
A-level

Art and Design

7202– Fine Art
Report on the Examination

7202
June 2017

Version: 1.0

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Component 1: Personal Investigation

There was some excellent personal, inventive and creative work produced in the Personal Investigation. Personal Investigations clearly developed out of work in the first year of the course. Many schools and colleges prepared students by providing workshops and short projects in Year 12 which focused on developing skills and exploring approaches to drawing and recording.

Personal Investigations were very varied in their approach and in their starting points with students focused on a specific subject matter or theme whilst others used a particular artist or an artistic movement as their starting point. In three-dimensional submissions the exploration of specific materials, such as plaster or plywood was the basis of the investigation or a specific process such as casting or construction. The most successful personal studies showed a clear personal developmental journey in their research.

The outcomes of the personal investigation were also very varied. There seems to be a decrease in traditional painting as an outcome and an increase in mixed media and relief work. Many successful students explored methods of mixing techniques together in inventive ways. There was also a noticeable increase in the numbers of installations that were seen and many of these had used IT or light projections to provide a multisensory experience. There were some excellent large-scale works submitted.

Students used a variety of methods for recording their investigation. Digital photography continues to grow as a method of recording and students are demonstrating advanced levels of digital manipulation. Photoshop continues to be used as a developmental and experimental tool.

There seemed to be less evidence of group visits as a starting point for an investigation. Although clearly some centres are continuing to offer group visits or events such as artist workshops, these tend to feed into the body of work rather than act as an initial starting point. There is more evidence of centre-based one day or short course workshops. Students are increasingly using IT to access artists' references. This secondary imagery is becoming increasingly used. The most successful students are able to use this imagery to inform and develop their own work in a personal way.

Many submissions featured a separate essay as the written element of the personal investigation to demonstrate the continuous prose that is now required. Weaker submissions often featured a biographical account describing the artists' work whereas more successful students were able to show clearly how the artists informed their work and showed clear related links to the ideas, methods or qualities in a evident in the work.

Centres were also clearly aware of the need to provide continuous writing within this investigation and many centres decided to ensure that this was met by including a separate essay. In the most successful examples students focused on analysing visual studies that they had explored in relation to their own work. Although the minimum was 1,000 words most centres clearly exceeded that.

There were some excellent personal investigations produced. however some centres over-marked their top students. Centres need to ensure that they pay close attention to the exemplars that are available and apply the standards seen at teacher standardisation.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment

Fruit and Vegetables

There were some excellent detailed paintings produced of fruit and vegetables. Students explored the detail of this subject matter and AO3 tended to be strong. Artists such as Natasha Clutterbuck's detailed linear drawings featured in several submissions, as did the decaying fruit of Zhang Xiaotao's paintings. Three-dimensional responses were also evident particularly in ceramics with students exploring the potential forms and shapes. Less successful students often achieved lower marks in AO1 as their work reflected a lack of a personal journey.

Rural Landscape

There were some excellent responses to this question with some well-researched and detailed traditional sketchbooks full of observed studies, planning and ideas. Many students explored this subject matter with pastels and mixed media. Some students combined images by working on different backgrounds which were then developed into paintings. Some students explored abstract qualities referencing the work of David Blackburn and looked at the rhythm and patterns of the landscape with Graham Sutherland and Anna Dillon also being referenced. Less successful students tended to copy, rather than develop a personal response, and with some less successful submissions the students copying of architectural features in isolation which caused difficulty with the student's ability to produce composition.

Isolation

This theme featured strongly in the work that was seen and was interpreted widely in terms of materials used, artists' references and in the type of isolation referred to. Many students used their own personal experiences and responses to isolation within their work. Many engaged deeply with the contextual sources and looked for ways in which they could relate the artists' experience to their own lives and experiences. This involved many topical issues of debate in this country with feminism, racism and discrimination being high on the list. Other students looked at isolation within the urban landscape. Isolation, involving buildings and structures, and how the relationship between the architectural structure and economic decline explored aspects of an isolated setting.

Domestic Interiors

In addition to the artists suggested. Responses tended to focus on fairly traditional painting techniques and photography was frequently used as both a recording and developmental tool. Many successful students showed that they were able to realise the potential to explore the detail of interiors. Strong painting skills were seen and students referenced the work of Matteo Massagrande and Edward Kienholz.

Folded

This was a topic for which direct observation was easily accessible and many students used this starting point to demonstrate high-level analytical drawing skills. Henrietta Harris, Mark Powell, Jonathan Yeo were all used to explore folds within the face and wrinkles proved to be a popular choice. Paintings appeared to have a common outcome with regards to portraiture paintings of 'aged' people. Some three-dimensional students used Jeanne Marchand's monochromatic

sculptures to inspire their ceramic developments. Several students researched Alison Dunlop's paintings of knots creases and shadows.

Technological Change

Many students used photographs of cities as starting points and explored distortion, perspective, shape and colour combinations to express a sense of unease and energy.

Festivals

There was a mixed response to this starting point. Some excellent submissions included headdresses and carnival designs. The Day of the Dead was popular for work using portraits. Some students used this starting point to look at music festivals. The most successful students were those that evidenced clear development of ideas from the original starting point. Less successful submissions did not develop from the starting point.

Suspended

Some students considered Cotan's work and looked at examples by Dutch still-life painters. Others submissions explored approaches of artists such as Chiharu Shiota's and hanging string installations. Puppetry was also used as a starting point by students with objects hanging upside down being explored. Interesting ideas were seen in submissions when view point was considered in relation to suspended objects. A variety of materials were seen in final responses, including wire, string and collage.

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.