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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

ART AND DESIGN

GCE Advanced Level and GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

<p>Paper 9704/01 Controlled Test</p>
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General comments

The open-ended themes from **Section A** were chosen by about 50% of the candidates. Approximately 30% chose the specific starting points from **Section B** and the remaining 20%, the specific design briefs from **Section C**. As usual, most submissions from **Sections A** and **B** were for the Painting and Related Media area of study. There was a substantial number of Printmaking, Photography and Textile interpretations but very few for Sculpture or Ceramics. The majority of responses to **Section C** were for the Graphic Design area of study. While the numbers of candidates achieving the lower levels of the mark range was similar to previous years, more work was seen that was worthy of the upper levels.

The most successful approaches arose from courses and teaching which emphasised the importance of directly observed research. This practice enabled candidates to analyse such information, explore a variety of possibilities through experimentation with media and processes and subsequently develop compositional ideas in a sequential and ordered manner. Confident evaluations were then apparent as the examination work continued to develop towards the culmination of a candidate's experience.

At the mid-levels of achievement interpretations were often limited by poor observation of sources or a lack of understanding of how to analyse the information. A lack of variety in experimentations with media inhibited the potential for exploration and the development of ideas. Colour, for example, was often used rather literally in terms of local distribution on an object, figure or spatial element, rather than mixed, explored and applied as part of a personal search for aesthetic relationships.

Many of the weaker responses were based on copying from secondary sources, such as magazines or comic books. This approach rarely helped candidates to meet the Assessment Objectives for Advanced Level. Although some technical skills were apparent, the work inevitably became lifeless, repetitive and continued to deteriorate for the examination piece.

The presentation of preparatory work with the examination pieces was generally well ordered and clearly labelled. Problems arose, however, when some Centres despatched the preparatory sheets in separate packages to the examination work; it is necessary for the two to be firmly fastened together with the examination piece on top, as all the work is assessed as a whole. For the Controlled Test it is also important the Questions Number and theme appear on the label, or somewhere else on the work, as this information is crucial to the assessment process. There were very few cases of inadequate preparation but several Centres sent in an excessive amount. Selection and ordering of preparatory work to conform to the four sides of A1 paper, or the equivalent, stated in the rubric of the question paper should be adhered to, otherwise submissions become too unwieldy for scrutiny. Candidates submitting work for Photography need to be particularly aware of the importance of selection and presentation in relation to the application of the Assessment Objectives; it was often difficult, for example, to distinguish preparatory work from the final photographic prints.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Initiation

Although the least popular question in this section, a substantial number of responses were seen. Most achieved the mid to lower levels of the mark range as the sources used were fairly derivative. Even the more ambitious ideas relating to personal experience of a ceremony were unresolved because of insufficient research or development of compositional ideas.

Question 2

Playthings

A popular question with most candidates focusing on groups of toys or musical instruments for still life studies. The most successful approaches developed more abstract solutions for the final pieces. Some interesting interpretations communicated the parody or human forms implicit in dolls and a few excellent paintings grew from life studies of a human model and developed towards a very mature handling of colour and space and form.

Question 3

Gradations

Also a popular choice, which, as intended, led to a wide range of imagery. Many submissions focused on tonal and colour gradations. Some interpretations conveyed ideas concerning the transformation of human, animal and natural forms. The most successful outcomes resulted from the selection and refinement of ideas towards abstraction.

Question 4

On the edge

One of the most often attempted themes, offering many inventive ideas, some of which related to landscape or still life and led to well resolved final pieces. The question was also undertaken in a wide range of media, with one memorable sculpture of feet with toes gripping the edge of a diving board. Mental anguish was a common interpretation, inspiring a number of works influenced by Van Gogh, Munch or the German Expressionists. Less successful approaches were limited by poorly researched information leading to sketchy ideas.

Question 5

Eating out

A question perhaps intended for more conventional interpretations and usually treated as such. The best outcomes were thoroughly researched inside and outside various cafes or restaurants and developed strong compositions combining figures, objects and food in particular settings. The question also attracted many Photography interpretations, some of which captured sunlit figures, food and glasses very atmospherically. Graphic Design specialists also chose this question, appropriately for menu designs, many offering inventive ideas which were sometimes limited by poor calligraphy or lettering.

Question 6

Partly obscured

The most popular theme in this section with many thoughtfully arranged still life groups and partly hidden heads and faces at all levels of accomplishment. The most advanced work was set in particular environments, such as interior views through doors, windows or curtains or exterior views through trees and plants. Some of the weaker approaches adopted rather easy solutions by fixing tissue paper or netting over images copied from secondary sources.

Section B (Specific starting points)

Question 7

Vegetables with meat or fish and a large knife on a chopping board. Two additional items, such as bottles of oil or jars of pulses, rice or pasta should be included in the arrangement.

This still life group was by far the most popular question in this section. Many excellent studies were seen where thoughtful arrangements exposed candidates' skills and understanding of spatial relationships, form, volume and contour and the use of colour and tone to create pictorial unity. Additional items, such as jars of pulses, rice or pasta, were often beautifully explored in terms of interior spaces and reflections. Most submissions included fish, rather than meat, for which the observation of surface qualities of scales and markings was often impressive. Weaker attempts suffered from the usual limitations, such as poor spatial relationships often seen in a lack of understanding of ellipses in relation to the base plane.

Question 8

Painting and decorating equipment arranged on and around a small step-ladder. Four of the following should be included: a tin of paint, a paintbrush, a roller, a bucket, a roll of wallpaper, a large pair of scissors, a cleaning cloth.

This arrangement of objects was the next most attempted question in this section. Many submissions, however, fell into the mid-levels of ability with only a few outstanding studies seen. While analysis of elliptical structures on paint cans and the relationship of planes on step-ladders was generally competent, the search for pictorial unity between the objects and within the surrounding space often lacked the level of understanding of the better work for **Question 7**. Some of the weaker responses were affected by the fact that candidates had not been given the choice of arranging their own groups of objects or an opportunity to decide on their point of view for observation. This practice, where the teacher presents candidates with a pre-arranged group, does not encourage individual choice; while less able candidates are offered a crutch those with a higher level of ability are inevitably disadvantaged.

Question 9

The whole or the upper half of a person reclining on a bed or a sun-lounger.

The reclining pose set for the figure study attracted only a small number of responses but most submissions were clearly from candidates who had gained considerable experience of drawing and painting from a life model. Consequently the work often achieved the higher levels of the mark range. The few less able submissions seen were dependent on information from photographs. Some less honest works were also seen which were actually copies of existing paintings by well known artists.

Question 10

A view overlooking roofs and a backyard or garden.

Although this question attracted no more responses than **Question 9**, several outstanding submissions were received, some of which were from the Photography area of study. The patterns and forms of roof tiles and structures were well observed and juxtaposed against the paths and foliage of gardens seen from above. There were few poor responses to the question as candidates with limited abilities tended to avoid the challenge of observing a particular place from a specific viewpoint.

Question 11

Interpret the whole or any part of this extract: 'The tall red and yellow flames shrank; the trash smouldered, red and black, crackled and collapsed, uncovering the red heart of the fire, quickly cooling to black and grey. Glowing scraps rose, twinkling redly, blackened and diminished. At the roots the canes glowed like charcoal; in places it was as if the earth itself had caught fire. The labourers beat the roots and the trash with sticks; ash floated up; smoke turned from grey to white, and thinned'. (From 'A house for Mr Biswas' by V. S. Naipaul)

This was the least attempted question in this section. However, most of those who did respond understood well the potential for colour abstraction and mark-making in the evocative description of burning trash on a sugar-cane plantation. Less able work began with good intentions but insufficient research or experimentation with colour and media led to unresolved results.

Section C (Specific design briefs)

Question 12

*Using the name of your country or local region, design the front cover for a book entitled **Landmarks of** Include your own name as the author.*

This was the most popular of the design briefs. The better submissions grew from extensive research of local features and historic buildings, much of which had been conducted through personal photography on visits to specific sites. Computer processes were usually used well to explore layout and choose appropriate lettering to integrate with selected images. The most successful solutions showed expertise in simplifying shapes and selecting a limited colour range to enhance clear graphic communication. Weaker attempts, by contrast, were usually cluttered with images, and lettering was either added as an afterthought or obscured to the point of illegibility.

Question 13

Design a repeat pattern for a furnishing fabric for rooms in a tourist hotel situated at a Wild Life Centre or a Game Park.

This attracted the fewest responses in this section. Some printed textiles were seen but candidates had not acquired a competent level of developing appropriate designs or technical skills for the execution. The level of research for hand painted designs was generally poor. Most information was traced from secondary sources and little awareness of repeat pattern manipulation of positive and negative shapes was apparent.

Question 14

Design two different costumes for participants in the opening parade of a Flower Festival.

This was the second most popular choice of the design briefs. Most candidates engaged in thorough research of flower forms, developing inventive ideas for costume structures as well as colour variations and the use of patterned and textured materials. Some excellent designs were received based on well drawn figures and imaginative structures which would have worked well if transformed into wearable costumes. The few poor responses seen offered simplistic flower shapes transposed onto badly proportioned figures.

Question 15

*Using the trade name **DOREMI**, design the packaging for a company which markets small musical instruments.*

This attracted far more candidates than this design brief has in previous years. This was possibly due to the advent recently of courses specifically related to problem solving and design application for commercial markets. Consequently there was evidence that all candidates choosing the question understood the requirements in terms of the integration of text and image on specifically designed boxes. Computer processes were used proficiently leading to very competent results. The best work offered interesting box shapes, well considered logo developments and colour selection integrated with lettering to create attractive and very marketable packaging.

<p>Paper 9704/02 Coursework</p>

General comments

The best of the work seen this session clearly showed that candidates had benefited from well designed courses, where Centres demonstrated that they had a good understanding of the syllabus requirements for this component. In whatever area of study, the work selected for assessment had been carefully chosen, edited, and presented in a clear format so that it was easy to see how the Centre had awarded their marks. Where photographs of finished pieces had been sent, Centres made sure that shots had been taken from many angles. The subject had been well lit, and there was some indication of size. Trial samples and experiments with media often had a few written notes indicating that some form of critical analysis had been applied to selection and further development. Any references of historical, contemporary or cultural influences were entirely relevant to the body of work submitted.

Unfortunately many Centres do not seem to understand the difference in emphasis between this component and that of Component 3. On many occasions it was difficult to differentiate between the two. This component places more emphasis on the development of ideas and the use of processes rather than the resolution of a final piece. Experimentation, discovery and research was often sacrificed completely in an effort to impress with numerous unrelated stand-alone pieces. There was much evidence of padding out, and in some cases it seems as if a candidate's entire output had been included without any form of selection.

There were a few Centres that submitted both components in one package without any clear labelling distinguishing which work was relevant to each component. This practice is to be discouraged as it makes the Moderator's task near impossible. Centres must distinguish between work submitted for Component 2 against work submitted for Component 3.

In most cases teachers had placed candidates in the correct order of merit. A few alterations to orders of merit were made when it was obvious that teachers had marked the candidate rather than the work. In the majority of cases Centres' judgement of the levels of attainment was very generous, and some were quite unrealistic requiring major downwards scaling, often by as much as 20–50%. Teachers were placing too much emphasis on technical achievement and Personal Qualities had been overestimated particularly when marking work above 70. The syllabus gives clear criteria of what levels of response are expected at various mark ranges, but of course the correct application of this only comes through experience. Teachers should take note of any advice given in the Moderator's report to Centres and also to thoroughly familiarise themselves with the syllabus. In addition, CIE has recently produced a Standards in Art and Design CD-ROM and Centres are strongly advised to obtain a copy of this. Details are available from CIE Publications Department or from the Website: www.cie.org.uk

Comments on work submitted for Coursework A

By far the largest entry was Painting and Related Media. Submissions covered a full range of working methods using acrylic paint; gouache; and sensitive watercolour. Drawing methods featured in every case, both in pencil and charcoal. Oil pastel was also popular but was often used inappropriately. There was some very interesting examples of collage and of combining drawn and painted images with this. A few had successfully explored printmaking.

The best work clearly demonstrated the value of researching from first hand observation and personal experience. Subjects both from within the studio and from the candidates' local environment had been explored using a range of methods to collect visual information, including using their own photographs. There was evidence, not just of collecting information but of applying personal evaluations and critical judgements. Ideas were developed through further experimentation with media and techniques. It was often at this stage that teachers had introduced their candidates to relevant sources of contemporary and historical practice. Final outcomes expressed confidence, maturity, and levels of understanding within all the assessment objectives.

Less successful were entries which were based on vague themes, often way beyond the candidate's own experience, and which could not be researched in any depth. This placed limitations on the development of personal ideas. Many resorted to making slavish copies relying upon qualities of finish and technique.

There were many examples of coursework which had been derived entirely from secondary sources such as magazine photographs or poor quality imagery downloaded from the internet.

There were very few entries where candidates had followed a design based course. Of those seen the best showed clear understanding of design development and of the ability to see the designing process as a problem solving exercise. Supporting sheets were full of lively exercises in visual thinking around ideas, and offering lots of alternative solutions.

Weaker work tended to revolve around set exercises. There were pages of pasted examples of logos or illustrations from teenage magazines which had given little opportunity for personal exploration other than poor copying. At this level there was an over-reliance upon computer generated imagery without any manipulation or personal creative input.

Entries for photography were generally poor. Candidates had not been creative in exploring chosen subjects with the camera to any sustained extent, and the results tended to be a series of snapshots. A range of processing techniques had been taught but their application was often superficial and did little to enhance the subject. A few entries had filled their supporting sheets with meaningless test strips and cut up images of their photographs. There was no evidence of the critical appraisal of the work of other photographers or of any cultural influences.

Very little 3D work was seen. Some clay modelling was submitted. Ideas had been explored both on paper and by the inclusion of small maquettes, giving evidence of abilities to develop a 3D awareness. Photographs documenting stages of production as well as the final pieces were generally of a good standard.

Textile and Fashion Design was usually limited to one or two entries from larger Centres who were able to offer a range of options. These often displayed good knowledge and understanding in research, exploration and design development, with some original outcomes. Knowledge of current fashion trends was very evident amongst the better work and had been positively used. There was also some extremely weak work, usually consisting of pages of poorly copied figure studies from magazines.

Paper 9704/03

Coursework B

General comments

There were some outstanding submissions for this component showing maturity of thought, skill and understanding. Final results were fully resolved in a lively and very personal way. These candidates showed that they had gained much from the range of research skills and development of ideas practiced in their Component 2. Working from direct first hand information had also developed confidence to use visual language in a more expressive way. There was some strong work in both two and three dimensions based around the figure. In all cases the influence of looking at the work of other artists and designers had had a positive effect upon the work both in the technical handling of the chosen media and in the choice of themes to explore and develop. The links between this work and Component 4 could easily be detected. Sketchbooks were equally as lively and reinforced the candidates' ability to explore ideas in visual terms.

Less able candidates had explored their subject with much the same degree of depth but were weaker in the Assessment Domains of Personal Qualities and Knowledge and Critical Understanding.

There was also some extremely weak submissions containing sheets of work of poorly copied images from secondary sources. Work done during the earliest stage of courses was often included to pad out submissions. Sketchbooks, when submitted were more like scrapbooks or a few pages of 'doodles'.

There were a number of Centres who had encouraged their candidates to produce all their work in sketchbook format. Whilst this is acceptable the project which is relevant to this component needs to be clearly identified. There were a few cases of folders containing many sheets of unrelated work, unidentified, and with no explanation. It was very difficult to see how the teacher had arrived at their marks.

Teacher assessments were still very varied. Differences in the order of merit were found, particularly from Centres submitting work from different areas of study which had been taught and marked by different teachers. In many cases no form of internal moderation had taken place, and it was clear that the order of merit of the sample sent to CIE was not sound. Teachers were still tending to over mark, not realising that for submissions to receive marks of 90+ the work has to meet all the Assessment Objectives to the same level of excellence.

Comments on work submitted for Coursework B

Painting and Related Media is by far the most popular area of choice, and covered the full range of media and subject matter. As is always the case those who had been encouraged to work from first hand observation and personal experience showed evidence of an intimate knowledge of their subject. They were able to build upon this and develop finished results of a highly distinctive and personal nature. Sketchbooks were lively and showed that a range of ideas had been explored before focusing upon one to explore and develop in depth. Gallery visits were often documented with notes and sketches from work seen, and the links between this component and Component 4 were very obvious.

Weaker work generally had strengths in Assessment Objectives (iii), (iv) and (v), but lacked the ability to express ideas in an individual and personal manner. The benefits of looking at the work of others had not been understood.

There were some very weak entries where too much emphasis had been placed upon making finished pieces without exploring anything in depth. Very often sketchbooks were not included. Access to the full range of marks within the Assessment Domains is limited.

The best 3D work had attained a high level of technical skills. This was supported by impressive back up work, showing research skills and the ability to develop ideas through the manipulation of relevant materials. This was often documented through photographs. Amongst this work were submissions which had been designed for a specific site. They had used computer generated imagery to place their own sculptures within different architectural or landscape settings.

Less successful work lacked sufficient supporting research and was rather immature.

Some Graphic Design was seen which was highly proficient in using computer generated imagery, particularly when manipulating text and personal imagery which led to finished work of a highly professional standard. There was also some highly original printmaking submitted where relief prints had been successfully integrated with computer generated images.

Book-jacket and poster designs were largely derivative and had generally been over marked in Assessment Domains (i), (ii), (vi) and (vii).

There was some outstanding photography, using the camera creatively to capture mood and atmosphere and documenting the candidates' local environment in a very graphic and dramatic way. This had been undervalued by the Centre. A very good video was submitted which was supported by relevant research including a story-board detailing camera angles, background scenes, lighting, etc. This gave enough evidence of a sound working knowledge of this medium.

There was also some very weak photography. Supporting research and development was limited to a few studies of the same image developed in different ways. Whilst there was a general level of competence in manipulative skills there were inconsistencies in other areas which inhibited development towards really confident and mature final outcomes.

Textile submissions included some very impressive Tie Dye, Embroidery, and Fashion Design. Entries for Fabric Printing were more disappointing; being weak both in design development and knowledge of printing processes.

Weaker work in Tie Dye was often more exciting in experimentation but confused designs spoilt the final outcomes. Poor quality drawing and work which was heavily derived from magazines marred many Fashion Design entries.

Paper 9704/04

Related Study

General comments

The numbers of candidates achieving the upper levels of the mark range rose again this year, but, regrettably, there were more studies that fell below the standard expected for Advanced Level received this year. Success was directly related to planning and forethought, initially fostered through the Outline Proposal Forms sent to Cambridge for approval and advice. It was noted, however, that some of the weaker submissions were accompanied by perfectly viable proposals but candidates had then neglected to fulfil their intentions. Other poor responses, though, were still the consequence of teachers' lack of understanding of the demands of this paper. CIE will continue to do everything possible to prevent such problems, but ultimately Centres are responsible for getting advice either by using the outline proposal form or by referring to the recently produced Standards in AS/A Level Art and Design CD-ROM that is available to order through Publications. There is also an On-line Discussion Group that is available to all teachers of CIE Art and Design syllabuses, so although Centres are often very isolated there are now many opportunities for real dialogue and discussion both with CIE and the Examiners and also fellow colleagues from other Centres.

The work submitted for the Related Study still has the potential for considerable improvement, particularly within the mid to lower ability range. Also, after three years of the syllabus, there ought not to be so many candidates submitting inadequate work. One aspect of the component which needs addressing in the future is the extent to which the studies relate to candidates' coursework experiences. Teachers should not assume that the same Examiner marks the studies as well as moderating their candidates' coursework. It is therefore essential for Related Studies to include references to and comparisons with some of the candidate's own work; this would need to be illustrated or reproduced in order to inform the Examiner. Ideally, such comparisons should be integrated with the analysis of selected works, as the study progresses, but it would also be acceptable for such references to be included in a separate section before the conclusion.

Comments on different levels of achievement

A sustained interest and personal enthusiasm was clearly evident in the best studies received. Investigations were firmly based on recorded visits to exhibitions, galleries, studios or specific sites. Distinct responses and informed evaluations were fostered by this independence and initiative. Following motivation from first hand experiences such candidates proceeded to select and organise their visual and written material according to their intentions. Specific examples were focused on in depth, comparisons were made, contexts established and critical judgements offered. Practical responses as well as written analyses were integrated through well planned and inventive layout and the visual presentation of the studies as a whole. A concern to include a variety of well notated illustrations, including references to candidates' own work, was always apparent. Practical analysis of chosen works was clearly focused on the relationships of visual elements, such as design, composition, form, space, line, colour, tone and the use of media and processes. This led to informed evaluations and an understanding of Art and Design issues in the conclusions.

At the mid-levels of achievement, serious intentions to sustain the investigation were usually apparent, but the analysis of works and the selection and ordering of information were often inconsistent. The works focused on tended to be described rather than scrutinised in terms of their organisation of visual elements, the context of their themes or the use of particular media and processes. There was a tendency to present copies of works rather than question their constituent parts. Such candidates, however, had usually put some care and thought into the presentation of their studies, making good use of computer processes to generate layouts with the integration of a coherent text with illustrative material. On the other hand more thought could have been given to the structure and sequence of the studies as many presentations consisted of a series of separate sections which missed the opportunity to make comparisons or draw conclusions about cultural contexts.

At the lower levels of achievement confused or unfulfilled intentions led to poorly sustained investigations and the inclusion of unselected secondary sources to fill out the presentation. There was a scarcity of visual material or a lack of notation of the few illustrations included. Short descriptive sentences were offered with very little sense that candidates had investigated any specific works from first hand experience. Technical manuals, chronological date lists, catalogues of works and regurgitated biographies substituted for any real attempt to enquire into cultural contexts or make critical judgements.

A number of very weak responses were received. Some had no relevance whatsoever to Art and Design issues. Others were a precis of tourist brochures or broad summaries of vast periods of history. Short essays on two sides of A4 paper with no focus on specific works and no illustrations were also submitted. Some offerings consisted of no more than several sheets of text downloaded from the Internet or photocopied from books. None of these responses could possibly meet the Assessment Objectives to gain more than a few marks.