

ART AND DESIGN

<p>Paper 9479/01 Coursework</p>

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

- Where the candidate had clear intentions, this enabled candidates to sustain a focus. This enabled greater depth of investigation of the theme and purposeful development towards a resolved response.
- Many candidates identified a clear starting point which was relevant to their interests or strengths and encouraged first-hand study. This produced a stronger response which was developed into a coherent portfolio of work, that effectively informed the final outcome.
- There were some submissions where unnecessary and extensive written notes, similar to those required in Component 3: Personal Investigation, were evident. In this component, annotation should be concise and relevant to idea development, but the focus should be placed on the candidates' own practical work.

General comments

Most work was appropriately presented onto A2 sheets, with the strongest well organised and edited to show clear realisation of intentions. In some submissions, the layering of work with additional foldouts, prevented coherence. The AO4 Present also assesses candidates' ability to select the most relevant work. This can be achieved by reflecting on intentions and refining development.

Many submissions were highly engaged and contained meaningful work, evolving from in-depth first-hand investigation. There were clear responses to the assessment objectives, with the stronger work showing consistency across each. Useful annotation supported visual responses and indicated influences.

The variety of themes gave scope for personal interpretation. Scripts relating to people, portraiture and places, as well as objects, food, flora, celebrations, and sources from within the local environment, were all seen. Thoughtful submissions demonstrated the candidates' sourcing of available subject matter, enabling them to record and observe from first-hand experience. Visits to local exhibitions and investigation of contextual sources often stimulated and encouraged new ideas. In other work, the direction of ideas could be vague and over reliant on secondary sources, where first-hand recording could have been possible.

A diverse range of materials was chosen to interpret the subject matter, express ideas and emulate the manner of a chosen artist. Most realised their ideas through fine art media, but there was greater evidence of digitally created works. Most were used to benefit the development or recording processes and were referenced appropriately, including the use of AI. Photography, printmaking and design-based responses, including graphic design and fashion and textiles, as well as 3D processes, were also seen.

Higher Level

The portfolio clearly demonstrated the creative journey towards the final outcome. Well-structured submissions were underpinned by focused investigations from first-hand study, and other sources. Clear intentions were apparent, enabling these candidates to focus when exploring their chosen theme. Original ideas were enhanced by the careful presentation of relevant studies. The recording was personal and detailed, evolving from a wide range of first-hand subject matter. Drawings and other experimental studies were proficient and demonstrated a highly effective understanding of visual language.

Candidates built on existing media skills with confidence. Some extended these skills by engaging in artist-led workshops, experimenting with two and three-dimensional disciplines. As a result, they were able to seek different ways to convey ideas, by effectively translating the qualities in their subject matter, through media. There was an increase in the use of digital media to express ideas through alternative methods. Most candidates acknowledged the use of digital programmes and included evidence of each step of the process.

Accomplished photographic skills were also used to record ideas, through setting up photoshoots to inform composition and concept development.

Conceptual work was evident, supported by relevant first-hand recording and development. Investigating the works of other art practitioners and cultural contexts also encouraged critical understanding. This enabled candidates to be ambitious while developing ideas, encouraging them to refine their work as it progressed. Final outcomes were planned through composition arrangements and media trials. Sometimes the planning was informed by arrangement of visual elements, while other examples were informed by concept. Frequent reviewing of the work enabled the successful realisation of intentions.

Middle Level

Many candidates demonstrated competence in gathering research from a range of appropriate sources, demonstrating the scope for investigation. The recording often consisted of first-hand observation through a range of media and the candidates' own photography. Relevant secondary sources were also included. There was insufficient visual material in some of the work which prevented depth of study and meaningful development. At other times, preconceived ideas inhibited opportunities for growth. Imbalances in response to the assessment objectives highlighted the differences in being able to show technical skill, while developing an inventive concept. Some submissions illustrated many images which were not always connected, where candidates would have benefited from revisiting their intentions to maintain focus.

Many used fine art media and other combinations of materials to effectively record and develop, relevant to intentions. Others demonstrated inconsistent skills, unable to select the most suitable techniques to inform later ideas. Connections were made to contextual study, informing media rendering and applied to good effect, but not always with consistency. Exploring and experimenting with materials through the investigation of the theme, could have enabled some of these candidates to build on and refine their skills. Reflecting on their strengths at each stage of the work could enable candidates to use their media with purpose.

Visits to exhibitions and practising artists' studios frequently informed development. The discovery of an artists' creative process often influenced the candidates' own creative ideas. However, for some the development was not a strength in the work and could prove to be a challenge. The expression of ideas was limited or repetitive showing only minor colour or media differences, of a similar idea. At other times, insufficient initial studies prevented candidates from fully exploring ideas. In the lower range of this level, there was a tendency to copy the works of others, regardless of whether they were relevant to the work.

The presentation of the work was mostly coherent and communicated the creative process, but stronger links to the work of others, and the deeper investigation of subject matter would have enabled stronger development. This could have supported the direction of the work into a stronger realisation of intentions.

Lower Level

This work demonstrated limited research from primary or secondary sources; an over reliance on images from the internet; limited technical skill and weak development. The over reliance on secondary sources prevented personal growth and the ability to demonstrate an understanding of visual language. Recording often contained insufficient substance for exploration, where investigating from first-hand study could have enabled a foundation for development. Deeper consideration given to intentions at the beginning of the work, could have enabled purposeful planning to take place, to select a theme with possibilities for first-hand study.

Some candidates demonstrated satisfactory media skills in their research and idea try-outs but these were not developed further into coherent final outcomes. Others explored materials to explore different effects, but did not develop with refinement, later in the work. Most candidates lacked the confidence, or the purpose to work beyond using one or two familiar media, with little or no exploration of alternatives. Contextual referencing was evident and supported media rendering, but not always relevant to ideas or the chosen subject matter. Many candidates did not show the skill in analysing or interpreting the works of other artists, with purpose.

Development was frequently limited due to insufficient intentions or purposeful recording. The candidates' studies were often repeated or combined with secondary sourced images to form a final outcome, showing little personal investigation. Other submissions at this level included a final form that had little or no connection with the preparatory work. These candidates were not able to decide which ideas to explore in depth, so produced several unrelated ideas. The final outcome frequently did not evolve from an informed or connected body of work and was often unresolved or disconnected. The creative journey was often brief with little intention, direction or personal connection.

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<p>Paper 9479/02 Externally Set Assignment</p>
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Key messages

- Digital work and photography were seen across all ability ranges. This was most successful when the candidate clearly identified how the digital process had been used and included their own recording at some point, rather than simply manipulating secondary images.
- In most cases where AI generated work was included in the submission, it was annotated and accredited correctly.
- There was a noticeable increase in the amount of written work which was at times at the detriment of practical work.

General comments

Overall, work was well presented and followed a logical progression relating to the chosen exam question. The most common area of study was drawing and painting and related media. Other areas of study included photography, textiles, design, digital media, and sculpture. The most successful submissions included recording from first-hand sources. Photography was used as a valuable contribution to explore possible starting points.

Higher level

Work seen at this level demonstrated clear intentions enabling candidates to thoroughly investigate their chosen question from a wide range of relevant sources. The candidates' commitment was clear, and submissions included in-depth visual research from first-hand study. Recording was extensive and was informed by clear intention to investigate the chosen subject matter, rather than simply reproduce it. At this level, candidates carried out detailed investigations looking at different aspects of the object, scene or figure to inform their ideas. As the ideas evolved, candidates added to and expanded their investigations by taking more photographs or making more observational studies, providing opportunity for further development. The work was focused and well organised and communicated an excellent understanding of visual language.

Candidates referred to the work of relevant artists and selected reference material based on their personal interpretation of the work and how it related to their own ideas, making strong connections. They used their understanding of the work of others to stimulate ideas and drive their own work forward.

At this level the exploration of media was thoughtful and was carefully chosen to reflect the subject matter and intention. Candidates experimented with their chosen media and processes and confidently explored alternative possibilities. The best candidates took inspiration from their artist research to inform their media use and considered alternative approaches, rather than simply reproduce a copy.

The presentation of work at this level was coherent; the creative journey was fully explored showing a clear connection between the question and the candidates personal interpretation. This led to a final outcome that was fully resolved. The submissions were very full, lively and thorough. Work was conducted with an intensity and high level of engagement.

Middle level

Although some submissions at this level demonstrated evidence of technical skill in media use, there was an over reliance on secondary images. The use of first-hand studies is essential as it leads to a better

understanding of form, tone, texture, and colour and allows for more interesting mark making resulting in more personal work.

Other submissions seen at this level contained sufficient observational studies from first hand studies, but the supporting studies often lacked development of ideas. Some candidates went straight to their final outcomes with little planning or exploration of their ideas. Final outcomes were more coherent and successful where candidates had experimented with alternative compositions.

Media exploration was committed and investigated with purpose, but the technical skill level was inconsistent. Media use was often inventive and appropriately used to express ideas but where Digital media was used it was not always clear which images were the candidates own or how the candidate had developed their own ideas to produce the final outcome.

References to artists and other cultures were made in most submissions, but the ability to use this visual information to inform visual development, was less strong. In some cases, the artist selected for study was not relevant to the ideas being explored by the candidate and the connection was weak.

Lower level

Most submissions at this level demonstrated a lack of first-hand observation as the starting point for study. Candidates were less able to record with purpose and their intention was less clear. Where artist references were made, there was little connection or relationship between the ideas or approach by the candidate and their own observations.

Submissions at this level included hand-drawn studies which were mostly limited to line drawings, often traced and coloured-in showing no understanding of the use of line and tone, shape and form. Where photography was included, the images were taken with little consideration of elements such as light, composition and depth of field.

Use of media was varied; some submissions were limited by the range of media and the range in which it was applied. Others were limited by the lack of control and experimentation. Candidates showed stronger skill in control and application of media when copying the work of others but were not able to apply this to their own studies or the development of imagery.

Some candidates working at this level did not refer to the work of others to support their ideas or encourage new ways of seeing and working. Those that did refer to the work of others often chose examples that were irrelevant to the themes being explored and the candidate was unable to use the reference in a purposeful and meaningful way.

At this level there was little evidence of development within the submissions, most contained no evidence of planning of the composition for the final outcome which often showed little understanding of the visual elements. More reflection on the work as it progressed would have allowed candidates to identify their most successful ideas and media use and build on them to inform a more resolved final outcome.

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<p>Paper 9479/03 Personal Investigation</p>

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Key messages

- Whilst many submissions demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements of this component, there was an increase in submissions that lacked analysis of the work of others, contextual references or written analysis.
- Teachers are reminded that the Personal Investigation requires in-depth independent research and detailed analysis. The word count for the written content is 1000 – 1500.
- Many submissions worked towards one final piece rather than a coherent and integrated study of interconnected works in response to their contextual and visual exploration.
- The use of additional flaps should be avoided. More focused editing of the work would help to show the creative process more clearly. Presenting work across multiple formats demonstrated a lack of selection.
- Some work was irrelevant to the focus of the investigation.
- Candidates must clearly identify their own photography and first-hand recording.

General comments

Generally, work was well presented, and most candidates made interesting choices for their themes and were committed to their projects which often included gallery or artist studio visits.

Whilst many submissions effectively integrated the written analysis with the practical development there were many where the written analysis and practical work was not presented coherently, and the work was disjointed and disorganised. Many submissions focused on the practical work with little written analysis of artists work and how it had informed the candidate's response. Where there was a misunderstanding of the requirements of this component, the submission was more like Component 1: Coursework, and the low marks awarded reflected this.

There were good examples of experimentation with photography, different painting and drawing techniques, print making, textiles and 3D experiments with a range of materials and processes. Clear annotation was helpful when candidates submitted work that had been digitally printed; clearly identifying first-hand photography, observational studies and their own experiences.

In some submissions the written analysis did not always fully connect to the practical work, and this affected the depth and purpose of development.

There were many submissions that presented photos of the process of making an outcome, confusing this with the development of an idea informed by research into the work of others and wider reference material.

Some submissions focused on making a final outcome rather than a series of interconnected pieces that developed through reference material and experimentation.

Many of the practical responses contained imagery heavily borrowed from other artists work and excessive amounts of secondary imagery. There were many examples of candidates making little or no attempt to inform their own work through first-hand recording such as photography of their subject matter or observational drawing.

Submissions contained an excessive number of copies of the work of their chosen artists rather than focusing on how their chosen artists way of working or ideas could influence their own work.

Some submissions did not contain the even the minimum word count and many remained unresolved. There were many examples where the work was brief and did not reflect a sustained, in-depth investigation that is expected at this level.

Higher levels

Submissions at this level demonstrated a clear intention throughout the work. Investigation from first-hand studies and experiences was extensive and continuous, informing subsequent development of ideas.

Themes were wide ranging, from global social, political and environmental issues through to those with a more personal perspective. Initial ideas were developed from both primary and secondary sources, showing originality of thought and critical engagement. Candidates were able to make use of a wide range of source material, references and make connections between them through knowledge and personal experience.

Candidates made relevant links to artists and designers, demonstrating effective critical and analytical understanding. They were able to articulate their ideas and make clear observations using technical language appropriately. The written elements reflected and complemented the practical and creative work as it developed. Candidates were able to critically reflect on their work as it progressed, showing depth of influence and response within the written and visual elements of the investigation.

The candidates' application and selection of media was explored with sensitivity and depth, not only in relation to the subject matter and the potential of their chosen materials but also the concepts being investigated. The use of media demonstrated high levels of fluency and skill, an ability to be experimental and combine different approaches to communicate ideas effectively. For some candidates this involved working across 2D and 3D media. Many submissions at this level were able to view individual works as part of a much broader context, putting these within actual or photographic installations.

The presentation of the investigations was coherent and considered, demonstrating a clear thought process, high levels of personal engagement and motivation resulting in a body of resolved work both in terms of the written elements and practical outcomes.

Middle levels

Submissions at this level lacked consistency, with candidates unable to maintain a focused approach to their ideas and subsequent development. Typically, candidates were not able to sustain the same level of skill and sensitivity in their selection and application of media. While some portfolios were personal and involved, other examples were less engaged with their subject, showing less depth of enquiry to support a fully sustained and refined, resolved body of work.

Most candidates explored media influences from their artist study which were sometimes inventive, but not always refined. Some work included skilful translations of artist's works that tended to dominate the research, this restricted the candidates' ability to develop their own personal visual language through purposeful experimentation.

Some of the candidates' written work, whilst reflecting on their progression, simply described how well they had managed to render copies of the work of others. They were less able to critically evaluate their own achievement and consider the direction for further detailed development.

Where Art terminology was used to explain techniques or ideas, it lacked analysis. There was evidence of some candidates making good connections with their artist research which enhanced their creative responses and demonstrated a competent level of independence and engagement. However, many submissions lacked purposeful development, typically candidates would refer to two artists, comparing the work and then make an image of their own. In some cases, the candidates had gathered some primary images to use but there was little or no lead up to the outcome produced.

Some submissions focused on research into the work of others, demonstrating various levels of analysis and understanding, leaving their creative, practical response to the end of the investigation. The research dominated the submission, and candidates may find it more helpful to integrate their research, reflection and analysis alongside their own creative responses as their ideas develop.

The presentation of work was less coherent, often the investigation lacked a clear intention or personal connection.

Low levels

Submissions at this level often showed limited research skills, they sometimes included primary sourced material but often relied on secondary sources (text and images) copied directly from the internet. Often, the written work focused on biographical or historical fact rather than analysing the work of their chosen artists. The work seen at this level lacked coherence, direction and personal connection.

Often both the visual and written elements of the personal investigation was limited and did not relate to a specific idea. Media exploration often showed limited skill in recording and only a basic understanding of visual language.

At this level visual, recording and gathering was disconnected, preventing a visual development of ideas. While some candidates demonstrated technical skill in their media choice, the fragmented gathering of resources prevented them from building on these skills to produce an original and informed practical response. Most work lacked commitment and made little progress from initial ideas.

There was an over reliance on copying artists' works rather than using the information learned through purposeful investigation to influence the candidates' own ideas and practical work. When attempts were made to interpret or manipulate the artists concepts, these translations often reflected a lack of understanding or purpose.

The development of personal and creative work relied heavily on the work of others, there was a lack of personal engagement and clear ideas. A more focused approach to selecting a theme or subject matter may have provided direction in terms of progression and developing a sustained and individual body of work.