ART & DESIGN

> **Paper 0989/01**
> **Coursework**

From the March 2025 series, we will no longer accept hard copy submission. If you send us hard copy work, we will return it to you un-marked. For details on how to submit work, please refer to the _Guidance on the Administration and Online Submission of Art & Design_ for 2025.

Key messages

- There was a noticeable increase of work where candidates had selected and edited their coursework to communicate the progression of ideas more clearly.
- There was an increase in portfolios that demonstrated the candidates' ability to research a single theme visually. This was done through thoughtful recording, exploration of media and development of ideas, informed by relevant artists that directly informed the outcome.
- Candidates are not required to annotate their work, but annotations can help the examiner to understand their intentions. When annotation is included, it should be legible.
- Teachers are reminded to consider the suitability of the candidates' approach to certain topics and themes. There was an increase in inappropriate content and the use of inappropriate materials such as the inclusion of broken glass, tattoo needles and prescription medicine, safeguarding and or compliance concerns were raised with centres in all cases.

General comments

Painting and drawing with pastels, charcoal, markers and collage were the most popular media. Photography was often included and used to record ideas and initial source material. Digital media, graphic design, fashion and textile outcomes and the inclusion of some 3D experiments were also seen. The best work seen included recording from direct observation, demonstrating a personal response. Submissions at the lower attainment level relied on secondary images. This work lacked focus and engagement, preventing development. Candidates selected individual themes to explore, with many demonstrating good personal engagement. Relevant and appropriate annotation supported the practical work and final outcomes were informed by the portfolio.

Higher levels

Submissions at this level were focused and candidates were clearly engaged in their chosen theme. Portfolios demonstrated high levels of recording from direct observation which was thoughtful and subject matter was carefully selected to explore the chosen theme in original and mature ways. Candidates were systematic in their investigations and presented visible artist connections and coherent and relevant annotation. At this level candidates were able to select appropriate contextual sources to inform the development of their work.

Candidates explored a range of media to develop their themes and ideas, looking to the work of other artists to inform media use and provide new ways of working. At this level work demonstrated confident technical skills and candidates were willing to take risks, such as exploring different ways to apply the media. Candidates were then able to analyse which media and method was most effective to fully realise their intention. Many candidates used printing techniques creatively in their submissions which added to their media exploration.

Artists' research helped inform ideas through composition and concept development, colour use and choice of media, and led to fully informed final outcomes. Candidates were able to use self-reflection and critical analysis to make appropriate decisions for moving ideas forward. A range of ideas and alternative compositional possibilities were explored before producing the outcome which was directly informed by their research.

CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Middle levels

Submissions seen in the middle mark range were often inconsistent in their ability to develop ideas from initial observations. Most portfolios included initial studies from first-hand observations which were usually drawn in pencil with some sensitivity to texture and line. Often the candidates' own photographs were included alongside observational studies. These provided good starting points, but at times candidates were unsure how to take these initial observations forward to develop their work informed by media exploration, image manipulation and reference to other artists.

Candidates explored a range of ideas and created a variety of compositions but did not produce sufficient initial observations from which to further develop these ideas, and this impacted on their ability to create fully informed and personal outcomes. In some cases, there was too much written annotation which did not support the candidates' ability to develop their ideas visually.

Candidates often made copies of relevant artists' work which were competently produced in a range of media, but further ideas were not always informed from these early explorations. Artist studies can be useful to help candidates consider alternative ways of exploring media, subject content and to give meaning to their own ideas or techniques.

Generally, submissions in this middle mark range provided evidence of coherent journeys but would have benefitted from a much wider range of initial observations followed by more exploration of media and composition. This would have helped develop ideas to create a more resolved and personal conclusion in the final outcome.

Lower levels

At the lower mark range, there was a lack of focused observational studies to initiate the start of the creative journey. This restricted the candidate's depth of exploration and their ability to create a meaningful response to their chosen theme. Candidates at this level copied images that they had selected from the internet, as their starting points, while others drew from imagination without any references to first-hand sources and direct observation.

At this level, many candidates chose to work in coloured pencil, there was a lack of meaningful exploration of different media. When media exploration was included in the portfolio it was often not used to inform the candidates progression of work. For example, some candidates explored printing methods or 3D techniques, without any consideration about how this new medium might move the development of their project forward. Most candidates would have benefited from exploring the work of relevant artists to inform their media use and idea development. Where written contextual research was included, candidates sometimes did not provide visual references to support their comments, and at this level candidates were less able to make meaningful links with their own work.

It was often difficult to understand the 'read' the candidates journey, their initial idea and development was disconnected to the final outcome. Frequently the work was presented as a disjointed body of work with little consideration to the presentation. Sometimes, photographs showing the process of making the final outcome, was incorrectly considered to be development. More time spent considering a composition, using thumb nail sketches for example, could help these candidates bring their ideas together into a more fully resolved final outcome.

ART & DESIGN

Paper 0989/02
Externally Set Assignment

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Key messages

- Overall, there was a noted improvement in submissions showing evidence of work that covered all the assessment objectives and the supporting studies had clearly informed the final outcome.
- Teachers are reminded to consider the suitability of the candidates' approach to certain topics and themes. There was an increase in inappropriate content and the use of inappropriate materials such as the inclusion of broken glass, tattoo needles and prescription medicine, safeguarding and or compliance concerns were raised in all cases.
- There was increased evidence of AI generated work which was, in most cases, annotated and accredited correctly. The use of AI was most successful when used alongside the candidate's original studies or photography to develop and present ideas.

General comments

Candidates do not have to annotate their work but where they do the annotations must be relevant and concise. There were many examples of copious written work, mostly biographical in relation to artists, or explanations of processes used by the candidate. Few of these added meaningful insights to the development of the work and in most cases, candidates could have used their time more effectively on their practical work instead.

Candidates explored a wide range of media in response to the starting points, including traditional wet and dry media, photography, printmaking, design, textile design, digital manipulation and some sculpture. The strongest work developed from first-hand observation, in conjunction with self-taken photographs and had used relevant artists and secondary source material. Ideas were developed logically from this visual investigation to fully inform the final outcome.

The most successful work referred to relevant artists for inspiration and the development of ideas as well as prompting media use and application. Some submissions did not include any supporting studies, this severely affected achievement predominately across AO1 and AO3.

Higher levels

The strongest work demonstrated an innovative and original approach that showcased excellent technical skills. Candidates demonstrated mature and thoughtful exploration of ideas, thorough experimentation with media, and a personal aesthetic touch derived from first-hand sources. At this level submissions were highly personal in nature and demonstrated a meaningful interpretation of the selected question.

Often candidates drew from interesting angles and viewpoints and dissected their images, exploring the properties of their subject matter and media.

The question, 'Glass containers', allowed for higher level achieving candidates to explore distortions, transparency and layering through careful selection, control and use of media. Artist research was evident and used effectively to build ideas and concepts.

The strongest candidates selected appropriate artists and expertly analysed their work to inform and develop their own work. This analysis led to successful work that was not simply copied but fully understood, providing skills and techniques that were fully utilised to enhance their own ideas and concepts.

Examples of photography submissions were seen, and these were presented as final pieces that reflected aesthetic awareness and technical proficiency particularly where candidates had used light and fragmentation to achieve some innovative results.

Candidates continued to extend and evaluate their first-hand research throughout the supporting studies. This helped candidates to identify strengths and weaknesses leading to considered planning for the 15 hour-timed test. Digital manipulation and thumbnail sketches often pre-empted the test, formulating the most interesting compositions and outcomes to conclude their study. Candidates' intentions were fully realised and presented in a way that showcased their masterful visual understanding.

There was a limited amount of 3D work seen at this level.

Middle levels

Submissions seen at this level often demonstrated an imbalance across the assessment objectives. In many cases, ideas were original and inventive; however, the technical skills were not highly developed enough to communicate the concept in a successfully visual way.

Others demonstrated competent technical abilities but with little evidence of working from direct observation or the development of original ideas.

Attempts were made to develop ideas from photography and media studies; however, these were often literal. Here, the decision-making process was less informed and focused resulting in disjointed studies that did not always fully integrate to create coherent or logical journey.

Artist research was often included in the supporting studies and was mostly relevant to the candidates' own work. Often the influence demonstrated was derivative of the chosen artist's style and an in-depth understanding of the artist's intentions was not evident or integrated with subsequent work.

Although candidates showed a committed approach to their chosen question and often articulated their ideas clearly through annotation, some were less able to visually communicate their intentions.

Final outcomes did not always reflect the technical potential achieved in the supporting studies. This was sometimes due to poor judgement in relation to chosen media and sometimes due to a change in scale. Planning and self-evaluation were frequently lacking.

Lower levels

The weakest submissions contained limited primary sourced observations. Candidates relied on copying images from internet. Encouraging candidates to work from first-hand sources promotes conscious decision making. Firstly, the selection of the item or person in question, then about where to place the item and which angle to draw it from. These choices and decisions help the candidate to understand what they are drawing, the form and the texture and this in turn informs how they respond to the item and how to represent it.

Drawing solely from a secondary source, they have not made these important decisions about angle, background, and lighting so subsequent observational drawings are not as rich or personal. Considered and unique observations lead to more interesting ideas and this in turn inspires a better development of ideas.

Typically, the ability to select and control media was limited. Often studies consisted of simple line drawings in pencil or coloured in, copied images. Alternative compositions were not explored, and very little planning was evident.

The development of ideas was often the weakest area for these candidates who were unable to show a logical progression of ideas. The journey through the assignment was short and lacked cohesion.

Some evidence of research into the work of artists was seen but often it did not relate to the candidates' own work and therefore, did not inform further progression.

Candidates at this level often lacked the focus to analyse, reflect and refine their work effectively. This resulted in outcomes that lacked technical development and sometimes were unrelated to the supporting studies. Overall, candidates would have benefitted from spending more time trying out a range of compositions and planning for the final outcome before the timed test.

Some submissions only included the final outcome without any supporting studies which severely affected the marks they achieved, particularly in AO1 and AO3.