



JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

2000

ART, CRAFT and DESIGN

HIGHER and ORDINARY LEVELS

CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

HIGHER LEVEL

Project

Preparation

Some excellent observational and exploratory drawing was evident in the top range of higher level candidates.

This provided a very solid foundation for the project work and candidates reaped the benefit of having had this experience to fall back on for research purposes.

Where this was not present, the development and the finished pieces suffered because of candidates not knowing the media they were working with or reaching the required finish and presentation of their work.

In general, at the middle to lower range there is a rather limited approach to preparation. There is an over-reliance on secondary images. This has the undesirable effect of eliminating the self-development of the candidates' ability to observe and interpret what is before them. On many occasions, repetition of these self-same images for different phases of the project magnifies the problem. The candidates learn nothing from practising this process.

Some of these candidates might be well advised to take the subject at ordinary level.

The themes were interpreted in a very broad and lively manner, which demonstrated a great deal of individuality and personal input.

The most popular themes were Celebrations and Summer Memories.

In quite a few centres, even at higher level, candidates are still presenting steps '1', '2', '3' etc of how work was made and finished, which is not necessary. Candidates are still presenting magazine cutouts as their own work and expecting to receive marks for it. Teachers should refer to the syllabus when guiding the candidates in their preparatory work.

Realisation

Examiners observed some excellent work in this area. In general, the realisation of the project proved to be the best executed and best understood section which justifies the extra marks allotted to this area.

Paint as a medium was less in evidence than in previous years, and where in use was often technically mundane. There were no examples of the richness and variety that this media can offer the candidate to interpret their ideas.

3D is often ceramic work and mixed media sculpture.

It is often the most exciting aspect of the project, showing an individual creative approach and response.

In the middle to lower range candidates, the option, particularly Lino-Printing and Packaging is very weak and shows no understanding of the any research into the basic skills required to complete these crafts. Examiners expressed great disappointment at the deterioration of this basic skill of printmaking. The understanding of this craft, the break-up of positive and negative shapes and the application of printing inks can go a long way to helping candidates to develop their cognitive skills, not to mention allowing them to experience the enjoyment of the craft.

Packaging in today's world of the teenager is very exciting and very dear to the hearts of many young people who make up a large percentage on the consumer population.

A general observation from all examiners is that most class time is spent on realisation to the neglect of preparation and development.

Drawing

Observation

Observation skills were well developed throughout. Many candidates produced drawings of much higher standard and quality than those seen in the project work.

Examiners noted some examples of very sensitive renditions of the model's face, hands and clothing details.

The majority of the candidates presented man-made forms and these allowed a broad range of techniques and personal responses to be explored.

Examiners constantly note that the drawing examination is a reliable indicator of the true ability level of the candidate. Teachers should allow this to indicate to the candidate the most suitable level he/she should take in the examination.

Interpretation

Many candidates produced drawings of high quality with excellent interpretation and originality.

Examiners observed good exploration of media in some centres using coloured paper to enhance the media in use.

Interpretation of man-made objects was most successful where candidates chose objects with which they were familiar from class contact.

Most common objects were the infamous "runner", the can opener and the old school bag. Examiners were amazed at the many examples of beautifully skilled treatment of the items. Many reports from examiners noted examples of excellent evidence of teacher direction and guidance.

ORDINARY LEVEL

Project

Preparation

Preparation is never top of the agenda with ordinary level candidates. Examiners noted that there is generally little evidence of candidates exploring their ideas or artistic possibilities. If this area could be improved on, it may very well eliminate the disappointment and lack of personal satisfaction which can befall these candidates. Spending more time developing personal skills and ability to understand what is to happen next can avoid mistakes and waste of effort.

Candidates have an extremely direct approach and their entire input is focused on the finished piece.

As in previous years, there is an over-reliance on secondary images.

The preparation in some cases can often be a simple pencil sketch of the finished piece. This is not the object of the exercise at all.

However, where strong teacher guidance is present, more successful results ensue.

The distinction between Preparation and Support Studies was often blurred with little appreciation for the significant role that each part plays in the project.

Teachers should refer to the syllabus for guidance where necessary.

The quality of the work presented in the drawing exam was not always evident in the project. Indeed, Examiners noted that if it had it would have increased considerably the candidates' grades.

Development

Examiners have noted time and time again that this is the weakest area of the project. There is little consideration given to the exploration of different media, thereby lessening any further developmental opportunities.

Where secondary images were relied on exclusively the creative response to such stimuli was often very limited and the candidates work suffered as a result.

Support Studies at this level suggested that inclusion was made to meet project requirements rather than to advance the work itself.

Realisation

Examiners noted that some very good accomplished work was presented. Ordinary level candidates tend to focus on the realised item; the marking scheme allows for this.

Weaker candidates just fulfilled the requirements for the project, submitting the bare amount of worked drawings, showing little evidence of learnt skill or any interest in the work undertaken. These candidates show very little evidence of direction and lose out in the marking process.

3D work differed greatly between centres but generally displayed evidence of the candidates' interest and involvement in the subject and theme chosen.

Manipulation of media such as "new clay" has improved particularly where support structures were in use.

Drawing

Observation

Examiners noted that there is a large discrepancy in the standard of drawing at ordinary level.

The drawing exam can on occasions present itself as either the best or the worst area of the project.

The skill displayed in the exam is not often present in the project and vice versa.

Familiarity with the chosen object gave added confidence and, where it was present, a good understanding of shape and outline in objects was displayed.

Some candidates did attempt tone, form and texture as well as line and were rewarded in the marking.

Teacher direction in these centres seemed to be of a high standard, informed and creative.

Only a small number of candidates drew from natural forms. Man-made objects were in the majority.

Interpretation

Pencil is the dominant media in use and very few candidates attempted to use any form of colour.

Where colour was used, it merely served to conceal the candidate's lack of ability and was not an enhancement to the work.

In some centres Examiners noted that candidates showed a very good personal creative response to stimulating subject matter. They made full use of the working page and showed an ability to position the item at its best advantage. Where candidates chose very difficult items to draw, the work resulted in disappointment.

General observations

Examiners noted the workload for higher level candidates is too much and too repetitive.

There should be a choice between Graphic Design and Painting as at Ordinary level. If a candidate is good at a certain art area, there is no need to keep requesting them to repeat that skill.

Where the preparation is very obvious in the finished art work, it should not be necessary to request it in the final submission; the work will speak for itself.

The standard of work is suffering because of candidates rushing to get all the work completed. This is diminishing the level of enjoyment and satisfaction associated with doing creative work. In addition, it makes the subject less popular with students.

Too much work in the project area leaves less time to practise for the drawing examination.

Examiners reported that missing components was a major factor in many students not gaining the grade the standard of their work deserved.

Understanding of Preparation and Support Studies is still a grey area in many centres.

APPENDIX

The table below gives the percentage breakdown of grades awarded at Junior Certificate, Higher level, Art, Craft and Design in the years 1998, 1999 and 2000.

School Candidates only.

Higher Level

Year	Total	A	B	C	D	E	F	NG
1998	13,467	19.10	25.90	34.80	17.00	2.80	0.40	0.00
1999	13,221	16.10	24.60	37.50	17.90	3.40	0.50	0.00
2000	12,247	16.30	23.50	36.70	19.40	3.60	0.50	0.10

The table below gives the percentage breakdown of grades awarded at Junior Certificate, Ordinary level, Art, Craft and Design in the years 1998, 1999 and 2000.

Ordinary Level

Year	Total	A	B	C	D	E	F	NG
1998	9,597	8.80	22.20	35.30	23.90	6.80	2.70	0.30
1999	8,666	6.80	18.70	35.70	25.70	9.40	3.50	0.30
2000	9,055	6.70	19.10	36.90	24.70	8.60	3.60	0.40