

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/01
Observational Study

General comments

There was an increase in entry numbers for this session with submissions for this paper approaching 3,000. All questions appeared to appeal to all ability levels with most candidates choosing options from **Question 2, Natural and Man-made Objects**. This was closely followed by **Question 1, Still-life Group**. **Question 4a, A View under a Bridge**, was the most popular in this section, and **Question 3b** received far more entries than **3a, The Human Figure**.

As always some highly accomplished work was seen, but overall numbers producing work worthy of marks at the highest level was noticeably less than previous years. The majority of entries fell within the mid and lower middle ability ranges. Unfortunately the number of entries that were ungraded increased fourfold a lot of which could be attributed to failing to provide any supporting preparatory work.

However the importance of preparatory work is now generally well understood by the majority of Centres. The quality of the final examination piece was hugely influenced by the amount of effort that had gone into the preparatory work. The very best was fully resolved in both the choice of media and technique, and it was clear that candidates' intentions had been met. A few candidates failed to achieve the potential seen in the examination piece because of sparse preparatory work. It is not possible to reward marks in those assessment domains when there is insufficient evidence. Those who had used preparatory work as a rehearsal for the examination produced final outcomes that failed to retain freshness and spontaneity. After three or four repetitious attempts at the same composition, the work fails to improve and a regression of standards frequently occurred. This is in sharp contrast to those candidates who use the preparatory period to experiment, explore and develop ideas; only tackling the final composition during the examination itself.

The referencing of other artists' work is now quite a common feature within the preparatory work, and is to be encouraged, but not at the expense of the candidates' own drawings and studies. An overuse of downloaded images from other artists is often used to camouflage candidates' own lack of practical work.

The use of digital photography can be a useful tool when supporting the candidates' own observations and experiments. However an over reliance on a single digital image in an attempt to mask the candidates' own observations or efforts is an occurring feature in many submissions. There is a trend where candidates have worked solely from a photograph of their chosen subject, with the final work being a careful copy of the photograph. In some cases this has been mechanically 'grided' up to enlarge. Such results are flat, lifeless and lacking in personal qualities.

A few entries were better suited to the Interpretative Study, Paper 2 where imagination rather than observation was the main focus of the work.

Once again a wide range of media was seen with some accomplished paintings using a full colour palette; also some excellent detailed pencil studies. Mixed media techniques using pen and ink; printmaking; collage and even bas relief using card and papier mâché achieved varying degrees of success. Such techniques can enhance the expressive nature of the work, but they should always be used selectively, and not at the expense of successfully rendering form, structure, texture and spatial relationships.

Administration by most Centres was very good, with clear labelling and correct attendance registers included. The overall presentation of submissions was also of a high standard with great care being taken over both final pieces as well as preparatory sheets.

However there are some Centres who fail to fix all the work together, sending everything in as loose sheets and in some cases badly labelled.

Submissions are still being received which exceed the maximum size stated within the syllabus. Also work on heavy mount board. Sending in studies mounted on foam board of fluorescent orange or lime green does little to enhance the artwork. There is also no need to submit canvas paintings still on their stretchers. If candidates wish to paint in oil colours they can use a ready primed oil painting paper.

Centres are asked to ensure that work is thoroughly attached as it becomes very tiresome when work is repeatedly detaches from sheets because they have been badly stuck down.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1, Still Life Group

- (a) The majority of submissions adopted a straightforward traditional still-life approach; although interesting viewpoints of the box were used in some of the better submissions. A wide range of toys featured from those that were commercially produced to hand carved wooden toys of local manufacture and traditional craft forms such as origami.

Submissions using colour predominated. Collages of brightly coloured paper were also used effectively, as were some submissions which employed semi relief techniques to suggest greater depth to the inside of the box.

The best submissions were able to establish the structure of the box and to convey a convincing sense of space between the inside and outside of the box through tonal contrasts and scale. Differences of surface (shiny plastic, soft and fluffy toys) were conveyed through colour and mark making.

Candidates in the mid to lower mark ranges encountered the usual problems with basic perspective. A lack of tonal range or textural differences tended to flatten and create a monotonous surface to many of the compositions.

There were some extremely weak submissions totally lacking in form and which were treated in a cartoon like style. It was clear from the evidence presented in the preparatory sheets that sources for their ideas had come more from cartoon illustrations than from direct observation.

- (b) This open ended question continues to be very popular and enabled candidates to produce a wide variety of interpretations. Unfortunately some were treated more as an interpretative subject, combining images of beach scenes, boats and seascapes derived from secondary sources such as travel brochures.

Many had used objects associated with religious holidays and it was pleasing to see a diversity of cultural influences; Chinese New Year celebrations with fireworks and lanterns; Deepavali; as well as Christmas or birthday celebrations.

There were the usual still lives of suitcases with objects spilling onto the floor, trompe d'oeil studies of passports and tickets in great detail with very successfully angled perspective lettering.

Question 2, Natural and Man Made Objects

- (a) The best submissions for this question had made extensive studies in the preparatory period, recording their observations and experimenting through detailed drawings, colour studies, and using photography to record unusual foreshortened viewpoints. Final outcomes accurately recorded the distortion of the brush handles both at the neck of the container and at the water level where this was included. Very carefully observed cast shadows were used as background features, as were additional brushes and paint palettes in the foreground arranged to create additional space and depth.

Weaker candidates often drew the brushes and then superimposed the glass container. The elliptical forms of the jar top and base also caused problems for the less able. Many at this level gave little thought to the surface plane, and where backgrounds were included these were often added as an after thought, being largely made up such as some very poorly drawn window frames.

- (b) Again in this option the best work was accompanied by some lively supporting studies in a variety of media, including some close-up macro photography which often contributed to dramatic perspectives in the final examination pieces. The most successful were always enlarged images. Some had taken a more imaginative approach and included the subject with tea cups and other items, or made compositions to include hands unwrapping the bar.

The influence of Wayne Thiebaud could be detected in many submissions.

The perspective of lettering was tackled with confidence by candidates in the upper mark ranges, who were also able to accurately represent the lettering as it wrapped around the form of the bar. Those in the lower ranges depended on a very frontal view for lettering construction.

Colour, tone, and texture were successfully used to convey the differences between the chocolate, silver foil wrapper and the brightly coloured outer sleeve.

Mechanical forms based on technical drawing techniques were used to record the forms of the chocolate bars by candidates in the lower mark ranges. The substitution of isometric construction methods often masked a reluctance to record from direct observation.

- (c) This was the most popular of all questions with some extremely inventive compositions of the highest level, and also many very ordinary submissions where little thought or in many cases very little first hand observation had taken place.

Better submissions explored the spaces between leaves and stems of interweaving growth. There were some good painterly responses with sensitive observations of colour and tonal relationships. Many at the highest levels had placed their plant on a window sill or viewed it against an open window. Some had placed the plant on its side and allowed the soil to spill out of the pot. Dutch seventeenth century flower painting had obviously been a good influence here.

Strong lighting was used to cast shadows onto surrounding surfaces which were used as a decorative feature on backgrounds. The more able candidates were aware of the subtle changes of tone and colour in these cast shadows.

Mid level work showed an ability to compose a picture but largely at the expense of the form of the plant.

Candidates in the lower mark ranges produced colourful decorative images but these were based more on imagination than observation.

A wide range of containers was represented, although weaker candidates tended to ignore this aspect of the question. Many, at all ability levels had problems recording the parallel ellipses of the flowerpots.

Question 3, Human Figure

- (a) Very few submissions for this option, and generally from the better able candidates. There were studies of young children, mothers and children, and school friends, all recorded with accuracy. Those that had included two figures had carefully considered the arrangement of the figures, either to create interesting overlapping and entwining forms, or to create negative spaces between the forms. Good use was made of dramatic lighting, either by using reading lamps or by placing the subject against a window.
- (b) The best submissions for this option had made extensive and detailed studies of all aspects of the question. Candidates used digital photography as an appropriate research tool capturing the subject from many different angles as well as recording details of hands holding the phone. The proportion and structure of the hand holding the phone presented problems for many candidates, but those in the higher mark range achieved a very high standard of accuracy in recording such complex forms.

Weaker candidates, whilst using photography, had worked from a single image and their transcriptions were nearly always flat and lacking in modelled form and structure.

Many had attempted to portray people shouting, smiling or crying whilst using the phone which added to the interpretative qualities of the composition.

Question 4, Interiors and Exteriors

- (a) This was the most popular choice for this section, although many had just produced a view of a bridge rather than exploring the idea of a view under a bridge.

The best submissions had really exploited the abstract geometric qualities of struts and supports, especially when seen in contrasting light and shadow. The arch of the bridge was often used to create a "picture within a picture" and the most successful were able to use aerial perspective to achieve a sense of space.

Although many had featured water in their compositions few had resolved the differences in reflective qualities. However there were some very successful night scenes which provided the opportunity for coloured reflections of street lights shown on the surface of rippled water.

Weaker candidates tended to work from a single view of their subject which was rehearsed and repeated so often that there was a steady decline in the standard of their final piece. The complex structures and perspective of the curvature of the undersides of arched bridges exposed the lack of understanding of one point perspective.

Some very weak submissions had made very poor copies of village and stream scenes from postcards.

- (b) River views and beach scenes were very popular but most were poor copies from photographic sources. Although many had used their own photography, most were open views where little attention had been given to observing the effects of reflections seen in water.

The best had focused their research and looked at more detailed subject matter which included swimming pools, fountains, rock pools and people drinking from containers of water including cupped hands.

- (c) Responses to this option were generally much more personal and based upon the candidate's own first hand research within the home, using the kitchen or a bathroom sink; or using sinks within the art room.

There were some very individual compositions which included reflections seen in bathroom mirrors, sometimes with figures washing or applying make-up.

Detailed views of sink taps, plug holes and items within the sink afforded the opportunity for differences of texture and surfaces to be rendered as well as abstract compositions to be used. Running water from taps as well as the spiralling effect of water running down the plug hole featured in some of the best work.

At the other extreme of the ability range candidates chose to adopt a more distant viewpoint of the sink. The entire room was illustrated and inherent weaknesses in the perspective views of tiled wall and floors were very much in evidence.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/02
Interpretative Study

General Comments

As usual, the majority of submissions seemed to rise to the challenge with a wealth of different ideas and approaches, and many submissions were highly individual, personal and well thought through. The most popular question, representing over 30% of responses this session was **Question 6**, *A secret place*, closely followed by **Question 4**, *In the night*, with almost as many responses. Two other questions were also fairly popular, **Question 2**, *The old and the new* and **Question 5**, *Zigzag*. **Question 3**, *The wheel of fortune* was the second least popular and the least answered was **Question 1**, *Compression*, with fewer than 10% of candidates choosing it.

As always, it was a pleasure to see some highly sensitive and individual responses produced by the candidates taking this paper. It is rewarding to know what young people everywhere feel and think about the world around them and that they can respond to it in a personal and often sensitive way through the vehicle of art. Those at the very top end of the mark range produced some very adept work that showed considerable control over the materials used. Submissions from these candidates were full of excellent personal, resourceful and creative ideas.

This session saw evidence of overall continuing improvement in the understanding of the aims and objectives of this paper. This was evidenced by the quality of research and preparation, particularly when candidates referred to primary sources and informed their work by drawing inspiration from relevant historical or contemporary artists. Traditional painting and drawing media, such as watercolour, tempera, pastel and coloured pencil was the overwhelming choice of most with a drop in the number of candidates making use of more experimental materials or techniques, even such common media such as collage was not much in evidence. In some ways this is regrettable as it is always good to see new ways of using media and candidates making bold or interesting experiments. Risk taking can, in this paper, be worthwhile and no candidate will be penalized for being on the cutting edge of their capability or in trying out new ways of working. However, the highest level candidates used media in a mature way and produced work that reflected a confidence in the use of colour, tone, line and texture, with subtle or striking use of composition and understanding of how to convey meanings, mood and atmosphere in interpreting the set themes. Whilst not necessary, some candidates feel they need to write about what they are doing, and there was some very good annotation, justifying ideas, outlining their thoughts, choices and media use.

Of course not all produced work of quality, after all the subject caters for the full range of ability. At the lower end of the mark range there were a few submissions where the minimum of effort had led to the minimal success. It seems fairly obvious that working hard on the preparation will be very important to the quality of the final examination piece; however some candidates seem to miss this point.

The amount of time and energy spent on the preparatory work does seem to vary widely. Within the time from the receipt of the question paper to the time of the examination itself, all candidates have at least three weeks and most have a month or more to get ready. The vast majority of candidates engage seriously with the task and do very well at producing extensive and really interesting supporting studies in this time, and really join in with the free ranging interpretative spirit of this paper. Others, thankfully a very small minority, do not seem to use the time wisely and seem disinterested in doing much work on thinking about their response, doing any research, developing ideas or seeking out resources. Sadly, it is still the case that some very weak candidates use their preparatory time in a very limited manner judging by this lack of preparation and the poor quality of the final work submitted. Evidence from a thankfully small handful of candidates would indicate no more than an hour or so is spent working out what their final piece is going to be based on. It is worth pointing out that even very weak candidates can benefit hugely in making the effort to do some preparatory work. They miss the opportunity to gain marks from developing ideas, experimenting with different media techniques and processes, choosing ideas from a range of possibilities and then developing it in some further depth.

Others, even of very modest ability, are commendable for their struggle to work from well selected primary or secondary sources, drawing or taking their own digital photographs and genuinely try to develop personal ideas. It is good to see these candidates rising to the challenge in producing work that is often innovative, exciting and imaginative, even if limited by a lack of skills in using media effectively. Through the process of investigation they take their achievements to a higher level, whatever its aesthetic merit, and are rewarded for their efforts.

Secondary sources such as magazines or the Internet are often useful to generate ideas and using photographs wisely from these sources can be helpful to provide relevant information. Several responses to the question, *A secret place*, for example, were based on geographical locations that would have been impossible to visit. However, it should be noted that candidates are advised to go beyond the found imagery, and endeavour to use such secondary source material with care as a starting point to work from or interpret rather than doing a straightforward copy. Wherever possible, it is wise to include at least some research from relevant primary sources and thereby improve the quality of the gathered information. Even if, for example, the candidate is relying on a photograph of a distant jungle, desert or mountain range, there is always benefit to be found in making observational studies, say, of houseplants with similar leaf colours and shapes as jungle plants or of stones and rocks to try and understand the tonal qualities and structures of rocks that might be found in the desert or mountain range.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1 Compression

This was the second least attempted question. Some of the better candidates responded initially in a literal way and made good use of the preparation time to observe and sketch such things as squashed cans before starting to get a wider range to their ideas. Other ideas attempted ranged from rugby scrums, corsets, headaches, diving, fish shoals, and crushing machines to global political problems between countries. There were some pieces where candidates had drawn metal springs and cogs and these were then developed into more abstracted imaginative designs. There were a few paintings involving a jack-in-the-box which were sometimes successful.

The title was used by some candidates to signify or symbolize personal pressures or of a difficulty in life or in society at large. This proved to be a successful response in many cases, and some really sought out ways of showing compression visually through extensive drawing from life, posing friends in appropriate ways to model compression for their studies. Putting a friend or sibling in a cardboard box and drawing or photographing them was seen several times. One extreme example was wrapping somebody in cling film. There were one or two interesting responses that grew into a wider context involving the 'pressure' on young people and teenagers in terms of pressure from doing well in examinations, growing up, fitting in to society and relationships.

At the higher mark range, some candidates used media in a way that heightened the mood and atmosphere of the topic, with the compression emphasised through line, shape, colour and tone. Strong contrasts of light and dark were used with success, as were clashing colours such as pale blue and scarlet. Graphic mark-making and brush strokes conveyed the energy and power of compression, sometimes to the extent of the work becoming almost abstract. Generally speaking, few weaker candidates attempted this question, but where they did responses were limited to literal images of squashed things, often not observed, drawn or painted very well.

Question 2 The old and the new

This was one of the most widely used starting points, especially by candidates representing the mid and lower ranges of accomplishment. Within the differing responses, its open ended nature provided candidates with the possibility of a wide range of subjects ranging across various old and new objects, human beings and machinery. Some of the very best work came from candidates setting up still lives of their subject matter and working from them: one memorable piece came from a candidate who set up a range of antique and modern communication devices – telephones and such like. One candidate made a telling piece of work based on the popularity of plastic surgery, whilst another concentrated on the reflections of old architecture in modern office block windows. There was an interesting piece that looked at fruit rotting and compared it with new fruit.

Often, with the weaker submissions, a line down the middle of the page would suffice to divide the paper into two sections in a very obvious manner merely producing an old and new image side by side without considering composition, scale and viewpoint.

Cars, houses, fashion, all kinds of consumer goods got the simple comparison treatment. Age and the comparison between babies and older people also occurred quite frequently. Overall the quality of recording was quite competent but the originality of the thinking was not always apparent.

Question 3 The wheel of fortune

This was not a very popular question, possibly because for many candidates it appeared restrictive and orientated towards gambling, a route that some candidates chose with not much success and found difficult because of the suggested circular composition of a roulette wheel. Candidates that managed to take a broader view, seeing the wheel of fortune as a metaphor, tended to produce much stronger compositions. World problems, human problems, the zodiac, and genetics were less common. More innovative interpretations and, in particular, one notable submission where a candidate produced a very evocative study of figures in an amusement arcade, were very good and well observed.

There were one or two good responses to this question where changes to lifestyle, success or failure and the effects of it featured. There were several spinning wheels with various ideas drawn on the sections. There were some using tarot cards or the like to suggest prediction and others made reference to astrology. Graphic symbols, usually second hand were used here. Collage or mixed media was seen, using photocopies of paper money, playing cards and other items associated with gambling.

Question 4 In the night

This was one of the most popular questions, appealing to a wide range of candidates who were able to readily employ their imagination as well as their powers of observation. Some good photographs were also taken by candidates as a source for developing information and ideas. One good series of photographs were based on the lights seen in traffic at night, with lines of colour abstracting the images from the headlights and taillights of cars. This was developed into a rich and evocative painting. Some of the strongest work was developed from this theme with paintings that contained sensitive and suggestive images with expressive qualities, strong tonal contrasts and good use of colour to convey a mood and atmosphere of mystery, fear or drama. Links to the dreamlike qualities of Surrealism and Symbolism were seen in some candidates work as were references to vampires, ghouls, ghosts and beasts. Candidates who chose to work from street scenes were often successful in promoting mood and atmosphere through strong effects of colour balance being altered through neon and street lighting and deep shadow.

The seedier side of life featured and there were several with figures lurking on street corners, alleyways or outside nightclubs. There were several looking at the effect of moonlight on people and landscapes. This type of response produced some painterly work looking at colour and tonal control. Dreams, love and affectation, figures around camp fires and animals at night also featured. This question produced a wide range of responses.

Question 5 Zigzag

Possibly one of the most difficult questions for many to come up with ideas for, but unfortunately one which seduced the weaker candidates into using made-up random patterns that had no relationship to anything observed or with any understanding of how the motif of zigzags can be successfully used abstractly. This question was not widely popular although some Centres seemed to promote it and there were several multiple submissions from these. Some strong abstracted work was noted and was particularly successful when derived from the natural or man made world and taken through the process of synthesis, using line seen in architecture, animal patterning, leaf forms and the landscape. Some very good references were made to established artists, with a few op art 'like' designs produced with some skill and patience. However, these op art pieces often lacked much original thinking or sufficient refinement to work really well optically. There were some traditional patterns from various cultures, notably African and Islamic, and these were sometimes done successfully from groups of objects set up in a still life. There was one that looked at fish scales and developed some patterns from there. A few incorporated the theme into fashion designs using zigzag motifs.

Question 6 A secret place

This was the most popular question and enabled candidates to make a very personal approach to their work by concentrating on innermost thoughts, spiritual beliefs or those secret places in the physical world which we all have and seek out when we want to be alone to reflect. Trees, gardens, rivers and streams figured as well as boxes in which special things were hidden. There was a wide range of levels of achievement, with

some weaker candidates using, for example, a Disney inspired palace in the sky. Others produced images of secret gardens and secret rooms. One or two more creative candidates developed ideas based on a 'secret place in your heart or head' or a secret in your past. Once again, candidates who took time to think around the question and not go for the obvious response tended to do better.

General comments

Most candidates used paint, generally tempera, acrylic or powder colour. Dry media such as chalk and oil pastel, as well as coloured pencil were commonly used and there were also some inks being used. Generally, photography, where seen, was employed by most candidates to inform their painted or drawn work, and where the candidates took the time to actually go out with a digital camera they were generally better resourced than solely using downloaded images from the Internet or images cut out of magazines. An increasing amount of strong research work is seen with really good set ups posed by candidate's friends – hands, faces in various emotional states, body poses and so on – and the increasing use digital photography to go out and record street scenes, landscapes and the built environment is generally welcome where quick and easy information is sought. All of these activities are worthwhile, with the eye and brain being usefully employed in seeking and looking for valid information, rather than choosing readymade imagery straight from a secondary source. Found images, from the Internet or from magazines, should be used only where anything else is not practical or possible, and limited to information or reference only rather than as a primary source merely to copy from. Examiners like to see as much evidence as possible to show the development of ideas and techniques, it therefore follows that if images from secondary sources are used these should be included by the candidate in their submission of preparatory work. Drawing from life should never be seen as second best – it is by far the most useful way to understand ones subject.

Administration was usually very good indeed, but some labels were not in the right place, or were not attached at all, some work was not tied together and there was too much over size work, much larger than the stipulated A2. A few Centres persist in using heavy mounting card which is a total waste of resources. Please allow plenty of time for work to dry before packing, and avoid at all costs putting plastic over acrylic or oil paint, however dry it might seem, as it invariably becomes stuck fast to the paint and obscures the work. Some layering of smaller work stuck on top of other work on preparatory sheets can be difficult to see clearly, and plenty of chalk pastels are still not fixed properly.

It is worth noting that question papers are available electronically as soon as the hard copies are despatched to Centres. These can be accessed via CIE direct and they can, if desired, be given to the candidates as early as you want. Wide research, investigation and reflection should give opportunities for candidates to test out their ideas, to develop new or alternative investigations and to refine their techniques and use of media. This means that often the preparatory work will need to be an edited version of the work done by the candidate before the examination, with some ideas or experiments left out and just important evidence of the route taken included. The Art Teacher who knows the candidate is in the best position to know their candidate's stamina and commitment, and how the preparatory time is structured and its length is ultimately their responsibility. However, no candidate should be in a position within the time of receipt of examination paper to the date of the control test to not prepare really thoroughly, and be able to submit good evidence in their preparatory work to show the experiments and research they have undertaken.

Standards are now available online for this examination, from the CIE website. At present this is limited to one set from one session, but it is hoped that more will be posted as soon as practicably possible. The files contain images in an easily downloadable portable document format and give a good representative flavour of the kind of work submitted at all levels of achievement. Teachers should log onto the Teacher Support Area, using their Centres ID. These images are downloadable and the files can be saved, feel free to use them in your teaching. Past papers can be found in the same place, as well as Principal Examiners reports.

The On Line discussion group for Art Teachers is also a useful tool and a great way of sharing ideas, problems and methods. This too can be accessed through the CIE website.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/03

Design Study

General Comments

By far the most popular question was **Question 1**, *Design using lettering* attracting over 70% of the candidates. **Question 2**, *Illustration and Calligraphy* and **Question 6**, *Fabric Design*, were the second most popular choices. **Question 5**, *Fashion Design* was the next most popular choice, but a substantial amount of work was received for **Question 8**, *Photography* and **Question 4**, *Interior Design*. There were far fewer submissions for **Question 3**, *Environmental/Structural Design* and **Question 7**, *Printmaking*.

While the number of submissions at the lower levels of the mark range remained similar to previous years, the percentage of higher level achievements, noted after the last session, has continued to increase. The most successful responses generally came from Centres that used the question paper selectively to specialize in the teaching of two or three of the design areas offered. Although this sometimes led to a formalised procedure for the research and evaluation of ideas in the preparatory sheets, there was no doubt that personal thinking, confidence and technical expertise had developed in the work of the ten hour examination. It was also noticeable that such Centres incorporate into their teaching the selection and use of appropriate media, materials and processes, including digital recording and computer manipulation, to enhance clear graphic communication. By contrast the less successful submissions were limited in research, development of ideas, use of media and, often, an understanding of the specific design problems of the chosen questions. Much of the weakest work showed a poor knowledge of design practice with some candidates exposed to very little prior experience in their coursework before being entered for this paper.

The majority of submissions were well presented with the examination work firmly attached to the front of the preparatory sheets, clear labelling and sensitive mounting. Preparatory work dominated by images cut and pasted from secondary sources can, however, obscure a candidates intentions, so it is beneficial for Teachers to advise candidates how to present their work more selectively for assessment. Similarly, over-elaborate mounting of smaller studies on several layers of card which add considerable weight to a submission, and the use of collage elements which do not remain attached to the work, should be discouraged.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Design using lettering

The logo design for a company named **ARK**, which operates sea and river boat cruises, was undertaken by a quarter of all candidates, with work received throughout the ability range. Many very able responses were seen, the best of which had developed from thorough research of boats to integrate with appropriately selected letterforms. A high level of refinement was evident in the selective use of linear emphasis, colour and tone for figure-ground shapes, borders and shadows. Luggage labels or signboards incorporating the logo were also given full consideration in terms of their respective scale, and often shown either attached to suitcases or placed in a particular setting of an embarkation point.

At the mid levels of achievement a competent understanding of the design problem was apparent in the development of interesting boat shapes and choice of letterforms. However, in the preparatory work, exploration and refinement of the relationships of line, shape, colour and tone were more limited or ceased once a single idea had emerged. Less successful responses tended to develop ideas for boats or lettering separately with very little concern to integrate shapes in a design which worked as a whole. The weakest submissions offered either clumsily invented boat shapes with lettering added as an afterthought, or crudely drawn letterforms in isolation, with no attempt to answer the demand of the question to show the logo on a label or a signboard.

Question 2*Illustration and Calligraphy*

- (a) The poster design to advertise a popular musical event, entitled **MOVERS & SHAKERS**, promoted by a company named **Dreamscape**, attracted by far the most responses to this question. The majority of candidates were personally motivated by their own musical tastes to develop lively rhythmic designs with dynamic colour schemes. Most submissions showed a genuine understanding of the design process, demonstrated through the stages of development from the research of figures and letterforms to the refinement of line, colour and tone towards the final solutions of examination pieces. In the best examples typography was considered as a design element with font size, spacing, balance, tone and colour fully integrated with the rhythm of the illustrations. The most adventurous designs also grew from direct observation of musical instruments and dramatically lit gyrating bodies, digitally recorded then manipulated through computer processes.

Mid level responses were also very lively but tended to depend quite heavily on downloaded images of silhouettes of disco dancers. Although many of these images were seen repeatedly in the work from different Centres they were usually experimented with quite inventively to develop competent colour and positive-negative tonal contrasts with the surrounding space. The fewer less successful submissions mainly suffered from dispersing images of figures and instruments of a similar scale across the poster format with the title, date and venue information filling the gaps in arbitrary manner.

- (b) Although there were fewer responses to the Calligraphy option, this choice has grown considerably in popularity in recent sessions, with more candidates able to demonstrate competence and expertise through practised calligraphic hands, as well as integrate scripts sensitively with illustrations. Some Centres, however, presented very refined examination work without enough preparatory developments to show how the final solution had been arrived at or where the imagery for illustrations originated from, and this inevitably limited the marks awarded for research and investigation.

A. W. E. O'Shaughnessy's evocative poem, **We Are The Music Makers**, also contained the phrase 'movers and shakers', so it was to be expected that some of the illustrative imagery would echo the dancing rhythms of the poster design for **Option (a)**. However, most candidates were more attracted to conveying the imagery of 'dreamer of dreams', 'desolate streams' and 'pale moon gleams' to enhance the mood of their designs. Those who were willing to be experimental with the spacing and layout of the text in their preparatory developments generally achieved the best results. Work at the mid levels of achievement was often boldly executed but lacked subtlety and refinement in relation to illustrations or border decorations. In some responses, for example, the illustrations of musicians, instruments and moonlight were scattered around the text, rather than integrated with it. The weakest submissions consisted of poorly spaced and uneven scripts, with little thought given to colour or other decorative additions.

Question 3*Environmental/Structural Design*

Very few responses were received for this design brief for a water chute at a swimming pool. One excellent and several very competent attempts were seen from candidates who understood the need to show ground plans as well as a view of the chute in relation to a distinctively shaped pool. A familiarity with architectural plans and drawings informed communication of structures, the use of materials and spatial distribution, and a selective choice of media, such as black ink and colour washes, added clarity and precision to the final outcomes. The less successful attempts were hampered by a limited ability to create spatial recessions and a lack of understanding of the demands of the question; it was apparent that some candidates had no previous experience of responding to such a design problem.

Question 4*Interior Design*

The design of a stained glass window for the entrance hall of a transport terminus attracted only a moderate number of submissions, but most candidates were motivated by a good perception of the design problem which led to some very interesting outcomes. Although candidates understood that they were not expected to have had experience of actually working in stained glass, they researched the strengths and limitations of design practice very thoroughly and were, therefore, able to transfer its characteristics successfully to their two-dimensional designs on paper. Preparatory experiments were particularly lively, even when initial research derived from downloaded images of buses, trains, planes or ships. The best examples showed a strong involvement in exploring effective shapes in which colour distribution; light and scale played a major part. The fewer less able submissions lacked an understanding of how the leaded framework holding the different segments of glass together needed to be considered as an integral part of the design. Some of the weaker responses made no attempt to design for a window but offered elementary paintings of an aircraft or a locomotive instead.

Question 5*Fashion Design*

Over 10% of candidates undertook one of the three themes offered for the costume design for a receptionist at a restaurant specialising in regional dishes. *South East Asia* was the most popular choice, followed by *The Mediterranean* with fewer submissions for *Central America*. The work received for this question was generally very accomplished and well presented, with candidates relishing the opportunity to research distinctive culinary styles, fruits, vegetables and other relevant cultural artefacts or decorative motifs. The most able responses used such information with expertise to develop the forms, structures, colours and surface qualities of costumes, including headdress, footwear and accessories. Several outstanding outcomes were based on directly observed figure studies to inform the postures and poses of models; these were developed through a confident use of media, front and back views as well as suggested fabrics towards highly personal and stylish final solutions.

At the mid levels of achievement initial research was always well motivated by the chosen theme, but less concern was apparent for the form of costumes because candidates tended to rely on secondary sources to extract flat silhouettes for models' poses. Some of the least successful candidates were inhibited by poor attempts to present their ideas as worn by the receptionist, or showing instead flat shapes of empty costume as if seen on a clothes hanger.

Question 6*Fabric Design*

The repeat pattern for a carrier bag for the gift shop of a *Museum of Anthropology* or *Natural History* attracted a very large number of candidates, second only to **Question 1**. Many excellent and several outstanding responses were received which were thoroughly informed by research and recording from the chosen source, such as skeletal and bone structures, ethnic artefacts or flora and fauna. Some of these investigations were clearly based on actual visits to such museums. Candidates from a few Centres were also concerned to show on a reduced scale how the pattern would actually look on the bag, and others went even further by designing the bag as a three-dimensional package by including pattern variations for the sides as well as the front or back. Inevitably, the strongest outcomes resulted from structured teaching of repeat pattern techniques which also encouraged individual colour mixing for distinctly personal developments of ideas.

Mid level achievements generally researched appropriate sources but rarely engaged in exploring design developments other than basic mirror repeats. A lack of awareness of figure-ground relationships, shifting, cropping and positive-negative counter changes led to outcomes which were stilted or contrived, rather than dynamic, naturally flowing or rhythmical. Many candidates at this level may have been attracted to this question by the potential of the source material but had possibly not gained enough prior experience of repeat pattern techniques to develop their research to a higher level. The weaker submissions, however, relied on scant information to present crudely drawn shapes rendered in parallel rows with unmixed colour, straight from the paint pot.

Question 7*Printmaking*

There were a small number of responses to the three themes for prints for a particular month of a calendar. A *religious or national festival* attracted the most candidates, followed by *an architectural landmark* and only two attempts for a *waterside event*. None of the work seen showed a high level of primary research or a personal development of ideas; even the better submissions were based on information of secondary sources and progressed no further than basic single colour relief prints. A number of weaker interpretations using stencils were seen, but there were few attempts to fulfil the requirements of considering the actual placement in a calendar. Candidates should not be encouraged to answer this question unless they have gained some experience with a particular process of the craft and are able to research specific sources to develop ideas for design application.

Question 8*Photography*

A substantial number submitted photography for the three themes offered for a leaflet for a charity appeal. *Urban renewal* attracted the most responses with much depending on the particular locations chosen for investigation. Candidates who were willing to search for interesting juxtapositions of machinery, scaffolding, and stacks of materials, heaps of rubble and construction or demolition workers recorded the most interesting viewpoints, in which spatial recessions and tonal range evoked a sense of activity. Less successful outcomes arose when views from below of cranes and scaffolding resulted in predictable silhouettes with very dull tonal distinctions elsewhere in the compositions. Weaker submissions failed to rise above the level of unselective snapshots of very uninteresting building sites.

Although not quite so many responses to *Care of the aged* were received, most of the best results for the question as a whole were for this theme. Several excellent submissions grew from sensitive and mature recording in specific care home locations. A strong concern for directional lighting enhanced moving portrayals of care workers assisting their charges with everyday tasks, such as eating, dressing or washing. The very best of these came close to evoking the qualities of a Caravaggio or a Rembrandt. The fewer less successful approaches offered little more than snapshots of elderly relatives and lacked a sense immediacy needed for a charity appeal leaflet.

Fewer candidates attempted the theme of *Educational provision* but the results were mostly lively, focusing on interesting groupings of children or teenagers working in classrooms, studios, workshops and music rooms. A good number of very successful responses were seen, which would, indeed, have attracted interest and attention if seen in a charity appeal leaflet.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/04

Critical and Historical Studies

General comments

More Centres entered a similar number of candidates this session. Studies were generally well researched and presented and made good use of local and wider resources. The actual subject matter varied depending on the environment and as such the submissions had quite a distinctive and unique feel to them.

A number of candidates had 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 and photographs taken at these sessions were all used to good effect.

Excellent work was often carried out using computer aided design programmes. Images were often very clear and well labelled. The strongest submissions were those where candidates had built up a body of research materials and visual evidence for their projects and then refined it for a final write up and presentation. The very best work showed that the candidates had an engaged involvement and had fully developed their ideas. As was the case last year, first hand contact with art works and exhibitions was a major factor in many of the more highly successful outcomes.

Weaker submissions were sometimes untidy and poorly managed with little attempt to relate images to text or even label images correctly. The balance of text and images should be maintained throughout the study and presentation needs to be well organised. In many of the weaker submissions the display was often haphazard with random 'cutting out' so that the overall look was untidy. As a coursework component candidates have time to ensure that the presentation is well considered and appropriate.

A number of candidates effectively illustrated their projects with their own photography and their own sketches, giving a personal touch to their work. However there were some problems with candidates who submitted their own art work which bore no relation to the chosen theme, this unfortunately did not help to clarify the objectives of the study.

Centres need to be more mindful of the syllabus requirements for this component. In some cases there was a tendency to place too much emphasis on elements of the candidates own practical art work resulting in superficial text and critical analysis. Whilst it is possible to respond in a practical manner the study must show the development of critical thinking and analysis, this in turn may be supported by the candidates own practical work.

Where photocopies and down loaded images are used these should be as clear as possible as poor reproduction quality gives a weak impact to the study. Handwritten submissions are permissible but they must be clear and tidy without endless crossing out. Candidates have the time to ensure that the presentation is of a good standard and they should be encouraged to revisit and make their submissions look as good as possible.

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 0400/05

Coursework

General comments

Whilst results varied from Centre to Centre the general standard of work seen was much improved on previous years, with many more candidates reaching achievement levels of competent and above.

The most successful Centres prepare their candidates with care, building strong foundations by encouraging them to explore and experiment within the supportive framework of a well structured course that guides candidates through a series of experiences using observational work and appropriate ideas, media and processes. Many candidates from these Centres develop excellent personal qualities in their work and are confident enough to experiment freely and make valid independent judgements about the outcomes of their investigations. There were some outstanding submissions demonstrating a firm grasp of the assessment objectives. Final outcomes were ambitious, both in scale and content and were completed in a mature hand. There was a consistency in every piece of supporting work, and it was a pleasure to view work of such a high standard, where every piece had been well considered and executed with such loving care.

There were many examples showing evidence of highly competent technical skills, which only reached the mid to lower achievement levels. Whilst these candidates had gained confidence by practising their chosen media, the development of their ideas was limited by insufficient and poor research, usually based around a single idea. Work of an individual nature requires a personal input at all stages of development. Whilst the best work makes good use of first hand resources there are still far too many examples where candidates are still relying on secondary sources for the majority of their visual material. They seem content to cut images from magazines, or to download material from the Internet, and then to spend their time making copies directly from these. The resulting outcomes, at best can only be technically competent transcriptions, whilst most are just poor copies with very little personal input.

A handful of Centres still persist in presenting portfolios that are not selected, organised nor focused on one unit of work as stipulated in the syllabus. In such cases the Moderator is faced with a scrapbook-like range of unrelated work, some perhaps of decent quality but with inferior work mixed in, causing doubts about how well the candidate understands their achievements. It sometimes appears that the Centre has just sent the whole portfolio of everything the candidate has done during the course. It is not the course that is being assessed but the candidate's level of achievement at having experienced a course of study within a specialist area. This can easily be measured by looking at one project with about eight well chosen, edited supporting sheets, providing evidence of research and investigation; selection and experiments with media and processes; development of ideas leading to a final outcome.

A few Centres are still submitting work that is far larger than the maximum size of A1 stipulated in the syllabus. Work on CD can be accepted, but with the proviso that if it is not intended to be seen on a computer, TV or film screen then it should also be printed out on paper to show how it should look. This certainly applies to designs for book or DVD covers and usually with photography.

For additional support Centres can now view a selection of Standards of recent work online. They can also access online support from one of the CIE Examiners as well as sharing concerns and advice with other teachers from CIE Centres. Details are available on the CIE website.

Comments on areas of study

Painting and Related Media

Well over 90% of submissions came from this area of study. They covered the full ability range and candidates had resolved their ideas using an equally varied range of techniques and processes. Paintings predominated, but there were also many submissions using mixed media approaches, particularly employing collage techniques with varying degrees of success. A few submissions were confined to just pencil drawings.

There were many straightforward paintings, some on an ambitious scale, with a few executed as large murals. In every case each stage had been documented with photographs and there was enough evidence within the folder of work submitted to CIE to support the high ability levels of these candidates.

It is pleasing to see how many more Centres are encouraging their candidates to research the work of other artists and cultures; to identify how others have approached similar themes, or to learn something of how selected artists have used certain processes to achieve particular visual effects. The best entries managed to integrate this research with their own ideas and first hand research. Weaker submissions tended to spend much effort in making detailed slavish copies of selected artists' works.

Sketchbooks are increasingly being used to document the evidence of research and experimentation. This is fine providing that those pages relating to the final outcome are clearly identified. Sometimes sketchbooks contained far too much written information. Extensive notes documenting a particular process e.g. water colour painting, or copied information on artists. There is very little value in this approach when it is not supported with evidence of visual investigation relative to the final outcomes.

Some candidates attempted to make compositions that were more issue based, either drawing on personal issues, or more world wide concerns. The best of these were treated in a very mature way and all had based their initial research around first hand studies. There were many much more weaker submissions that had relied on secondary sources.

The world of fairy tale and fantasy featured, but these were usually amongst the weakest. Most of the imagery used was derivative and very poorly copied.

3D Studies

Here a wide variety of techniques were seen with the most successful submitting well organised folders that tracked the process of developing ideas and making the sculpture very clearly indeed. There was evidence of a real engagement and commitment where some candidates had attended workshops and in one case had dug and refined their own clay from raw.

The qualities in the final outcomes varied enormously, depending on just how much primary research had taken place early in the process. Some candidates studying animals, birds and flowers missed the opportunity to base their ideas on observational work. Even if secondary sources had been extensively used for animals difficult to shade first hand, this would have provided better building blocks towards more aesthetically pleasing outcomes.

The integration of two units of work was seen to be very successful where candidates had produced masks in a range of media and these had both inspired and been used as props in a painting project.

Examples of architectural model making were of a very high standard. Completed scale models were well researched using real sites on which candidates had developed their own ideas.

Basketry, weaving and beadwork achieved competent craft skills but candidates were mostly working to set designs and there was very little scope for personal ideas or development.

Graphic Design

Work seen for this option covered the full ability range. At the very highest level candidates used their own drawings from first hand sources as starting points for development on the computer. Lots of ideas were generated using overlays of images and relevant lettering. It was also clear that referencing to work of other artists had been used intelligently and had contributed to the design style of final outcomes of menu covers and advertising material for cafes and restaurants.

Some illustration was seen, again where images had been computer manipulated with some technical skill, but unfortunately they were highly derivative and failed to achieve anything above a competent level.

At the lower levels of the mark range were some poor attempts at logo designs and some examples of calligraphy where there was very little understanding of relating the written text to any images or patterns used within the final designs.

Photography

Only one Centre had used traditional black and white photography with candidates processing and printing from their own films. Their folders of work had been well organised and edited and rewarding individuals, in terms of their achievement, was an easy task.

Some excellent colour digital prints were received showing that the influences of other photographers had been well understood. Manipulation in Photoshop had brought out interesting abstract qualities of chosen subjects. All this had been done with a sense of purpose and sensitivity towards chosen subjects.

There were examples of submissions received entirely on CDROM. This is not an appropriate medium to submit photography. Using a CDROM to send up to thirty or forty images, few of which have been identified as final pieces, avoids one of the main objectives of this syllabus in making judgements above work, refining it, developing it to make it better in some way and reaching a final outcome.

A work book filled with ideas and contact strips or a series of early photographs with thumbnail images printed to show a genesis of image making followed with larger prints, as the work proceeds makes moderation and the application of the assessment objectives much more relevant. If the candidate chooses to provide more than one final print then this is possible or if they want to submit a short series of images that provide a narrative or a short commentary on different aspects of their topic.

Fashion and Textile Design

There were some excellent and very individual submissions. Chosen themes which were generally based around plant or natural forms had been researched in some depth through direct drawings supplemented with the candidates own photography. Their studies had been simplified and further developed through several stages towards several versions of their final designs. Different colour schemes had been tried. In addition there was also evidence of experiments and trial samples of craft processes so that final pieces were finished to a high skills level as well as being well designed.

Those designing for fashion made final garments which had been modelled and photographed for inclusion in folders. In one case photographs of their garments being shown in a School fashion show were submitted.

A few weaker entries showed evidence of research and design skills but their final textile outcomes had little relationship to earlier studies. They were unable to evaluate the information they had collected, or to fully understand to process of developing designs suitable for their chosen craft.