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FOREWORD

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

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01
Observational Study

General comments

This paper offered many options within each question, and there was every opportunity for candidates to choose a subject with which they were familiar. **Question 1 (a)** was by far the most popular, closely followed by **Question 2 (a)**. **Questions 1 (b)** and **2 (b)** were also used by many. Very few chose **Questions 2 (c)** or **2 (d)**.

As usual, those choosing *The Human Figure* (**Question 3**) were mainly confined to submissions from more skilled candidates, or from Centres who structure this activity as part of their course. No submissions were received for Option (**b**).

The *Interiors or Exteriors* option (**Question 4**) appears to be growing in popularity but many candidates are producing work better suited to Paper 2 than this observational paper. Candidates who choose this option are expected to find locations from which they can make visual recordings from first-hand observation. Many submissions were composites of different views or simply creations from imagination. Before allowing candidates to make choices from this option Centres should ensure that their candidates are well briefed and carefully monitored throughout the preparatory period.

There was very little really weak work, with almost every entry achieving a grade. There were less really outstanding submissions that went beyond expectations at this level than has been received in past years. Predictably, the majority of submissions fell within the competent to highly competent achievement levels.

Direct first-hand observation was apparent in practically all work. When photographs were used they were as part of the preparatory studies. This worked well for those candidates who had planned the lighting, viewpoints and alternative arrangements in a series of photographs. However, there were many examples of candidates relying on a single 'snap shot' which had been taken with little consideration of the formal qualities required by this paper. It was also clear that some submissions had simply copied from one photograph for their examination piece.

Submissions achieving high achievement levels had thoroughly investigated their chosen questions by means of experiments with viewpoints, compositional sketches, lighting effects and colour studies. Weaker candidates often simply repeated the same study that had been done as preparatory work.

Where candidates had undertaken a preparatory composition which was not of an A2 ratio they often failed to resolve their examination composition by attempting to fit a square format into a rectangular composition. They had not understood the methods involved in scaling up drawings.

A full range of media was seen and at best this was used with confidence and a sensitivity towards the chosen subject. Some Centres are encouraging candidates to experiment with mixed media techniques; combining collage and printmaking, and over-drawing and painting onto prepared surfaces. Mono printing was also used very successfully on occasions. When practised as part of preparatory work this does allow for a wide range of mark making possibilities to be employed, as well as allowing for results to achieve more expressive and interpretative qualities. However, the importance of underpinning all this with traditional analytical recording skills should not be overlooked.

Whilst most Centres take great care to label and present their submissions carefully, there are still some Centres who attach little importance to this. A few Centres are mounting all work on A1 sheets regardless of the actual size of submissions, making it very difficult to handle. Some are still not attaching preparatory studies to the examination piece. One Centre submitted all their candidates' works without any labelling or form of identification.

Comments on specific questions**Question 1***Still Life Group*

- (a) The traditional still life group gave opportunities for fully considered compositions where backgrounds had been successfully integrated with the foreground. There were excellent examples of paintings which showed a very advanced understanding of colour theory, including colour within cast shadows and reflected colours between surfaces. Many candidates had experimented with cut sections and patterns of peeled vegetables which enhanced the surface qualities of their work.

Mid-range work had successfully resolved the rendition of fruit and vegetables but baskets and drapery tended to highlight problems in handling space. Most pencil studies fell into this category, where forms were generalised and a predominance given to mid-tones resulted in a flattening effect.

The weaker entries came from candidates who had little idea of creating a composition. Their preparatory work almost entirely consisting of poorly observed studies of objects seen in isolation.

- (b) There was a very wide range of interpretations, often linked to the candidate's own interests or hobbies. These included magician's bags, toy boxes, art equipment cases and make-up boxes.

The perspective and shapes of containers such as briefcases, boxes and holdalls all helped with the establishment of depth and space in the most successful compositions.

Work in the mid-range contained errors in the rendition of perspective with a confusion between observed perspective and isometric viewpoints.

Weaker candidates failed to understand or apply basic rules of construction when drawing bags and cases.

Question 2*Natural and Man Made Objects*

- (a) Most candidates elected to answer this question in the format of a still life group, although there were one or two instances of an investigative study sheet approach.

The complexities of parallel ellipses both served to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of candidate's recording skills. Some of the most striking explorations as compositions came when one of the mugs was broken, introducing irregular shapes. The ability to represent lettering and pattern on a curved surface also distinguished the work of the more able candidates from those in the lower mark ranges, as did the control of light falling on the objects. Weaker candidates tended to invent or at best only approximate the shadows on the surface of the mugs and cast shadows on the supporting surfaces.

The use of folded fabrics or paper was used as an effective compositional device and this masked the ellipse construction where the mugs met the table surface.

Where backgrounds were included, problems were encountered by weaker candidates who failed to adopt a consistent eye level for both the mugs and the room.

- (b) This question was generally very well resolved with some highly accomplished analytical observations. Many of these adopted a larger than life format which enabled form and structure to be represented in greater detail. There were effective combinations of pencil work and collage, as well as some ambitious multi-media studies, which enabled candidates to stress the surface textures and patterns found within the plants.

Many had taken great care to select an interesting plant container and to place the composition within a setting such as a room or on a window ledge. The rendering of ellipses and perspective tended to expose the limitations of some candidates.

Weaker submissions also showed a struggle to record plant structure with many resorting to a formula.

- (c) Not many examples seen, although there were some effective outcomes that were particularly successful in the representation of items related to various cultural festivities rather than just the Western idea of Christmas.
- (d) Very few entries, and most seemed to be by less able candidates. There was a strong emphasis on flat surface pattern with very little representation of form. Nearly all encountered problems in representing pieces with such a thin depth, or of understanding the effects of perspective on pieces fitted or scattered across a surface. One of the more successful entries had chosen to work from a three-dimensional jigsaw which gave more opportunity for conveying form and structure.

Question 3*The Human Figure*

Not a large entry but outcomes in all options were mostly of a high or outstanding standard.

- (a) The very few who attempted this produced some effective compositions with the figure placed in a number of domestic settings mostly in the kitchen, or in a workshop. There was much evidence of copying from photographs or illustrations. These tended to be very flat and formulaic.
- (b) No entries seen.
- (c) Most entries used this question with some very original and well considered studies showing evidence of experimenting with various viewpoints before deciding on a final pose. A great deal of care had been taken with the selection of costume. Traditional tribal costumes proved to be very popular and provided lots of scope for using colour, pattern and texture. The mirror was used at best as an effective compositional device and there were some very successful examples where the reflection included a self portrait of the candidate in the model's mirror.

Question 4*Interiors or Exteriors*

There were still a few examples where a single secondary source such as a magazine picture was taken as a starting point and faithfully copied, with no evidence of direct observation or investigation. Such work does not meet all of the assessment objectives and can only achieve low marks.

- (a) Only a very few examples seen. Some farmyard scenes had drawn on first hand observation but the majority had copied illustrations, with a few using scenes from countries far removed from the candidate's own.
- (b) This was the most popular option in this question. The understanding of the importance of the sky in a landscape composition was a major factor in differentiating the stronger candidates from the weaker. The best had experimented with sky colours and by implication, the time of day. Cloud structures and formations also provided candidates with the opportunity to experiment with colour and painterly techniques. This all helped to create pictures with a powerful sense of atmosphere.

Weaker candidates instinctively used strong shades of blue for the sky often with no modulation or cloud structures.

The representation of reflections was recorded to a very high standard by many candidates, and the laws of refraction were well understood. The potential of shadows crossing reflections were also exploited by stronger candidates.

- (c) The most successful of these entries had fully explored and understood the potential of compositions which utilised positive and negative shapes created by trees, fences and narrow passageways.

However, there were also many weaker attempts to create compositions from various elements taken from different photographs. They were unaware of the spatial implications offered by this question.

Paper 0400/02

Interpretative Study

General comments

The questions for this paper are intended to encourage all candidates to explore the suggested themes in a personal way in whatever technique or media is most appropriate to them. They are intended to be starting points with a broad range of possible interpretations.

A very interesting set of responses this year, with some very imaginative and highly skilled work from many candidates. Work that reflected the nature of the examination as an interpretative paper was occasionally very surprising in the various individual ways that candidates responded. Not only was some of the work imaginative and thoughtful, but also in many cases the preparatory work showed high levels of maturity in its accomplishment. Many of the best candidates experimented with their ideas and took time to research and develop it using, for example, the work of established artists to help their thinking. Many candidates had clearly followed courses that encouraged experimentation and these made full use of the time available for preparation, always being ready to try things out and see what works, or to experiment with techniques to see which is best in terms of what they are trying to express. One can often see vitality, sensitivity and richness reflected in the final piece. Teachers working in these kinds of Centres had prepared them well for the final examination.

Those weaker candidates that did not adequately meet the demands of the examination were often skimpily in their preparation work, with sometimes just a few quick sketches that were either just copied or were distinctly derivative. Some supporting work consisted merely of photographs cut out of magazines, with very weak or no evidence of personal investigation or development. It should be made very clear to candidates that the supporting studies are very important indeed. All of the assessment objectives would benefit if time is taken to really base work on good solid research and development, honing initial attempts to improve them.

For these candidates, preparation work often consisted of little more than one practice piece, which was simply copied during the examination time. No evidence was given of where ideas or images come from, and no trail of studies to show how initial studies had come from. It would seem that many candidates seem to either leave things to the last moment or have little motivation to spend a sufficient amount of time exploring ideas, researching, developing and trying out techniques ready for the control test. It seems rather a wasted opportunity that the time that the question paper is available to them is not used effectively.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Starting out

This was the second most popular question. The better candidates often managed to convey through their work the sense of anticipation or excitement that the question suggests. Most common interpretations centred on a journey of some kind, perhaps a holiday or more often, the journey of life itself. Wombs, babies or infants, insect larvae and hatching eggs featured frequently. Some based their work on sports themes, often or a race of some kind. Those that responded well to this particular question developed personal interpretations with good painting skills, creating atmospheric and thought-provoking imagery.

Question 2

Workplace

The most common response was that of an office, a crafts workshop or a building site, all providing excellent opportunities for direct observational work leading to personal compositions. Ambitious candidates also tried to convey some human involvement in the workplace, with figures in the environment rather than an empty space. Where some found difficulty was in the use of perspective, clearly unused to the discipline of it and not able to discern when it was inaccurate. One was also sometimes concerned by the rather lazy decision to use memory or imagination to produce an idea of a workplace rather than working directly by sight. Weaker candidates often lacked basic drawing skills and, having relied completely on imagined visual elements, did not show an appreciation of form and structure.

Question 3

A tight fit

This was the least popular question. Those few who did attempt this question seemed to go for one solution, which is one of the more obvious, creating compositions based around human figures and clothing. There were, however, a few notable departures from the obvious. Exceptions were those who took time to explore and to use their imagination to make a departure from the norm. Good interpretations of this question included people stuck in narrow potholes and studies of spanners and bolts. Opportunities to base responses on such starting points as packed suitcases or boxes full of objects like toys, rush hour in the train or bus, or people in a lift were largely missed, which was a shame.

Question 4

Spiritual home

There were similarities in the responses between this question and **Question 1**, *Starting out*. There were commonly many religious buildings or ceremonies. Many strong candidates opted for this question, with a few taking the literal path and making studies of churches, temples or shrines from life and using these to support their final pieces. Some excellent work was seen especially in aspects such as personal adornment with religious themed jewellery.

Very interesting were a few candidates who took a political view of the question and made work based on the country they lived in, with conflict and history taking a part in the imagery. Some of the best of these used a mixed media approach, with either actual cut up or photocopied maps and a collage of newspaper images and symbols from their country to create a visual comment of the state of their nation.

Question 5

Ruined and overgrown

A fairly popular question attempted by many candidates, some using the title to develop strong observational work. The vast majority of interpretations used derelict houses, gardens or ruined cars as a theme, with some excellent results. As is often the case, the candidates who used direct observation as a starting point generally created the most interesting compositions. Good painting skills were seen and a sensitive appreciation of overlaying and interlocking various forms and colours were apparent in some work.

There was some good figure drawing seen from candidates who had used either the theme of poverty or of elderly people as a theme for this question.

Question 6

Hidden

By far the most popular question, with some excellent responses seen. Many took the route of animals camouflaged in their natural habitat, whilst others made play of visual illusions with hidden objects. Some candidates produced thought-provoking imagery with examples as seen in surrealist paintings, such as Dali, whose paintings frequently featured in supporting sheets. The very best work in this mode retained a fresh and original approach and used their knowledge and analysis of surrealist work to inform their own ideas rather than merely copying the style of an established or well-known painter.

It was interesting to see that opportunities were taken to use art as a political or social comment, with a few making their work reflect thoughts and ideas on such themes as poverty or inequality.

Administration

In general terms, work was well organised and labelled, and most preparatory work attached securely together tied loosely to the examination work with string. A few Centres still seem to think that work needs to be mounted, which is not necessary. The only mounting that is needed is of preparatory work, and this should be done neatly and simply on A2 sheets of paper. It is of no benefit to mount work in any way that is sophisticated or to mount it on large sheets – A1 should certainly not be used. Heavy card makes handling very difficult and does not help the examining process.

Far too much work is packed whilst still slightly wet, making everything stick together. Please allow plenty of drying time. Chalk and charcoal need to be fixed really well, and a loose sheet of cheap newsprint can be employed to protect delicate work, but please do not make the Examiners' task even more difficult by using tape to stick protective sheets of paper onto the work.

Attendance registers submitted with the work need to be accurately completed to ensure that Examiners can check if a candidate's work is missing – some attendance registers were either incomplete or incorrect. Work should be packaged in candidate order.

Most teachers are clearly preparing candidates as well as they can, but too many are still spending far too short a time in preparation. If teachers can put aside sufficient timetabled time for preparation in the weeks leading up to the controlled test, most candidates would benefit.

Paper 0400/03

Design Study

General comments

The most popular questions this session were **Question 1** *Design using Lettering* and **Question 2** *Illustration and Calligraphy*. Substantial numbers of responses were received for **Question 4** *Interior Design* and **Question 7** *Printmaking*. While fewer candidates chose **Question 5** *Fashion Design* and **Question 6** *Fabric Design* only a small number of submissions were seen for **Question 3** *Environmental Design* and **Question 8** *Photography*. Continuing the improved trend noted in last year's report, few very poor responses were seen, and almost a third of the work was worthy of recognition in the upper levels of the mark range. Thoroughness of research and development of ideas in the preparatory work were invariably linked to the most successful outcomes for the examination pieces.

The Examiners were grateful that fewer problems arose through the use of inappropriate materials, such as sprinkled glitter, unfixed pastels and three dimensional objects attached to the work. However, some Centres still need to organise the labelling and mounting of work in a manner which assists the Examiners' scrutiny and the recording and checking of marks.

Firstly, work should not be submitted in folders which bear the only information of candidate and Centre names and numbers. If this information does not appear on the front of each sheet of work submitted, it will inevitably be unavailable when the marks are recorded and checked because the folders will have been discarded in order for marking to proceed.

Secondly, some Centres encourage their candidates to mount preparatory work on very large sheets of card, often in excess of A1 size. This creates problems for the movement of work during the marking process, especially when the examination pieces are much smaller. Centres should therefore limit the mounting of preparatory work to A2 size, as instructed on page 20 of the syllabus, as well as making sure that it is securely fastened together with the examination piece, correctly labelled, at the front.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Design using Lettering

The logo design brief for a company named 'ARENA' which supplies sportswear led to results across the full ability range. The best work grew from thorough research of letter-forms and sports-related equipment as well as stadium architecture. This informed the development of integrated designs where colour, tone and linear border enhancements were selectively refined. The illustration of how and where the logo might be placed on a track suit or a pair of running shoes was also undertaken selectively to show the most effective consideration of figure-ground relationships. Mid-level achievements sometimes became so involved in studies for the shoes or track suit that the logo design was given a secondary consideration. Some candidates developed a potentially promising idea in their preparatory work but neglected to refine or develop it further for placing on an item of sportswear. Less able submissions often attempted a fashion design response, offering poorly shaped figures in track suits with very little focus on the logo design.

Question 2*Illustration and Calligraphy*

- (a) The design brief for the front cover for a menu of a coffee shop named 'SUNDAES & SUNDRIES' was by far the most popular option of this question, with the work covering the full mark range. The most able designs were informed by thorough studies of fancy ice creams, cakes, pastries and crockery combined with carefully chosen letter-forms. The development of ideas also considered appropriate borders, colour distribution and surface qualities which led to a crisp and precise use of media for the examination pieces. Mid-level responses offered promising ideas based on competent research but limitations were apparent in shapes, placing, colour and visual impact of lettering. In the less able work poorly drawn images and letter-forms tended to be scattered around simplistic design motifs and a very basic ability to select or control the use of media led to fuzzy graphic communication.
- (b) The calligraphy option for Robert Louis Stevenson's poem 'The Cow' was far less popular. Only a few submissions showed a high level of control of a particular calligraphic hand. Not all of these, however, were then successful in integrating the poem with borders and illustrations to present the total layout of a page. In some mid-level work illustrations and borders were actually more promising than the written scripts, which tended to be uneven in form and spacing. Less successful attempts showed a lack of experience of a specific calligraphic hand, disconnected illustrations and often the use of inappropriate materials, such as ball point pens, leading to barely legible writing.

Question 3*Environmental/Structural Design*

The design for a mooring area for a small boat was mostly chosen by candidates with sound intentions, although the number of responses was few. The best examples offered clear plans and elevations which could be translated into a physical structure by a specialist builder. Such work was informed by architectural practice in terms of establishing scale, proportions and use of materials. Plans and artist's impressions were executed in selected media, such as pen line and ink washes, to communicate precise ideas. Some mid-level designs resulted from photographic research of existing sites which then informed the development of similar ideas. Weaker responses were very uncertain of the requirements of the design brief, producing vague paintings of riverside views but no plans or elevations.

Question 4*Interior Design*

The mosaic design for the interior of an ornamental pond inspired some of the most outstanding submissions of the whole paper. Of the two themes offered 'Mythological animals' was the most popular, but substantial numbers of designs were also seen for 'Fruits of the sea'. The best work grew from strong research, sometimes referring to historical examples from Roman, Byzantine or Islamic decorative motifs, to develop lively solutions enhanced by rich colour in which the spaces between the mosaic pieces were an integral part of the designs. Mid-level responses often developed pleasing symmetrical designs which could be viewed from any angle and considered the overall shapes of ponds in relation to the organisation of visual elements. Less able submissions usually became embroiled in copying fantasy comic imagery but were less interested in developing or refining such secondary sources into mosaic schemes.

Question 5*Fashion Design*

The best work for the costume design for a street performer or a circus entertainer was firmly based on candidates' abilities to draw the human figure and select suitable poses for presenting the final ideas. However, the question encouraged many witty and charming solutions for all but the weakest level of ability, even when the most naive or schematic figures were offered. Consideration of different materials also informed inventive costume shapes enhanced by lively patterns and decorative frills. The less successful submissions inevitably derived from easily accessed secondary information, probably from the Internet judging by the repeated use of similar clown images, but lacked any further research or personal development.

Question 6*Fabric Design*

The repeat pattern for a sunshade, an umbrella or a circular table cloth based on built structures by famous architects tended to be chosen by all candidates from particular Centres where this specialisation is taught. Gustave Eiffel's tower in Paris was the most usual source, but many candidates also researched the Art Nouveau designs of Antonio Gaudi. While Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright were rarely chosen, a few good designs developed from their Modernist structures were seen. Some excellent responses were received, benefiting from thorough research to develop intricate patterns which were meticulously rendered in the examination pieces. At mid-levels of achievement many competent designs with alternating motifs within the circular formats were seen. The weaker submissions were limited by poorly studied information or disregard of the requirements of the design brief.

Question 7*Printmaking*

More candidates chose the theme of 'Camouflage' than 'Machine parts' but very few responses were received for 'Packaging'. The printmaking themes have become increasingly popular for the November session with several particular Centres specialising in relief, stencil and wax resist processes. Generally, the results were very rich in colour and surface qualities with many submissions achieving the upper levels of the mark range. Strong, directly observed drawings led to aesthetically pleasing examination prints with some interesting experimental variations also included. The selection and control of colour and media was sensitively used to convey the balance between camouflage and invisibility. Thorough studies of machine parts led to selected enlargements of structures which were equally well developed for the final prints. At mid-levels of achievement the research was more limited and candidates sometimes lost control of registration, leading to less coherent results. However, very few unsuccessful attempts were seen for this question.

Question 8*Photography*

Only a few entries for this specialisation were seen this session. Most responses focused on the theme of 'Dawn or Dusk' with some interesting attempts to create montage by overlapping negatives to combine atmospheric effects with images of birth and death. Some weaker responses were seen for 'Cross Sections' for which cut halves of vegetables had been recorded through digital processes, but as no subsequent manipulation of the images took place the work failed to meet the requirements of the question.

Paper 0400/04

Critical and Historical Study

General comments

A similar number of candidates to last November. Projects were generally well researched and made good use of local resources. The actual subject matter varied depending on the environment so that Centres' submissions had quite a distinctive feel.

Many candidates made excellent use of first-hand resources and visits which helped to inform and inspire some really good submissions based on the experience. Interviews with artists and designers were also used to good effect.

The balance of text and images should be maintained throughout the study and the presentation needs to be well organised.

Weaker submissions were sometimes untidy and poorly managed and the visual display was often haphazard where cutting out was random making the overall look untidy. There is time allowed to ensure good presentation is maintained.

Some excellent work was often carried out using computer-aided design programmes. Images were very clear and well labelled but in weaker submissions there was little attempt to relate images to the text and even label images correctly.

A number of candidates illustrated their projects effectively with their own photography and their own sketches and this often gave a personal touch to the work. There were some problems with candidates who submitted their own art work which bore no relation to the chosen theme and this did not help to clarify the objectives of the project.

To repeat advice from the summer, where photocopies and downloaded images are used these should be as clear as possible as poor reproduction gives a project a weak impact.

The strongest submissions were those where candidates had built up a body of research materials and visual evidence for their projects and then sifted the material and refined it for a final write-up and presentation. Higher outcomes showed proper involvement and development.

If handwriting is to be the main form of the text then it must be clear and written without endless crossings out. There is time allowed to get presentation to a good standard and candidates should be encouraged to revisit and make submissions look as good as possible.

The best work in this section revealed high quality research and some excellent themes including architecture, folk arts, the style and development of single artists and visits to buildings and artists studios. Some candidates became very dependent on the Internet as the sole research tool and this gave some projects a shallow feel to the content. The comments from last year's report are worth repeating as they are the key to good practice in this paper:

- Keep the aim of the project clear
- Ensure that enough material exists to allow thorough research
- Keep good photo evidence and notes of visits, interviews, etc.
- Make sure images to be used are clear and appropriate
- If handwriting is scruffy then word-process text
- Make good use of practical visual skills such as drawing and sketching
- Do not print out Internet material and present it without evaluation
- Good presentation is important
- List illustrations and number them in the text
- Write out a bibliography and include web sites and other electronic sources used.

Paper 0400/05

Coursework

General comments

Twenty-five Centres submitted work for moderation this year and generally the level of ability was of a competent to highly competent standard. This indicates that most Centres have a good understanding of the syllabus criteria for this paper and can structure their courses to allow their candidates access to all of the assessment objectives.

Supporting work is an accurate guide to a candidate's research and development of ideas and techniques. In most cases, this is a good way of supporting the assessment of a candidate's personal qualities and their ability to interpret chosen themes and subjects. Since this forms 50% of the Assessment Criteria, those Centres who emphasise the relevance of this are able to achieve the higher levels of success. However, many Centres still see the preparatory work as being simply a practice piece for the final work without any evidence of research and development.

Some of the best entries were informed by reference to other artists' works and was most successful. The choice of artist was particularly appropriate to the nature of work undertaken by the candidate.

Where candidates had been encouraged to work from first-hand sources which could be easily accessed, e.g. organic forms, still life, landscape, then this allowed for some very personal development to evolve.

Amongst the mid-range and weaker work there was much evidence of an over-reliance on secondary source material. In some cases, whole Centres presented little more than direct copies of the work of well-known artists or copies of magazine illustrations.

A few Centres sent in too many projects. Candidates were not being encouraged to be selective and organise their submissions to show research and development towards one final piece. There was also evidence of Centres operating a system of marking each project and arriving at an overall average. This tends to work against candidates in that work completed very early on in the course brings down the mark for stronger, more mature later work. Examiners are not assessing the entire course. The syllabus guidelines for Centre marking are quite clear in that one unit of coursework should be selected for assessment.

Centre assessments were generally accurate in placing submissions into an order of merit, but levels of marking tended to be generous and in some cases very much so. Although there is a very good CD with examples of coursework at all levels (available from CIE Publications) it would seem that teachers are either very optimistic with internal marking or are unsure of using the Assessment Criteria for different levels of achievement.

Comments on specific areas of study

Painting and Related Media

Most Centres chose this option. There were several excellent submissions from candidates in different Centres. Their work was thoroughly researched, often using a variety of media and approaches. This led to individual ideas and fully resolved final pieces. Much of the best work was also informed by relevant references to similar themes in other artists' works.

Mid-levels of achievement were often the most accurately assessed, showing considerable benefits from well structured courses which enabled candidates to achieve competent levels of understanding and a confidence to experiment with interesting ideas.

With weaker submissions, intentions were confused and there was a noticeable lack of sustained or focused investigation. Ideas were largely based upon copying from secondary sources with very little idea of development or personal input.

3D Studies

Three Centres submitted work for this area of study with varying degrees of success. The best work demonstrated abilities to resolve personal ideas with some highly competent modelling in clay.

However, most submissions tended to be three dimensional transcripts from secondary sourced imagery of animals, insects, human skulls, heads and hands.

There was no evidence of any references to the work of other established sculptors or of sculptural forms within a cultural context.

Graphic Design

Very few candidates specialised in this option but some graphic techniques had been encouraged and the experimental and development processes within painting courses.

It was encouraging to see evidence of printmaking being used, particularly when mono prints had been further developed through over drawing or painting.

Some examples of photographic scanning and computer manipulation also featured within supporting folders.

However, the possibilities offered by encouraging a discrete design course had not been exploited.

Textiles

Three Centres submitted work for this area of study. There was some interesting and highly competent batik work which displayed a sound knowledge of craft skills and design development. Although these were well marked by the Centre, few achieved really personal outcomes since research was largely based upon secondary sources.

Fabric printing and block printing techniques were also used very effectively, although with less technical control. Particularly pleasing was the way each candidate had selected and organised colour schemes for their final prints. Once again limitations in the range of research and a reliance on secondary source material limited overall achievement levels.