Digital manipulation was a common feature within the work and in most cases proved a useful way to develop ideas further. Candidates must clearly indicate what processes have been used and which images are original or secondary sourced.

Many candidates chose to include photographs of the making process. These did not help to inform the progression of ideas. Instead, examples of how the actual work progressed would have been more helpful to understand the candidate's intentions.

Many candidates explored appropriate contextual referencing which often made a positive impact on the progression of work, encouraging personal development and creative responses.

The strongest submissions contained imagery from first-hand study. A range of research methods were used such as drawing, painting, the candidates' own photography and relevant references to other artists' works. Intentions were clear, encouraging focus and depth of investigation. Critical analysis effectively enabled reflection and appropriate decision making. Candidates made good use of reference material by utilising their locality, friends and family and peer events and activities. Sometimes subject matter was selected to form a narrative. Ideas were explored to show the process of mending, knotting, tying, darning, stitching, hammering, sawing, screwing etc., through a range of images to give insight into necessary chores.

Sports and group activities were a popular subject matter, with many candidates recording from direct observation. Observations explored from different viewpoints, angles and close-up study. Many used a

camera, made sketches and detailed colour studies in paint and drawing media, to record initial observations. Much of the work demonstrated commitment.

The weakest submissions lacked focus and direction, leading to incoherent investigation. The creative process in the preparatory work often demonstrated little visual connections, preventing ideas from growing. This disconnection in the supporting work meant that candidates were unable to build on their ideas towards an informed final examination piece.

Higher Levels

Candidates working at this level demonstrated a strong engagement with their chosen question, which they researched in depth. Their supporting studies demonstrated a clear journey through thoughtful recording from a wide range of sources. Personal connection and genuine interest were sustained throughout the submission. Some candidates visited a gallery or museum and local craftspeople, reflecting on artworks seen firsthand, which gave further depth and integrity to their research.

There was a willingness to explore and try out new techniques and processes inspired by the artist research. Links between what they had seen and their own experimentation were consistently made.

Recording from observation was detailed and relevant and demonstrated an excellent level of enquiry.

Media was fully explored, with candidates working to their strengths. Experimentation was strong with processes and techniques combined to create unique ways of working with any given media.

The use of vibrant colour, pattern and intricate details were areas of notable skill. Subjects were intelligently selected to showcase these attributes.

Submissions at this level also demonstrated the candidate's ability to edit their work in order to present a sense of focus and maturity to the work as a whole. The supporting studies directly informed the final outcome produced in the timed test, ultimately realising intentions.

Personal connections made by commenting visually on local environments and people in connection with the chosen theme, were particularly strong.

Controlled and transparent use of digital media helped candidates at this level to explore ideas and concepts in an original way.

Middle Levels

Individual responses were evident, where some candidates explored their topic with commitment. Most candidates competently manipulated a range of materials to demonstrate good technical skills both in their recording and with the development of ideas.

However, at this level, inconsistencies were often apparent. Intentions were sometimes unclear, preventing focused and coherent investigation. There were also examples of disconnect between the concept and the recording, making the development difficult to follow.

Candidates were generally able to identify and select appropriate media, relevant to their concepts and intentions. Some were less confident and tended to limit their range of materials which prevented them from exploring alternative media and taking creative risks. This impacted on the possibilities for extending their technical and creative skills, limiting the scope for creative exploration and the progression of ideas.

Idea development was varied across this level. Some candidates were able to select and explore the works of art practitioners and other cultures, to influence ideas and broaden development. Others struggled to realise the importance of contextual referencing and were less able to select contextual sources that fully connected to or made an impact on their work.

Some submissions contained a range of recorded imagery that did not build to a cohesive idea. Effective choices for development were sometimes missed.

Stronger critical assessment of the work during each stage of the creative process would have benefitted many of these candidates, in order to recognize and develop their strengths with confidence.

Lower Levels

Work at the lower levels was characterised by a lack of focus in response to the examination question and the over reliance on secondary sourced imagery.

Questions were selected without in-depth consideration or exploration of the topic and often tenuous links to subject matter were made. These were often the result of a Google search and consisted of copied Internet imagery.

Where primary research was included, this mostly consisted of mobile phone pictures of poor quality which had superficial connections to the development of ideas. The lack of meaningful and varied source material made the development of personal ideas limited.

Some candidates attempted to include contextual influences, but these mostly consisted of copied artists' work. Although sometimes effective, this did not indicate a depth of understanding or prompt further development, rather the copying of a style in reference to media use.

Appropriate material selection and use was often limited. Pencil, coloured pencil and paint were favoured, often used to 'colour' simple line drawings. An understanding of the visual elements had not been grasped or developed with observational study and therefore technical skills were unrefined.

Candidates at this level were unable to reflect upon or evaluate their work, to identify a successful method of working and therefore opportunities and potential ideas were missed.

Final outcomes tended to either be a copy of an earlier study or completely disconnected to the supporting work. Many outcomes would have benefitted from composition planning and exploration of alternative ideas.

This would have provided candidates with a focus and sense of purpose in order to showcase the best of their skills in the examination.