

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 9704/01
Controlled Test

General comments

Almost two thirds of responses were for **Section A**, the open-ended starting points, for which **Question 1**, *Weathered* and **Question 6**, *Exaggeration or distortion* were the most popular choices. A fifth of all work seen was for **Section B**, the specific starting points, with the majority of responses for **Question 7**, the still life arrangement of cakes and pastries with a tea or coffee pot, cups or mugs. Slightly fewer submissions were received for **Section C**, the specific design briefs, for which **Question 12**, the cover for a travel brochure design, attracted the most responses; however, many Graphic Design specialists also chose the open-ended themes of **Section A**. Although most submissions were for Painting and Related Media, a substantial number of responses for Graphic Design and Photography were seen, but fewer for Sculpture, Ceramics or Textiles.

Over half of the work received was worthy of the upper levels of the mark range, with as many as 15% of all submissions achieving an excellent standard, and some of these were outstanding. The best work was informed by coursework experiences, showing clear developments from directly observed sources to the final outcomes. Clear evidence of independence, confidence and enthusiasm was apparent in abundant preparatory investigations, experiments with media and processes, and sequential explorations of alternative aesthetic relationships for the composition or design solutions of the examination work. This individual sense of direction and creative endeavour continued to be developed during the 15 hour time limit of the Controlled Test.

Mid level achievements usually engaged in thorough experiments with a range of media, following generally competent recording and analysis from selected sources. The development of this information, though, was less exploratory in terms of the relationships of visual elements, with often the first and only idea repeated and rehearsed and then reproduced for the examination work, resulting in mechanical rendering and an inevitable loss of interest and liveliness.

The less able responses lacked a concern for personal investigation, focusing instead on existing images from secondary sources for inflexible, though technically adroit, copying in a limited range of media, followed by very little concern to explore visual relationships to develop a personal sense of direction. In the weakest submissions only a basic level was apparent in the ability to investigate sources, develop ideas or sustain the final pieces. However, there were fewer attempts this session which fell below an acceptable standard for AS Level.

The Examiners appreciated the concern shown by the majority of Centres for the labelling, mounting and presentation of the work, but problems still arose when the information on labels was incorrect or did not specify which question had been answered. Some Centres had adopted the practice of presenting each candidate's work in individually labelled folders, but then neglected to label the sheets inside, which resulted in a complete loss of identity once the work was removed for assessment. Others complicated the scrutiny process by presenting the work in elaborate folded formats, which could only be looked at as a whole when spread out to a length of several feet, when all that is required, as stated in the rubric of the question paper, is that the work should be fastened together in the top left hand corner. In order to assist the assessment process and the accurate recording of marks, Centres are asked to check that each individual candidate's work can be identified and is easy to handle and look at.

Comments on specific questions

Section A *Open-ended starting points*

Question 1 *Weathered*

The theme was researched and interpreted for Painting and Photography from a wide range of sources; the growth and decay of leaves plants and trees, built structures in urban and landscape environments and, perhaps most commonly, the human figure, particularly portraiture. Personal digital recording was generally used very effectively to gather information in conjunction with directly observed studies. In work of all but the lowest levels of achievement candidates explored surface qualities well through experimentation with media and processes, with the better outcomes using subtle layering and even relief effects to enhance well developed compositional ideas.

Question 2 *Unusual viewpoint*

Figures in interiors, and exterior urban environments were the main sources for investigation of this theme. Many interesting self portraits, making use of mirrors and other reflective surfaces to create intricate spatial effects were seen. Some candidates used computer programmes to manipulate scanned drawings or digitally recorded images, to develop dramatic viewpoints, but only the best outcomes refined the information to a more abstract interpretation by cropping images against the edges of rectangular formats. Many of the less able attempts offered views of streets from above, but these were rarely based on first hand experience and were usually limited by inconsistent spatial manipulations.

Question 3 *Interwoven*

Hair, hands, bodies, ropes, roots, branches, creepers, snakes and spaghetti were seen in abundance, researched to various levels of accomplishment, with the most advanced solutions developing towards abstraction in Painting, Photography and some Textile submissions. Other interpretations focused on aspects of multicultural modern society and the World Wide Web, through the use of montage and collage to juxtapose images very effectively for interwoven Design or Painting ideas. Some very accomplished works were seen of dance movements for Painting and Photography. Less successful candidates often relied on magazine images of popular music celebrities in an attempt to use their songs to interpret the theme, which resulted in dull copying, lacking a sense of compositional unity relating to any idea of being interwoven.

Question 4 *Personal adornments*

Some interesting portrait studies were seen of military or naval figures and other dignitaries wearing regalia. Most of the better responses focused on jewellery worn by a female friend or relative, which when thoroughly observed, led to sensitive and intricate portrayal of selected areas of the body. A number of mid level submissions were quite successful in developing competent abstract solutions from investigations of well chosen specimens of jewellery by itself. Several Photography specialists visited indigenous peoples to record tribal dress and body markings. There were, however, many less able responses which made use of secondary sources of tattooing, which lacked any concern to explore personal ideas: this was all too evident when candidates from different Centres based their work on the same images downloaded from the Internet.

Question 5 *Shimmering*

Although this theme was the least undertaken of **Section A**, a number of very interesting interpretations were received for Painting and Photography. Most candidates used some form of personal photographic recording to gather information on the kinetic qualities of sunlight falling on water or metallic surfaces. When the primary research had been carried out at specific riverside, seaside or garden locations, the idea developments were imbued with a strong sense of personal direction from the outset. Other approaches, such as acute observations of candlelight shimmering on arrangements of objects with reflective surfaces, were also very successful. A few Graphic Design specialists also exploited the theme for brand names on labelling of fizzy drink and make-up commodities. Only a few weaker attempts were seen, usually based on images of fashion design or seaside resorts from magazines or holiday brochures.

Question 6 *Exaggeration or distortion*

Although candidates made use of a wide range of sources for this theme, most interpretations were based on research from the human figure. Directly observed drawings, sometimes combined with personal recordings, were often scanned into computers for manipulation. The influence of Surrealism, particularly Dali, dominated the development of ideas throughout the ability range. Similar to **Question 2**, many acutely analysed self portraits were seen, frequently observed from the reflective surfaces of domestic objects, such as pots or spoons, and some from polished vehicle surfaces or shiny metal hub-caps. A number of candidates used the theme successfully to explore information propaganda or emotional feelings. Levels of achievement were always dependent on personal investigation, analysis and development; those who seized on ready-made images from secondary sources were seldom able to evaluate the information in terms of visual relationships to organise an independent outcome.

Section B *Specific starting points***Question 7**

The still life arrangement of cakes, pastries or breads placed on a dish with a knife, near to a tea or coffee pot and cups, was by far the most popular choice in this section. The best work adopted interesting viewpoints and offered a precise analysis of the ellipses, spouts and handles of containers and a sensitive control of subtle nuances of tone, colour and textures of bakery items. At mid levels of achievement some thought was apparent in the selection and arrangement of the objects, but they tended to be analysed and executed separately from each other through an inconsistent observation of light and shade, or were vague in definition at key structural points. Many less able submissions were seen, for which only a basic understanding was apparent of spatial relationships within and surrounding the objects, as well as an uncertain or very generalised rendering of form, tone, colour and surface qualities. In addition to Painting outcomes, several lively and crisply communicated Graphic Design interpretations were seen, which focused on packaging for cakes or logos and posters for cafés.

Question 8

The alternative still life arrangement of a shirt next to an iron on an ironing board, near a basket of washing, attracted less than 10% of all responses for **Section B**. While several very able studies were seen for Painting and Photography, most submissions achieved the mid levels of the mark range. In these the structures of cloth folds, irons, boards and baskets were generally well established, but the observation of a directional light source, in terms observing broad areas of tone and colour to create a sense of overall unity, was often inconsistent or rendered in separate parts. Also, some studies virtually split the arrangement into two equal halves, with the shirt, iron and board on one side of the composition and the basket of washing on the other. This resulted from a lack of awareness of the importance of the surrounding space to the analytical process of establishing interesting relationships with the objects. However, very few weaker submissions were seen as less able candidates avoided this question.

Question 9

The study of the whole or the upper half of a person wearing a boldly patterned shirt or dress, seated next to a large potted plant, attracted a substantial number of responses, among which were several outstanding submissions. Confidence fostered by experience of working from a model was apparent in the consideration of alternative poses and compositional ideas in the preparatory studies, leading to many lively Painting, and a few Photography, outcomes. Some of the most adventurous approaches portrayed the model behind and partly obscured by the plant leaves, which resulted in exciting shape, colour and surface juxtapositions with the pattern of the clothing. Very few less successful responses were seen, but even these were able to develop some liveliness from the plant and the pattern, although the understanding of underlying anatomy and bone structures of the model was more limited.

Question 10

There were fewer responses for the study of motor vehicles parked in the forecourt of a garage, but most candidates gathered very competent and well sustained observations, particularly of surface reflections. Some of the best outcomes used well recorded information to develop abstract and Pop Art styles, by highlighting clean shapes, trade mark emblems and logos with contrasting colour and tone. At the mid and lower levels of achievement the tendency was to isolate a whole vehicle in the centre of the composition, when more consideration of cropping and placing would have brought into play the surrounding spatial areas.

Question 11

A pleasing number of responses were seen for the literary extract, describing a fishing port and fish market. Candidates who lived close by or had easy access to local harbours produced an abundance of interesting research, through digital recording accompanied by sustained first hand drawings of boats, fish and trade. The best outcomes developed excellent Painting compositions, full of activity, character and a sense of time and place. Mid level achievements were based on competent research, but evaluations concerning the refining and development of recorded information led to a limited range of compositional ideas. The few less successful attempts seen were generally inhibited by poor initial investigations.

Section C Specific design briefs**Question 12**

The design for the cover of a travel brochure for a tour company named *Safari Holidays* asked candidates to use the name of their own region or country in the main title, for example *Dhaka National Park*. This design brief was by far the most frequently undertaken in **Section C**, with submissions covering the full ability range. The best work was researched from excellent personal photographic recording of wild life locations and used well chosen letterforms for computer manipulation, the development of layout and refinement of line, shape, tone and colour for crisp, clear and elegant graphic communication. Mid level responses tended to follow a taught formulaic approach which led to very similar outcomes from individual Centres, although some good ink drawn rendering of animals, suitably arranged with lettering, led to competent outcomes.

In the less successful outcomes, little selection and organisation were apparent in designs which were cluttered with too many different fonts and images; this revealed a lack of judgement and experience with computer technology and the dangers of attempting to include too much, rather than engage in a selection and refinement of layout and visual relationships. The weaker submissions were invariably based on silhouettes of the shapes of animals and plants, derived from tracings of secondary information, or researched no further than 'clip art', using downloaded images for very limited investigations and designs.

Question 13

The repeat pattern design brief for a clothing fabric, based on observations from two of a range of options of marine plants and creatures, attracted a good number of responses, some of which were carried out as Printmaking on paper, or, as a Textile Design, on cloth. When candidates engaged in thorough first hand observations of seaweed, coral, seashells, sea anemones, starfish or jellyfish the potential for developing an intricate design was strongly motivated, depending on the experience and expertise in manipulating repeat pattern techniques. There were some examples, however, of good design developments which lost all precision when transferred to intermediaries for printing, and other cases where the use of processes led to poor registration which did not do justice to the preparatory evolution of the designs. Less able attempts, though, were limited in investigation, design development and final execution, and some very weak responses showed no understanding of the processes or requirements for a repeat pattern, let alone any concern to research specimens from direct observation.

Question 14

The costume design brief for participants in a ballet based on the idea of toys, dolls and puppets being magically brought to life, attracted a number of very competent to high level responses. All candidates made good studies of well chosen items to inform inventive ideas for costumes. The best developments explored alternative poses through accomplished figure studies to present striking final pieces. Some Graphic Design specialists also extended the outcome into posters advertising such a ballet. Mid level submissions offered competent research of toys and dolls, but a further extension of preparatory work in the search for more effective final solutions would have led to higher achievements. However, the few unsuccessful attempts focused on action men and robotic figures taken from illustrations in fantasy comics, with very little further development towards a personal outcome.

Question 15

The packaging design brief for a geological specimen, purchased from a National Geological Museum, attracted only a handful of responses. A few, from candidates clearly experienced with logo and packaging formats, were very successful. Others had chosen the question to produce just logo designs, but offered attempts to show how they would work with other relevant information on the three-dimensional surfaces of a package.

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Coursework A

General comments

Approximately 800 submissions were received from just over 100 Centres.

Although approaches vary enormously the best Centres have a clear understanding of the syllabus content for this paper, as well as the Assessment Objectives. There is evidence that courses have been well structured and the work submitted for assessment meets all of the Assessment Objectives so that candidates' performance levels could be accurately rewarded.

The best work was exploratory, experimental, full of originality, and showed very good levels of technical competence within chosen specialist areas of study. Centres had encouraged working from direct observation from first hand sources. There was evidence of detailed analyses from natural forms, shells, plants etc., and still life arrangements. Candidates had visited interesting locations within their immediate environment, where they had collected visual information through drawing and photography. Many had chosen to work directly from the figure and had used family, friends, and themselves, as sources of first hand study.

The value of studying the work of other artists and cultures had also been stressed by many Centres. Visits to museums and galleries had been arranged so that candidates could experience viewing work first hand to motivate an interest for further investigations.

Most entries, however, fell within the mid to lower mark ranges. Here the work was much narrower both in ideas and exploration. An emphasis had been placed on producing finished pieces. Sometimes the same subject had been produced in two or three different media, with little additional research, experimentation, or development.

Too much work at this level was reliant on secondary source material, where an emphasis had been placed on technical skills of copying from such material. Where references to the work of other artists or historical sources were used, they had come solely from books or downloaded indiscriminately from the Internet. Slavish copying of such works, or use of long biographical notes, does little to inform personal exploration or development.

Standards of presentation vary enormously as well. The best entries have edited their work and mounted and arranged their sheets in a logical sequence. Final outcomes are well supported with clear evidence of the depth and range of research, experimentation, and development of ideas through to the finished pieces. Sometimes these are supported with photographs of work in progress, or relevant written notes. In such cases it is clear to CIE Examiners how Centres have used the Assessment Criteria in arriving at their assessments.

Unfortunately there are still many occasions when this good practice is not used. Folders are submitted with many pieces of unmounted work in no logical sequence. It is difficult to distinguish between finished pieces and relevant supporting studies. In many cases only a few pieces of unrelated finished works are submitted with little evidence that candidates have pursued a specialist course of study to any great depth. It should be clear to Centres that in such cases these candidates have failed to meet all of the Assessment Objectives and their levels of achievement must fall within the lower mark ranges.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

About 90% of all submissions used this option. The work was very varied and covered the full ability range. Different approaches were explored; figurative, landscape, rural and urban scenes as well as studies from man made and natural forms. There was much experimentation and the best submissions had explored several ideas in a variety of media before selecting one to develop further. All the better work had evidence of working from first hand observation even though much of the development led to abstract outcomes. When the work of others or cultural references had been used they had a positive impact on the development of personal ideas.

Mid and lower level entries suffered from inadequate or superficial research and investigation and there was little information from which to develop ideas. Often one study was carried out in several different media but not really developed or taken any further. The use of colour was rather literal, and even when they had looked at other artists they had not been able to analyse how they had used colour as a means of personal expression, or to create mood and atmosphere. As usual, at this level there was too much copying from secondary sources. Very often this was just an end in itself, and whilst their work may have strong technical skills it was lacking in personal qualities.

Very weak entries which failed to meet the minimum assessment criteria generally consisted of a few unrelated studies of copied images. There was no first hand information, research or development towards personal conclusions. In a few cases only one project had been submitted and there was little evidence that these candidates had followed any course of specialist study at an advanced level.

Printmaking

There were very few entries this year. The best had made good use of digitally manipulated imagery from which they had developed into relief and screen prints.

There were also some block prints on fabric and lino prints. Whilst the use of colour was very sensitive, a limited range of processes had been used and all the work looked rather similar and repetitive.

Graphic Design

There was evidence of some well structured courses and supportive teaching encouraging each candidate to work to their strengths and achieve their full potential within their individual levels of ability. Briefs were appropriate to the age and interests of the candidates and they encouraged cultural diversity. At this level digital technology and the use of appropriate software was much in evidence, but in most cases preceded by the candidates' observational studies and hand rendered lettering. Sheets were well organised and the standard of presentation was excellent.

Less successful submissions had adopted a much narrower approach with too much reliance on Photoshop. Some ideas and exploration could be detected within some submissions but most were very derivative and showed a poor knowledge of design development.

Photography

A very high standard of black and white photography was much in evidence. Final prints were supported by technical notebooks where evidence of the candidates' developing ideas and concepts was documented. The better work took on ambitious themes, some issue based, some with a narrative element, both allowing exploration and conceptual thinking.

At all ability levels there was evidence that candidates had benefited from well structured courses emphasising an experimental approach to using cameras as well as different darkroom techniques. Less successful entries tended to be too narrow in range.

In a few cases only digital photography was submitted. In such cases care needs to be taken to identify which images are the candidates own; where and under what conditions they were taken; and why they have chosen to use them. There should still be evidence of exploration and experimentation, and development of personal ideas alongside the manipulative skills required of Photoshop. A high level of professional finish can be used to mask weak ideas.

Fashion and Textile Design

There were only a few entries for this area of study, all submitting folders of fashion design. They showed a very good understanding of fashion design and had produced some sensitive fashion illustrations supported by sources of inspiration. Unfortunately all were based on secondary sources which prevented the work from moving into the upper attainment levels.

3D Design

Only two submissions were seen.

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Coursework B

General comments

About 440 entries were received from 70 Centres.

As in previous years some of the most mature work was submitted for this paper. These candidates had gained much confidence from their work for component 2. There was a real sense of commitment with a greater evidence of risk taking. It was clear that they enjoy the opportunity of developing work towards a finished piece, and the best of these were often very ambitious both in scale and complexity of ideas.

Large scale work had been well documented with quality photographs and supporting notes where appropriate.

Links between the choice of subject for component 4 (Related Study) were relevant and the influences of looking at how others had approached similar themes or in their use of media could be clearly seen.

Mid level work was characterised by limited research and development of ideas, even though very high levels of manipulative skills were evident. Too much emphasis was placed on producing a number of finished studies rather than focusing upon an in depth exploration of a chosen theme before then carrying an idea through to a conclusion.

There were a number of entries that showed very little difference from the work submitted for component 2. Such folders consisted of sheets of unrelated studies and class exercises. There was much evidence of copying from secondary sources.

When sketchbooks are used properly they are a valuable tool for the candidate. Drawings, observations, notes, experiments and reference material should be entered directly into the sketchbook and develop into a visual diary which documents the candidates' thinking and involvement throughout the course. Any studies which are particularly relevant to the final coursework piece can always be identified in some way. Unfortunately in most cases this good practice is not encouraged and most sketchbooks are made up of studies cut from class work and stuck in. Many appear to have been manufactured after the final work has been produced. Some are made from sheets of earlier work simply stapled or bound together.

Comments on Areas of Study

Painting and Related Media

A wide variety of approaches was seen. Candidates had used oil paints, acrylics, watercolour, inks, pastels, printmaking and collage. There were many excellent and inventive combinations of mixed media as well. Candidates producing the most successful work had carefully selected their choice of subject or theme. Those using starting points that could be visited and revisited, such as their local environment (urban, industrial, landscape), or had selected to produce work using friends, family, or themselves, or man made or natural forms, generally had much more to inform their ideas. Although there were also some very impressive and powerful compositions expressing candidates' reactions to emotive issues. However the best of these had still relied on first hand sources as their starting points. The influence of science fiction was also seen in a few submissions, where a creative use of computer manipulation was used to arrive at new shapes and images, and which had informed the final paintings.

All submissions at this level contained evidence of evaluation of work in progress, and this could be rewarded within the assessment domain of Critical Knowledge and Understanding.

Mid level work was also ambitious in intent but levels of understanding in some of the assessments meant that intentions were not always carried through successfully. There were many examples of an exciting range of research and experimental sheets were produced, but the potential within these did not influence the final outcomes. In some cases the finished pieces suffered from being in a medium not appropriate within the supporting work.

Weak entries lacked a focus and chosen subjects were not explored in any great depth. Many candidates seemed to start their research with enthusiasm but failed to maintain or sustain this through to a final conclusion. Folders contained too much evidence of unrelated work which had been included as a filler when ideas had run out.

Graphic Design

The presentation for the majority of submissions regardless of ability levels was excellent. The work was well organised and presented in a logical sequence.

The best submissions had developed ideas to very accomplished and almost professional outcomes, often producing a range of graphic work in both two and three dimensions, such as package design, and related flat advertising material.

Some excellent illustration was seen where a candidate had produced a completed comic book. They had created their own characters and story line. Research was based on first hand study and the final outcome demonstrated an excellent understanding of layout and use of scale.

There were also some entries demonstrating proficient knowledge of computer skills. These could be marked highly within the domains of Manipulative Skills, and Aesthetic Qualities, but less so in Personal Qualities as much of the imagery used was downloaded from secondary sources, when with a little more effort they could have used their own photography.

Less successful work failed to sustain ideas through to finished pieces, and folders contained too much evidence of disjointed studies. Other illustration submissions had used conventional imagery, which, although carried through to final comic illustrations, was very derivative.

Photography

Most entries had built upon the skills and good practice produced for component 2. The majority fell within the upper levels of attainment.

There was evidence of one theme being explored in much greater depth with many subjects being more conceptually based, exploring issues of gender, ageing, identity or specific landscape as in a "sense of place". Many had broken away from the traditional mounted photograph for their final piece and had produced ambitious work of a large scale, or CD presentations incorporating sound. Many sketchbooks or journals contained evidence of candidates writing their own briefs, and of keeping notes documenting developments and changes as the project developed. These were a great aide for moderation.

Weaker submissions continued to rely on technical processes. Final outcomes were usually a collection of unrelated shots lacking in analysis or personal development.

3D Design

Some of the most original and exciting work seen this session came from this area of study. All range of assemblage media had been employed; wood and coloured raffia; wood, paper and wire, metal sheet and cans; and natural grasses where the influence of Andy Goldsworthy was well understood. There was another impressive series of ceramic abstract forms based around architecture. All these entries were supported with extensive research using first hand resources. There were lots of experiments in the manipulation and combination of materials, before embarking on the final sculptural pieces which were all on a large scale. The final outcomes were presented through large format coloured photographs which provided evidence that their ideas had been refined with a very clear aesthetic understanding of 3D forms.

Fashion and Textile Design

There were a few fashion design entries with evidence of good fashion illustration but with little understanding of fabric, colour or construction process. In every case fabric samples had not been included within the design sheets.

Entries within the area of textiles saw a range of printed fabrics, batik, and tie-dye. The better ones had excellent technical skills plus a good design aesthetic, but none of the entries had enough evidence of the sources of their ideas, or of how the final designs had evolved from earlier drawings.

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Paper 9704/04

Related Study

General comments

Similar to previous sessions, approximately half of all the work assessed for the Related Study achieved the upper levels of the mark range. Among these were a substantial number of excellent and several outstanding investigations. However, over 10% of the submissions received offered a less than adequate response. This continues to cause concern to the Examiners because a higher level of success ought to be possible with this component which, as the syllabus states, is expected to grow from the support and guidance of teachers. Teachers must make every effort to convey clearly the demands of the Related Study and give necessary guidance to all candidates (although the Examiners accept that there will always be candidates who ignore or fail to respond to their teachers' advice for various reasons). If teachers themselves feel the need for assistance and advice they should contact CIE to obtain the CDROM: AS/A Level Art and Design Standards, or gain access to the CIE online help and support services, for which a 'chat room' with an experienced Examiner is available.

It was often noted that the weaker responses were linked to the absence of an Outline Proposal Form (OPF). It is a requirement of the syllabus that an OPF, stating sources and intentions for investigation, is submitted with the study, whether it has been approved by the teacher or sent to CIE for an Examiner's approval and advice. While it is entirely acceptable for teachers to approve the proposals of their own candidates, it may still be advisable to seek advice from CIE if there is a risk that the Examiners might consider that particular sources and intentions are not relevant or appropriate to the Assessment Objectives of the Art and Design syllabus. Very little benefit can be gained if the OPF is sent to CIE for approval a few weeks before the deadline for the completion and submission of the study. The most productive approach is to send it at least six months in advance of the closing date so that candidates either have time to adjust their intentions according to the advice offered, or proceed with a thorough planning, organisation and presentation of their investigations. The completion of the OPF should give positive encouragement to candidates to focus on their intentions in relation to their current coursework. If, however, as is the practice in a number of Centres, the teacher actually completes the OPF, candidates lose the benefit of having to articulate their own aims and intentions.

It was evident that the majority of candidates had received very effective advice and support from their teachers. Clearly, this had generated an initial sense of motivation in relation to a candidate's main coursework interests, which led to the identification of accessible sources for first hand investigation. The use of local sources encouraged a focus on the work of particular practitioners or specific sites as well as the potential for comparisons with international or mainstream examples from books or the Internet. Further guidance from teachers then led to a productive gathering of information, the selection and organisation of visual and written material and the structure, sequence and presentation of the studies. Advice to focus on a selection of examples encouraged personal analyses, comparisons and evaluations, relating back to coursework experiences as well as a growing awareness of cultural contexts.

Many candidates were, therefore, able to offer a very good balance between personal coursework interests, first hand investigations from galleries, exhibitions, studios or sites and mainstream or cross-cultural examples from secondary sources. In the less successful submissions, however, such a balance was not apparent as there was either a predominant focus on a candidate's own work without any reference to historical or contemporary practice, or a complete focus on information from secondary sources without any first hand investigation or relationship to coursework experiences.

Comments on various levels of achievement

Higher Levels

Several outstanding submissions were seen which met all of the Assessment Objectives to the highest level. Such achievements were exceptionally sustained, coherently structured, elegantly presented and clearly personal in their practical and written analyses and evaluations. An encouraging number of candidates also submitted excellent studies which showed considerable enthusiasm for carefully chosen topics which were strongly motivated by direct experience of the selected works of artists, sculptors, designers, photographers, craft workers or architects in relation to their main coursework interests. A very stimulating range of local practitioners' work and architectural sites were focused on to inform analyses, comparisons and critical understanding.

Thorough planning of layout and presentation led to a variety of inventive formats, exploiting double page spreads and internal foldouts with sensitive mounting on deliberately chosen and distinctively coloured papers to create a variety of visually exciting juxtapositions of text and image. In both handcrafted examples and those produced through computer processes, a concern for the sequence and integration of selected visual and written material, making use of notations, headings and sub-headings, offered a refined clarity of communication.

Mid Levels

The majority of submissions showed a competent level of research, organisation and presentation. There was some evidence of a personal commitment, interest and enthusiasm, leading to articulate written descriptions of works, but less concern to engage in practical analyses or comparisons to develop or explain how the investigation *related* to coursework experiences. Unfortunately, many quite able candidates at this level assumed the Examiner would be familiar with the directions they had followed in their own practical work. Consequently they neglected to refer to it, or include any record of it, in order to compare and evaluate it in relation to their selection of works by artists or designers.

Computer processes were used well to organise and integrate visual and written material, usually within conventional A4 sized formats. Some handwritten submissions at this level were quite difficult to read because of the combinations of various media, for example silver ink on textured buff coloured paper or writing on cellophane laid over illustrations. There were no doubts that first hand familiarity with the works focused on had motivated a personal interest in the investigation, but there was also a tendency to place more emphasis on works of international renown which were only accessible from books or the Internet. Better results were apparent when these examples were compared with the research from local sources, but the lack of explanation of how they *related* to the candidate's own interests inevitably limited the depth of personal evaluations and critical judgements.

Lower Levels

The studies which did not meet the Assessment Objectives evenly enough to achieve more than an adequate response invariably showed a heavy reliance on secondary information from books or the Internet. Sources for first hand investigation were either uncertain or patchy, for example, a few photographs showing the candidate meeting this or that artist or designer were offered as evidence of visits to studios or workshops, but no further comment or focus on any particular works. Surveys of media and processes often lacked personal analyses or even simple references to the contexts, styles, themes or aesthetic qualities of any particular works. Such approaches offered very few attempts to make comparisons or critical judgements. References to coursework experiences were sparse or difficult to find and very little consideration had been given to the structure, sequence and presentation of the material.

Some submissions included no more than two or three illustrations which were poorly reproduced and given uncertain or inaccurate notations. Covers, titles, introductions, conclusions and bibliographies were often neglected, as if the studies were the product of last minute compilations, rather than a planned project in relation to specific intentions, which in many cases were unknown as an Outline Proposal Form had not been included. Some studies were bolstered with irrelevant scrap book cuttings, interviews and questionnaires, unselected biographies, chronological lists and regurgitated technical manuals which led nowhere in terms of informing personal evaluations. So much more could have been achieved, especially in relation to coursework experiences.

Unsatisfactory Levels

The submissions which failed to offer a satisfactory response for an Advanced level study usually consisted of no more than two or three pages of writing with little concern to gather visual information, or integrate it with the text. Some of these were very brief summaries of general art history or techniques involved in a particular process, and others were focused on topics which had only a tenuous link to Art and Design issues. Almost all of them lacked an approved proposal outlining sources and intentions. If an OPF had been completed and sent to CIE for advice, some of these weaker outcomes might have been avoided.

Exceptions to the examples above, which also attracted very little recognition from the Assessment Objectives, were submissions consisting entirely of more of a candidate's coursework. These included no written content, no introduction or conclusion, nor any references to existing works by practitioners. Such responses clearly resulted from a complete lack of understanding of the demands of this component, weighted as 20% of the whole examination. Several very weak studies, however, included perfectly viable proposal forms, but the candidates had simply neglected to produce any work, other than a few hastily assembled notes. There were also a few submissions consisting of no more than several pages downloaded from the Internet.