

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/01
Controlled Test

General comments

Almost half of the candidates chose questions from **Section A**, the open-ended starting points, for which **Question 2**, *Arrivals and departures*, **Question 3**, *At ease*, and **Question 4**, *Veiled*, were the most popular themes. Over a third of candidates chose questions from **Section B**, the specific starting points, with the majority of submissions for **Question 7**, the still life arrangement of fruits. **Section C**, the specific design briefs, attracted less than 20% of candidates, with most responses for **Question 12**, the cover for *The Lost Civilisation* DVD documentary. However, many Graphic Design specialists also chose one of the open-ended starting points of **Section A**. Most work was for Painting and Related Media, but although a substantial numbers of Photography and Graphic Design interpretations were seen, very few Sculpture, Ceramics or Textile submissions were received.

Preparatory work varied from exemplary investigations to the barely discernible. The best examples always grew from sustained direct observation which informed experimentation with media and a sequential exploration of ideas. In the less successful approaches the research was patchy, often relying on secondary sources which limited evaluations and a personal sense of direction. The weakest responses showed little evidence of observation, recording, analysis or development; such candidates had not benefited from coursework experiences and their examination work was usually based on copies of existing imagery. The rubric of the Question Paper clearly states that 'The entire submission will be assessed as a whole'. This means that the preparatory work is crucial, especially in terms of the judgements made in developing a personal response. Some very poor attempts did not even relate to any of the starting points on the question paper.

The mounting, presentation and labelling of work was sometimes very good, but mostly only just satisfactory. While many Centres clearly gave helpful advice on the size and weight of mounting papers, others allowed some very impractical presentations for the purposes of assessment. Candidates need to be advised that an ordered, sequential presentation on similar sized sheets, with all work fastened together in the top left hand corner and the examination piece uppermost, is essential if the Examiners are to apply the Assessment Objectives fairly and consistently. This is also stated in the rubric of the Question Paper.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Open-ended starting points

Question 1

Stadium

Although the least popular question in this section, an interesting range of responses were seen. Many of these showed a genuine fascination with the high-tech structures of contemporary examples from which first hand research was integrated with references to historical examples from Greece or Rome. Quite a few Graphic Design submissions, based on good observational recording, developed into tickets, posters and other publicity material for specific events, often using computer processes with expertise. Less strong outcomes, however, used downloaded images and showed a superficial interest in typography and layout. A few three-dimensional interpretations were seen for which the research was very thorough, but the techniques and processes used to realise the final pieces lacked refinement or the use of appropriate materials for architectural models.

Question 2

Arrivals and departures

This was one of the most popular themes, interpreted either in terms of the life cycles of a variety of species or activity observed at airports, stations and quaysides. While Paintings frequently used birth, death and renewal very effectively for enigmatic compositions, in which the over layering of surfaces suggested the passage of time, some excellent mass observation was undertaken at transport terminals for photography submissions. Also seen were installations of life sized wire sculptures of waiting figures which had been well documented through photographic records to send to Cambridge for assessment. Most responses developed interesting compositional ideas, following competent to high levels of research. Less able work tended to be reliant on wild life and nature secondary sources which tended to inhibit development beyond literal illustrations. However, only a few very poor attempts were received.

Question 3

At ease

This theme was the most popular in this section and the second most undertaken question of the whole examination. Some very able interpretations of people and/or animals relaxing in various surroundings were received, the most outstanding of which were clearly developed from direct studies. Most interesting of all were candidates who sought to express a sense of unity with their own culture or nature by integrating symbolism with colour, mark-making and surface qualities to evolve more abstract outcomes. Many competent responses also grew from personal photographic recordings, but weaker attempts were inevitably derived from printed media images found in life-style magazines. Photography specialists exploited the theme by investigating specific locations, such as beaches, cafes or areas of entertainment. Graphic Designers also developed effective publicity material relating to such sources, making good use of digitally recorded research for computer manipulations of text and image.

Question 4

Veiled

This theme was not only very popular but also inspired the most interesting variety of responses, ranging from religious and social contexts to atmospheric effects, often relating to pollution in the natural or built environment. Some excellent city and landscape renditions were seen as well as political satire. In one notable example specific newspaper cuttings had been used to 'veil' a particular group of people to expose their lies and deceptions! Many very successful outcomes simply focused on domestic interiors, offering carefully planned compositions which included a figure or a group of objects or furniture exploiting partly obscured and overlaid viewpoints. Portrait studies of heads veiled in cloth for religious observance or protection from climate extremes were frequently seen, with many of them achieving an impressive characterisation. Cloth was the most common feature in all figurative interpretations and such envelopments usually developed from sustained direct observation. The fewer less successful outcomes suffered from poor research, a reliance on existing images and very little personal interest in responding to the potential of the theme.

Question 5

Missing link

Although this was a very challenging theme for interpretation, many candidates were attracted with ideas relating to evolution or the fragmented nature of international events, with most attempts showing sincerity and well considered personal evaluations. However, candidates who sought to pillory familiar images of world leaders often struggled to copy their likenesses from poor quality media images. Intentions were interesting but the manipulation of information needed to be more sophisticated to communicate personal views or insights. The theme was intended to offer an opportunity for a more abstract path of development, but the only interpretations seen in this direction made use of imagery transposed to jigsaws with one piece displaced. Sometimes this idea was achieved with considerable expertise in spatial manipulation. Other developments were based on personal experiences, such as loss in the family, missing persons or deprivation. Some more political ideas contrasted the power, wealth and dominance of particular nations with the sense of isolation, absence and despair resulting from famine, global warming, natural disasters and viral infections.

Question 6

Trading places

Many of the better submissions for this theme focused on straightforward research from local markets which proved to be a rich source of human activity and colourful displays. The most able responses were developed from thorough first hand observation in combination with personal photographic recording. Mid level achievements also showed a lively enjoyment in the use of media and an enthusiasm for evoking the characteristics of a particular place, familiar from personal experience. Other interesting interpretations used the theme as a social, political or spiritual metaphor by transferring images of renowned world figures from their positions of high status to environments of upheaval or deprivation. However, the attempts to copy such iconic images rarely achieved the high levels of directly observed portrayals.

Section B

Specific starting points

Question 7

The still life group of a large fruit, sliced on a plate, near woven baskets or decorative bowls containing other fruits placed on a patterned cloth, was by far the most popular choice of the whole question paper. Consequently, the work received covered the full ability range. In the best submissions the rendering of forms, structures and spatial relationships was fully integrated with an accomplished use of media, colour and tone to convey directional and reflected light sources. Such candidates were also aware of historical practice, and references to the paintings of Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse and Picasso were frequently seen in their preparatory developments. Some interesting experiments with collage and mixed media were also seen, but final pieces, though showing a variety of technical expertise, often became too fragmented at the expense of spatial unity.

At the mid levels of achievement, either vitality was evident in the handling of surface qualities and media, or a careful control and modulation of colour and tone, but the rendering of forms and structures of fruits and bowls or baskets tended to be more generalised. Less able responses usually faltered in terms of the relationships of the objects to the surrounding space. Many quite poor submissions were also received, for which drawing and colour mixing had not progressed beyond an elementary level. Teachers are advised that, although it is not prohibited for them to arrange a single group of objects for several candidates to study, personal evaluations and critical judgements are much more likely to develop if they are encouraged to develop their own arrangements.

Question 8

In contrast to **Question 7**, the arrangement of items and tools connected with changing the wheel, or repairing a tyre, of a car, bicycle or motorcycle attracted far fewer responses. However, many lively paintings were seen in which the various surface qualities of metal, rust patina or rubber tyre treads were rendered with subtle and sensitive tone and colour gradations. The strongest examples had also been thoroughly organised to develop dynamic spatial relationships, and often included a figure, or a selected view of a person engaged in the activity. What usually hindered the success of the weaker submissions was a lack of interest in the composition or arrangement, as the various shapes of wheels, tyres and tools were poorly organised within the rectangular format of the paintings, both in terms of their aesthetic and spatial relationships. Apart from paintings, some very well researched repeat patterns, often developed towards printed textiles for the examination pieces, were also received.

Question 9

Less than 10% of the work received for **Section C** focused on this pose set for the study of the human figure. Several of the responses seen for the foreshortened view of the model were, nevertheless, outstanding, and some of these were awarded full marks. There was evidence in the work from some Centres that candidates had made studies from a model adopting this pose, but had then developed their ideas further to interpret the theme of **Question 3, At ease**. Nearly all work showed a strong understanding of underlying anatomy and bone structures and candidates were well practised, from their coursework experiences, in analysing the foreshortened forms of the figure in relationship to the surrounding space. Consequently, very few less successful attempts were submitted.

Question 10

The view of a narrow path or alley between buildings, or between buildings and foliage, was the second most frequently undertaken question in this section. Generally, the research of alternative locations and viewpoints was impressive. This led to an adventurous exploration of compositional ideas and a lively experimentation with media for the surface qualities of buildings, shrubbery and pathways. Many excellent outcomes, clearly motivated by the visual aspects of particular place, were seen. Personal photographic recording contributed to the quality and variety of research and photography specialists also explored interesting locations with a selective eye. The fewer less successful responses received usually showed limitations in establishing spatial recessions. Some candidates, regrettably, avoided the focus of the question by submitting purely landscape interpretations, for which no attempt had been made to observe buildings.

Question 11

Although only a few candidates were attracted by the literary extract, which described shanty settlements set against a backdrop of the high rise buildings of a city, some of the paintings seen achieved an exceptional level of evocation of the visual cues of the quotation. This had invariably developed from direct observation of specific places as well as the human activity within them. The use of media, colour and mark-making to create unified painting compositions was often highly accomplished or, at the very least, full of vitality. Several mid level attempts also benefited from a focus on the theme of the quotation by offering depictions of people with animals or poultry in the setting.

Section C

Specific design briefs

Question 12

The design brief for the front cover for a DVD of a documentary, entitled '*The Lost Civilisation*', was by far the most popular in this section. A very wide range of sources from ancient cultures was referred to, but those from Egypt, Greece, the Middle East or South East Asia were the most often researched. The more successful outcomes gathered a variety of information from architecture, costume, murals, sculpture and decorative motifs which was then refined and evaluated selectively in relation to well chosen letterforms. Many candidates used computer processes with skill and sensitivity to combine digital imagery with hand drawn studies to develop their layouts, but others using pen and colour ink washes also created very cultured and aesthetic ideas.

At mid levels of achievement there was a tendency to produce a painting, sometimes a copy of an existing work, then attempt to superimpose the text which did not often result in clear graphic communication. The weakest responses were too content with simplistic patterns and crude typefaces and the integration of text and image showed very little serious consideration or development, even when computer programmes had been used.

Question 13

The design brief for a repeat pattern for a furnishing fabric for the reception area of a college specialising in *Lens Media* courses did not attract many submissions. The better outcomes were well developed from thorough studies of cameras and photographic equipment and some of these were extended into printmaking for the examination pieces. Most designs, however, lacked effective investigation of appropriate sources and no candidates actually thought to base their ideas on film or photographic imagery. Generally, the response to the question was disappointing as few candidates seemed to be aware of how cutting-edge technology might be a stimulating source, as well as a process, for the research and development of interesting ideas.

Question 14

The costume design brief for two cybernetic or robotic characters for a science fiction production was also a less popular choice in this section. However, some very able submissions were seen, for which directly observed figure poses, natural and machine forms and surface patterns and textures were inventively combined to create interesting costumes. Less able responses were limited by attempting to dress robots in costumes, rather than engaging with the problem, which was to design costumes for human performers. Very few candidates showed any interest in the grafting of electronic hardware onto organic forms to explore cybernetic structures. Some weaker attempts were little more than copies from comic book illustrations.

Question 15

The packaging design brief for a company, using the trade name *ZABRA*, marketing model boats, was an even less popular choice. Most of the work seen was of a mid to low level of achievement, with only a few better submissions which addressed the three-dimensional aspects of the packaging. Research was usually adequate enough to provide information for combining the image of a boat with the trade name, but this was nearly always presented as just one side of the packaging. Few candidates went beyond this to consider the figure-ground relationships or positive-negative emphasis or interplay of tone and colour. Some very poor attempts simply offered a copy of an existing painting with the trade name added underneath as an afterthought.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/02

Coursework A

General comments

As always, some of the work was of the highest calibre, fulfilling all criteria for this paper and meeting all of the Assessment Objectives with near-maximum marks. Most of this outstanding work had been correctly identified by the Centres' marking, although there were a few cases where Centres had undervalued the level of achievement of their best candidates. In such cases marks were raised by CIE Examiners.

Unfortunately, there appeared to be less really good work this year. Most submissions fell within mid levels of achievement, displaying competent or satisfactory skills in meeting the Assessment Objectives. Whilst some Centre assessments were accurate, there were significantly more cases of overestimating levels of achievement and some degree of moderation had to be applied.

There appeared to be more Centres submitting work which failed to meet the basic criteria for this level of examination. Candidates from these Centres were ill-prepared for this paper. They had not practised enough of the basic drawing skills to be able to visualise their ideas. Their research was too often confined to a total reliance on secondary source material which was poorly copied and showed no evidence of the ability to interpret or to provide some form of personal input. The domain of Critical Knowledge and Understanding was practically ignored with no evidence of looking at the work of other artists or of making use of cultural sources within the candidates' locality. Of concern is the high level of marks given by Centres to such weak work. Centres must realise that study at advanced level should be demanding and stretch candidates' abilities way beyond those expected for IGCSE. For advice and reference, Centres should obtain a copy of CIE's CD Rom *Standards in AS/A Level Art and Design*.

Comments on specific areas of study

Painting and Related Media

This was the most popular area of study. Submissions covered the full ability range, as well as a full range of subject matter which was expressed in an equally varied range of techniques and processes.

The most successful entries came from candidates who had chosen themes or subject matter which could be researched from first hand sources. There was evidence of collecting visual information through drawing, sketching, colour studies, plus additional visual information using the candidates' own photography. Through close analysis of natural forms such as shells or plant structures, or details of local buildings of interest candidates were able to collect a wealth of visual information from which to experiment in a number of different ways and in a variety of techniques. They discovered new forms, textures, and colour combinations and this gave them confidence when developing and interpreting ideas through to more conclusive pieces.

There were some equally impressive submissions based on research of the human figure. Centres encouraged candidates to reference the work of other artists who specialise in this subject matter. Aspects of their work, including composition, lighting, and technical processes, were analysed and informed the candidates' own learning and development.

The majority of submissions fell within mid-levels of achievement. Whilst there was much evidence of sound abilities to gather information from visual stimuli, images created in one medium tended to be repeated using several different techniques, without showing any further development. When photography was used there was often too much copying from the photograph as an end in itself.

Good levels of competence were attained in the domains of Manipulative Skills and Aesthetic Qualities, but most candidates at this level lacked the ability to apply critical judgement to their work or the imagination to develop ideas further. Consequently, the evidence of meeting objectives in Personal Qualities and Critical Knowledge and Understanding was much weaker.

Many of the very weak submissions suffered from inadequate or superficial research. Candidates had very little to develop ideas from. The subject matter of most of these submissions was rather derivative. The influence of Fantasy illustration was very prevalent, but much of this imagery was simply poorly copied. At this level of achievement, there were also examples of whole groups entering the same class exercises based on fairly low-level tasks, offering little opportunity for individual response.

Printmaking

There were fewer entries than last year and the general level of ability was quite a bit weaker.

There was a small number of excellent stencil prints of repeat patterns. The imagery was well researched and developed into highly original and personal forms, showing a high level of design development and understanding of repeat formats. Other stencil prints were considerably weaker, both in technical skill and evidence of research and design development.

There were other examples where candidates covered a range of processes including etching. These demonstrated competent levels of understanding but were weaker in Aesthetic Qualities.

There were a few very weak black and white lino prints which just recreated drawings and lacked evidence of exploration of the possibilities offered by this medium. Results showed little understanding of the balance of light and dark or of the printing process.

3D Design and Sculpture

Entries covered a range of processes; clay modelling, wire metal, cardboard and plaster constructions. Subject matter was based on shells, insects, the human figure and abstract geometric shapes without any reference to observed forms.

The very best produced some clay modelled forms derived from shell structures. The subject had been well researched through drawings, and there was extensive design development, which enabled the candidates to produce some technically complicated sculptural forms displaying high levels of originality and manipulative skills.

A significant number of other submissions displayed a lack of exploration of both ideas and materials, with a poor understanding of 3D form or structure.

Submissions were also let down by the poor quality of photographs submitted instead of the real article. 3D work needs to be photographed from several angles, either in a strong directional light or outside in daylight against a plain background so that contours, recessions and textures can be seen. Some idea of size can be indicated by including another object, such as a ruler.

Graphic Design

Some highly accomplished and skilful work was submitted for this area of study. Teaching was clearly with an awareness of cutting-edge technology, but always with the understanding that drawing is a central activity. Whilst IT and computer assisted work figured in most submissions, so did hand drawn work. Often, the candidate's own artwork was subsequently manipulated electronically. The best of these submissions integrated image and text well. A few candidates chose illustration. Their work showed good references to the work of other illustrators such as Arthur Rackham and Beardsley. Nevertheless, candidates developed their own visual language through a process of experimentation with styles and media.

Weaker submissions still demonstrated skills in visual thinking and design development, but in many cases ideas were overcomplicated and designs became cluttered. Lettering needed to be more considered; it either needs to be more skilfully hand drawn, or more experiments need to be done with different computer fonts. The balance of image and text was not fully appreciated.

Photography

The majority of entries for this area demonstrated that all candidates had been well tutored in a range of darkroom skills, as well as using the camera to explore chosen subjects. These candidates appeared to have a sound understanding of the historical as well as the aesthetic context of the subject, and this knowledge significantly informed their performance.

All submissions reached the higher attainment levels.

Fashion and Textile Design

Very few Centres are encouraging creative work with fabric and submissions came from individual candidates.

Whilst there were some competent submissions, most were lacking in evidence of well structured teaching. Batik, tie-dye, and stencil prints were seen. The best work coming from stencil printing where the subject had been well researched and there was evidence of a good understanding of design development carried through into a repeat pattern.

The standard of fashion design entries was generally good. The best had an excellent understanding and ability in visualising designs on made-up garments. Their general levels of basic drawing skills were excellent.

Mid- to lower-level entries had less ability at rendering clothing on the human form. Design development sheets needed to be more experimental, showing colour swatches, studies of details, and colour variations. Submissions need to contain complete design sheets rather than just good fashion drawings.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/03

Coursework B

General comments

The best work demonstrated that the different emphasis between the two coursework papers had been well understood. Candidates had the confidence to build upon the skills gained from their experience of Component 2, and they could explore ideas in greater depth and sustain these through into accomplished outcomes.

Links with the Personal Study were relevant and firmly established. The influence of investigating the work of other artists and designers had a positive effect on submissions, both in the technical handling of chosen media and in the choice of themes to explore.

Less successful work was often characterised by a lack of careful consideration of the choice of subject to be explored. Themes such as “Water Colour Painting” or “The Human Figure” are far too broad, with resulting folders containing lots of finished studies in water colour of unrelated subjects, many of which were copied from secondary sources. Very often the most interesting results came from candidates who narrowed down their choice of subject and made a detailed and thorough investigation, using a variety of approaches to collect visual material. Through an analysis of this information, they made discoveries which they were able to develop into truly original ideas.

Many weaker examples were seen where images had been copied from other sources, and, as in the past, the world of Fantasy was very popular.

Centre assessments were generally a little more realistic for this component. Since there should be some relationship between this paper and the choice of subject studied for Component 4, Centres’ marks within the Domain of Knowledge and Critical Understanding were generally much more relevant and accurate. Likewise, Centres rewarded candidates within the Domain of Personal Qualities where there was evidence that ideas had been developed and carried through to personal conclusions.

Comments on specific areas of study

Painting and Related Media

This was the most popular area of study. Entries covered the full ability range as well as a full range of subject matter realised in an equally varied range of techniques and processes.

The most successful submissions came from those candidates who chose themes or subject matter which could be researched from first hand sources. Some had chosen to work from the human figure and made many studies direct from friends and family. These were well supported by reference to the work of other artists to inform them of compositional elements and lighting ideas. This provided confidence to develop and interpret ideas through to some highly accomplished finished pieces.

There were also some excellent paintings where candidates had responded to the colours and textures observed by working in their local landscape. The same scene was often recorded under different weather conditions, and the influences of Cezanne, Monet, and Van Gogh, as well as local contemporary artists could be detected.

Some Centres had taken groups to sites of architectural and historical importance. The studies and photographs they made and took inspired further research into the cultures behind these places and provided additional sources of imagery which were integrated in their compositions.

Mid-range work displayed plenty of evidence of good technical skill. Still Life subjects predominated. Although first hand observation had been encouraged, most submissions were lacking in range and depth of research. Folders tended to contain lots of finished paintings or drawings of different still life groups. They were all of a similar standard, with little evidence of progression or development.

When supporting work was, extensive studies were more often of individual objects, or copies of human anatomy done in isolation, such as a page of hands or a page of mouths rather than an exploration of the subject from different viewpoints and under different lighting sources. The candidates who produced this work struggled with composition and scale when attempting final pieces.

Some submissions at this level showed good use of the candidates' own photography in collecting initial images. Unfortunately, these had simply been copied in their final work with little knowledge or attempt to apply any kind of interpretative qualities.

Weak work was over-reliant on secondary sources of imagery which in many cases had been very carefully copied but showed no evidence of the candidates' ability to develop or evolve their own personal visual language. At this level, much of the initial research consisted of written notes or pages of photocopied material from "How to Draw" manuals.

There were some very weak submissions, consisting of just a few copied examples of seemingly unrelated patterns, with no research or supporting work, demonstrating a lack of understanding of the syllabus requirements.

3D Design and Sculpture

Only a very few entries were seen.

The best candidates provided well presented visual documentation of extensive research and development.

Within the mid-range of ability there were some examples of very competently made dolls, where both the clothes had been made and the facial features had been modelled by the candidate. There was also some interesting ceramics at this level, demonstrating good technical skills with some commercial knowledge.

Graphic Design

The best work came from Centres that had placed an emphasis on presentation. All work had been carefully edited and mounted sequentially on uniform sheets of card. It was impressively clear that all the Assessment Objectives had been met.

Themes were challenging and were thoroughly explored and developed, often demonstrating proficient knowledge of computer skills, although in some designs the aesthetics were not as strong.

There were a few examples of package designs in the middle to lower achievement levels. Research and reference of relevant commercial examples was competent, and each candidate had been able to carry out successfully their particular design brief. However, results were often disappointing particularly, within the Domain of Aesthetic Qualities where candidates often failed to be selective and tried to crowd everything into their work.

Photography

As with Graphics, most candidates placed an emphasis on uniform methods of presentation in which all their work was contained within four mounted card panels. This approach seems to suit many candidates, creating a structure which many (often the weaker ones) need.

Most submissions used a narrative approach, taking a theme such as "A Day in the Life" and documenting a story from beginning to end in a series of photographs jig-sawed together on the panels. Preparation was usually done in sketchbooks.

Fashion and Textile Design

A few candidates carried their initial interest shown in this area through into this component. They were able to build upon technical processes gained in Component 2 and develop ideas and design solutions relevant to this Component. There were examples of batik, tie-dye and printed textiles.

Most achieved above average levels of ability. Some demonstrated a sound commercial knowledge, especially when they established links with similar practitioners within their Personal Studies. Some produced finished work which was ambitious and well planned, although design development and aesthetic awareness were weaker. This was usually as a result of an over-reliance on secondary source material which had been poorly copied.

The weakest submissions used a tie-dye process of very basic exercises in one colour. There were no relevant sheets exploring sources or development of ideas.

The few fashion designs were of a high standard. Themes were challenging, well explored and carefully documented, using drawings, photography, colour notes and material swatches. The idea and relevance of using "mood boards" was well understood.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/04

Related Study

General comments

While the percentage of candidates achieving the upper levels of the mark range has improved steadily over recent years, the Examiners continue to be disappointed by the number of Related Studies which are either only just satisfactory or inadequate for an Advanced Level submission. Most Teachers were aware of the benefits of sending outline proposal forms to Cambridge for Examiners' comments and advice, as early as possible before work on the studies began. Some teachers preferred to give such advice and approval themselves, but, although this is allowed, it led to quite a few inappropriate topics, with tenuous links to Art and Design issues, being undertaken. Other Centres, regrettably, did not ask candidates to complete or include a proposal with their work; it was often amongst these submissions that the weaker responses were found.

In order to improve the achievements of less successful candidates, especially those who have an uncertain sense of direction, the teacher's role in offering guidance and overseeing the development of the studies is crucial. It is, therefore, important that teachers understand the syllabus and how a study might 'relate' to a candidate's coursework experiences. The use of the outline proposal form is one way of doing this, but the Examiners are always willing to offer further help and advice if contacted through the Board. Furthermore, the CDROM, AS/ A Level Art and Design Standards, which can be obtained from the Board, includes many examples of different approaches and levels of achievement for the Related Study as well as the other components of the Examination.

The key requirements of this component are: that the study should 'relate' to some aspect of a candidate's coursework interests; that first hand study of some existing works of Art and Design, whether observed at specific sites or in studios, museums or galleries, should motivate the investigation; that visual and written material should be integrated in the presentation; that the study should not exceed 3500 words but might well be less if predominantly focused on carefully annotated visual material; that an introduction, conclusion and bibliography should be included. This is elaborated upon below by referring to how different levels of achievement met the Assessment Objectives

Comments on different levels of achievement

Personal Qualities

Candidates achieving the upper levels of the mark range invariably used the introduction to communicate how their studies *related* to their own coursework experiences, as well as why they had chosen particular works for investigation and how they planned to fulfil the intentions of their Outline Proposals. Consequently, Personal Qualities were evident in this enthusiasm and initiative from the outset. As the studies progressed, personal appreciation and sensitivity towards the works focused upon became clearly apparent in the determination to sustain the investigation from the start to the conclusion.

At the mid levels of achievement, although a concern to sustain the studies was apparent, the communication of the relationship of the investigation to coursework experiences and intentions was usually patchy or inconsistent. Less able submissions lacked any sense of personal direction, determination or focus on first hand investigation. The weakest submissions were poorly sustained, sometimes offering no more than several handwritten pages without illustrations, and some were not even related to an Art and Design topic at all.

Manipulative and Analytical Skills

In the most able submissions visual and written material was well integrated and clearly organised in an appropriate sequence and structure. The works focused on were thoroughly analysed in terms of specific qualities, such as the relationships of visual elements, the use of media and processes, stylistic contexts and thematic interpretations. Research from secondary sources, such as books or the Internet, was always used selectively with any quotations attributed. Illustrations, photographic records and practical studies were carefully notated in relation to the text to enhance clarity of communication. Whether hand-crafted or computer processed, such studies were impressive for the maturity of their coherence, as well as the articulation of a growing consciousness or enlightenment resulting from the investigation.

Mid level submissions usually offered some focus on a selected number of works. However, there was a tendency to engage in descriptions of what had been created, rather than analyse how it had been achieved. The organisation of visual and written material was often presented in separate sections as a series of disconnected essays with few attempts to make comparisons to gain further understanding, but a competent use of computer processes to integrate text and image was usually apparent. Less successful studies relied heavily on secondary information from books or the Internet which was used unselectively to bolster the contents and offered very little focus or analysis of specific works. The poorest examples even included unaltered photocopies from books or whole pages downloaded from the Internet with very little else added to show an engagement with a particular topic or intention.

Aesthetic Qualities

The most successful submissions resulted from careful planning and consideration of all aspects of visual presentation, such as formats, covers, bindings, mounting, sequence, coherence and layout. At the upper levels of the achievement candidates invariably chose distinctive formats which allowed for flexibility of layout. Double-page spreads, making use of both sides of a page encouraged a variety of juxtapositions of text and image for exciting visual presentations. Sensitive mounting on deliberately selected and distinctively coloured or textured papers contributed to the aesthetic unity of booklets. Inventive formats unfolding on more than one side or in two or three sections simultaneously, or containing internal fold-outs or pop-ups, were sometimes seen. Illustrative material varied in size and media to include paintings, drawings, diagrams, photographs as well as reproductions. Typefaces or computer fonts were carefully chosen for titles, headings, sub-headings, quotations and notations. Such candidates' concern to integrate text with images was a natural extension of their involvement with and perception of visual art through the topics they had investigated.

At the mid levels of achievement, although computer processes were used very competently to present the text, the gathering, selection and integration of a variety of illustrations was altogether less thorough. Practical analyses of the works focused on were seldom undertaken, and references to a candidate's own coursework were brief and unsupported by visual evidence. The formats of studies were usually limited to an A4 file which inhibited flexibility of layout, and front covers, titles and headings were often only added as an afterthought. Less able submissions lacked any concern for or ability to consider layout and presentation. Illustrations were sparse and the text often muddled or illegible. The poorest studies showed very little awareness that the component had any connection with visual art, by offering a few sheets of handwritten text with no visual content. Conversely, some submissions consisted of a few paintings in a folder with no explanation or justification of how they might constitute a Related Study; a purely practical approach is only acceptable if is carefully notated and presented.

Knowledge and Critical Understanding

In the most able submissions the knowledge and understanding gained from the investigation, in relation to the intentions on the outline proposal form, was continually articulated as the studies progressed, as well as in the conclusions. The analyses and comparisons of selected works and their cultural contexts led to informed judgements and clearly communicated personal evaluations. The best work was strongly motivated by an enthusiasm and admiration for chosen artworks and practitioners in relation to candidates' own coursework experiences. Evidence of the development of a personal awareness of Art and Design issues was apparent in the positive engagement with the investigation from the introduction to the conclusion, as well as in the aesthetic awareness of the visual presentation of the study as a work of art.

Candidates achieving the mid levels of the mark range also acknowledged the benefits of the investigation in their conclusions. However, evaluations of the works focused on were intermittent as the study progressed, or were rarely made in relation to personal experiences from first hand study or coursework experiences. For example, biographies, interviews or questionnaires were frequently included but no comment or conclusion was drawn from them. More concern for the cultural and stylistic contexts of the chosen works would have encouraged a higher level of personal judgements. In the less able submissions evaluations were patchy and evidence of any knowledge or understanding gained from first hand study was difficult to recognise. In the poorest attempts almost no critical judgements were apparent as the information presented was either copied from secondary sources or had little relevance to an Art and Design investigation.