

DIGITAL MEDIA & DESIGN

Paper 9481/01 Portfolio
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Key messages

- Candidates frequently worked within the guidance for the number of pages or screens for the submission of their supporting studies.
- Centres should not provide links to external sources to view candidate work.
- Candidate should avoid an overreliance on writing, ideas should be expressed largely through visual means.
- Stronger scripts demonstrated high levels of engagement and creative progression.

General comments

Many well-designed presentations were seen where candidates had clearly thought about the development of ideas and the presentation of their proposal. Some scripts took the opportunity to showcase an enthusiasm for their chosen theme and the development of a particular concept within it. Many scripts referred to a final outcome. Centres are reminded that there are two elements to the component, supporting studies and a proposal.

As the work progressed some candidates gathered feedback from peers or others. Where this approach is used, it should be presented as evidence of pertinent and relevant commentary on the candidate's creative work. Candidates then need to demonstrate how they have acted on the feedback in the development of their work.

Some centres submitted largely moving image work with very little research, exploration or development work. Where candidates are working in the moving image area of study, they are reminded that marking is not solely based on making a video. Candidates are encouraged to refer to all of the assessment criteria to see where marks are awarded. Among some scripts, there appeared to be an over reliance on the written word. Whilst text and text layout can be a dynamic visual element, large tracts of writing beyond notes, titles, scripts, or other recordings are discouraged. Where learners are researching and recording ideas, exploring media, developing ideas, and producing a personal digital response, the work will be largely visual. The syllabus requires that in each of the areas of study, ideas should be expressed or generated through visual means. Please see pages 17, 18 and 19 of the syllabus. Centres should not provide links to external sources to view candidate work as examiners will not be able to view it. All work should be submitted according to the guidance on page 20 of the syllabus; 'Candidates submit the Portfolio to Cambridge International digitally'. Moving image work should be embedded into the submitted work.

Learners submitting moving image work, frequently provided concise video content. This is consistent with the guidance provided in the syllabus. However, centres are requested to avoid submitting duplicate video and image files. Candidates frequently worked within the guidance on the number of pages or screens for the submission of their supporting studies. However, some scripts contained pages or slides in excess of the guidance provided in the syllabus. This is strongly discouraged as it is unnecessary and may create potential confusion and limitations to marking. Learners should perform a thorough check of all of their work before the final submission. Centres are also reminded that they are not required to submit duplicates of either the Supporting Studies, or Proposal in different file formats. Video narrations of learner work are not required, and learners are discouraged from this practice. It can be time consuming for the centre and learner and provides an unnecessary level of complexity. Centres should avoid submitting video files as supporting studies. Learners are encouraged to focus on the quality of visual communication in their portfolios. Some candidates submitted a document titled Personal Statement. This is not encouraged as the syllabus does not require a personal statement.

Overall, stronger scripts demonstrated high levels of engagement and creative progression. Higher scoring scripts also remained focused on reflective development and the realisation of intentions throughout the portfolio. Among higher scoring scripts, source material was usually appropriately attributed. However, all candidates are reminded that the work of others should be clearly referenced and clearly distinguished from the candidate's own work.

Comments on the Themes

Boundaries

Many candidates explored the boundaries between humans and nature. Lower scoring scripts often relied on personal photography without clearly linking it to the theme, and while artists exploring human boundaries were referenced, their relevance was not always clear. This limited the development of ideas and marks for AO3. Other scripts addressed boundaries in relationships, society, and philosophy, using devices like mirrors, slow shutter speed, and visual records of interactions. Candidates keeping technical logs should use relevant specialist language.

Some candidates addressed issues such as the environment, marginalisation, or boundaries in sport in all three areas of study – photography, moving image, or multimedia applications. Abstract interpretations included cultural, social, political, or emotional boundaries. Higher scoring scripts used photography purposefully, demonstrating control of formal elements like colour, pattern, symmetry, and composition, and were rewarded for the creative use of staging and lighting. Candidates used a variety of approaches including macro and studio photography, disguises, veiling, and masking. Both digital and analogue processes were used to develop a visual language for communicating ideas.

The Digital Classroom

There were too few responses to this theme to identify any patterns.

Digital Poetry

Confident responses to this theme were noted by examiners. Some scripts cited poems from the start and referenced them throughout the project. Candidates using text as a creative element should pay attention to typography and layout. Lower scoring scripts were sometimes inspired by music videos or online poetry projections, often accompanied by a subjective critique. These scripts demonstrated basic camera competence but could have been improved by a more focused and discerning approach to image gathering.

High scoring scripts explored creative ways to present text, such as projections, site-specific installations, and dynamic lighting. Digital manipulation techniques like overlays, offsets, and controlled colour palettes were also used. Artists who use text in photography were referenced, informing the development of candidate work. Candidates working with text used techniques such as graduated tone, abstract motifs, painted backgrounds, and inversions.

Emotions

This widely explored theme produced varied interpretations, including colour associations, mood expression, and records of personal experiences. Some candidates presented engaging video concepts, but these would have benefited from more developed ideas informed by feedback and testing. Several submissions relied heavily on written content with little visual work, and while other practitioners were referenced, visual examples were lacking. These scripts would have benefited from evidence of visual research and exploration. Centres are reminded that the assessment objectives require evidence of insights **and** observations.

Lower scoring scripts often cited song lyrics or film scenarios without convincingly connecting research to the candidate's creative work. Other scripts used basic internet image searches, and then assigned colours, emojis or icons to specific emotions. These would have been improved by more discerning image choices and by establishing a more reliable association with emotions. More successful scripts developed original characters or pictograms to communicate their interpretation of the theme.

Higher scoring scripts showed clear links between research, exploration, development, and a personal response. Specific emotions were investigated through the work of artists and photographers like Freida Khalo, Edvard Munch, Gustav Klimt, and Henri Cartier Bresson. Most scripts demonstrated how each stage

informed the next, though some would have benefited from clearer evidence of exploration and refinement. Some video responses used film language effectively, and digital experiments were revisited after further research. Stronger scripts included digital and analogue overworking of photographs, appropriate use of typography, and variations of a core idea, such as visualisations for retail, T-shirts, music apps, and posters. Conceptual development was demonstrated through experiments with composition, lighting, editing, and styling.

Travel

Some candidates approached this theme through personal or cultural references, often producing confident scripts. The strongest video submissions showed a clear journey from inspiration to outcome, supported by design and editing skills. Higher scoring photography scripts generated new work rather than relying on existing vacation photos. Some explored fantasy travel or travel inspired by antiques, and stronger submissions curated and developed ideas thoughtfully, including photographic series, short films, interactive maps, or digital guides.

Weaker submissions often used basic techniques, showed little experimentation and did not consider composition. Lower scoring scripts often based supporting studies on personal holiday photography, with annotations attempting to link images to the theme. These would have benefited from more convincing insights and research into relevant artists. Video and photography work could have been improved by further research, experimentation, and planning, such as developing shot lists and directing participants. Stronger video work used varied angles, secondary action, and multiple locations, with attention to lighting, composition, and titles.

Some higher scoring scripts focused on broader themes like armed conflict or public transport, supported by research using museums, archives, and posters. These scripts typically demonstrated a confident understanding of the theme as they pursued research into art movements such as Futurism, Bauhaus or Pop Art, and into applications such as camouflage. Systematic research and poster deconstruction showed critical understanding and helped build a visual language.

Wellbeing

Some scripts contained no visual work, while others had extensive written content and limited visuals, resulting in marking being significantly limited. Responses to this theme included photography, video, animation, app concepts, and interactive campaigns, and interpreted wellbeing through aspects of mental health, physical activity, and through relaxation. Candidates who experimented with tools, materials, and digital methods showed stronger creative progression. However, candidates are encouraged to clearly record their progress. Weaker submissions relied on simple techniques with little evidence of development and would have benefited from a clearer demonstration of creative decision-making. Some candidates used internet-sourced infographics for promotional material. Such scripts but would have been improved by candidates designing their own icons, signs, or pictograms.

Lower scoring app designs often demonstrated only basic visual elements. Scripts based on a favourite sport often concluded with a video. The strength of these was in developing a simple storyline combining the idea of physical and mental wellness, with appropriate photography and editing. However, these videos could have been improved by applying insights gained from reference films, such as point of view, montage, or tracking. Stronger submissions explored personal or reflective narratives, such as documenting exercise routines or mental health journeys, and demonstrated a responsive approach to experimentation with visual media.

DIGITAL MEDIA & DESIGN

Paper 9481/02 Externally Set Assignment
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Key messages

- Stronger submissions showed a clear understanding of how visual media communicates meaning.
- Candidates who engaged in sustained visual research and recorded ideas throughout their journey produced more assured and coherent outcomes.
- Higher scoring scripts demonstrated a mature and focused investigation.
- Candidates should adhere to the guidance on video length and number of slides or pages in the supporting studies described in the syllabus and in the rubric.
- Extended episodes of writing are not a substitute for communication using visual language.

General comments

The Examiners noted examples of effective planning for the 10 hour externally set assignment. This was evident in the supporting studies where candidates made reference to the brief provided, any feedback obtained and their understanding of the constraints of the assignment. Among higher scoring scripts this remained a consistent feature throughout the work. Some candidates presented mock ups. This approach provided an opportunity to both investigate constraints and critically reflect on progress. Some scripts referred to a proposal. Centres are reminded that there are two elements to the component, supporting studies and final outcome. Where candidates gather feedback from peers or others it is used most effectively where it forms a pertinent and relevant commentary on the candidate's creative work. Candidates then need to demonstrate how they have acted on the feedback in the development of their work.

Among some scripts, there appeared to be an over reliance on the written word. Whilst text and text layout can be a dynamic visual element, large tracts of writing beyond notes, titles, scripts, or other recordings are discouraged. Where learners are researching and recording ideas, exploring media, developing ideas, and producing a personal digital response, the work will be largely visual. The syllabus requires that in each of the areas of study, ideas should be expressed or generated through visual means. Please see pages 17, 18 and 19 of the syllabus. Centres should not provide links to external sources to view candidate work. The Examiners will not access such links. All work should be submitted according to the guidance on page 20 of the syllabus; 'Candidates submit the Portfolio to Cambridge International digitally'. Moving image work should be embedded into the submitted work.

Learners submitting moving image work, frequently provided concise video content. This is consistent with the guidance provided in the syllabus. However, centres are requested to avoid submitting duplicate video and image files. Candidates frequently worked within the guidance on the number of pages or screens for the submission of their supporting studies. However, some scripts contained pages or slides in excess of the guidance provided in the syllabus. This is strongly discouraged as it is unnecessary and may create potential confusion and limitations to marking. Learners should perform a thorough check of all of their work before the final submission.

Higher scoring scripts also remained focused on reflective development and the realisation of intentions throughout the portfolio. Many stronger scripts demonstrated high levels of engagement and creative progression. Among higher scoring scripts, source material was usually appropriately attributed. However, all candidates are reminded that the work of others should be clearly referenced and clearly distinguished from the candidate's own work.

Approaches to the assignments

Question 1

Creative Spaces.

A variety of responses to this assignment were submitted. These included apps exploring colour ways, fabric and lighting combinations, photo essays on the relationship between interior spaces and design, homepage designs for a Creative Spaces website, and animations about interior design or designers. Among lower scoring scripts, candidates often developed an initial idea, but it was not seen to be consistently reflected during recording insights, exploration of materials, and final outcomes. This work would have been improved by adopting clearer purpose and intention. Other lower scoring work scripts would have benefited from clearer evidence of the exploration of materials combined with developmental of ideas. In some cases, candidates referenced the use of online apps and software as tools used in the development of their work. It is important that technical processes are clearly illustrated, so that the candidate's own work can be clearly identified. Where webpages were submitted as a final piece, it was often unclear to what degree candidates had relied on the use of templates. Where candidates were seen to rely on templates or secondary assets without testing alternatives, this tended to limit the development of ideas and the progress of the work. However, higher scoring scripts clearly distinguished reference or AI generated material from the candidate's original work. Some lower scoring scripts would have benefited from establishing a clearer design narrative from first ideas to realisation. A few outcomes contained very little visual or development work. This significantly limited marking.

Submissions for Creative Spaces often demonstrated an interest in interior aesthetics, layout, and the relationship between colour and atmosphere. Higher-scoring candidates presented relevant visual research using mood boards, photography, and references to existing design practices. These candidates were generally able to comment on how such examples informed their own design intentions, using the research as a starting point for personal interpretation. Where candidates collected primary photography of interior spaces or examined contemporary website layouts, this provided a strong foundation for developing their own ideas. Higher scoring scripts recognised the opportunity to undertake primary research. There was evidence of candidates visiting retail outlets and private homes. These scripts were rewarded for recording insights using their own photos, rather than those taken from internet sites. Scripts were seen to be more successful when candidates experimented with layout, colour palettes, and interface structure through sketches, mock-ups, or homepage layouts. Some candidates combined analogue drawings with digital manipulation or used collage to explore composition. This approach demonstrated the opportunity to refine work and critically reflect on progress. The strongest responses showed a coherence between research and final design, with clear connections between an evolving visual language and the final work.

Question 2

Message.

Some interpretations of the assignment referred to a literal meaning with candidates visualising forms of communications such as mobile phones, laptops or letters. Other scripts provided a more metaphorical or conceptual interpretation such as supernatural messages, cyberbullying, or the distorting effects of war. Candidates worked towards a variety of final outcomes including animations, photography presentations, short films, digital posters, animations, and multi-media designs. Many scripts demonstrated a clear understanding of the brief and an understanding of an audience. Lower scoring submissions often lacked sufficient development or experimentation, with ideas presented in a more linear or text-heavy format, which limited the opportunity to fully demonstrate creativity. In scripts where the evidence of development was more descriptive than visual, or where experiments were limited to the use of basic tools, progress in the assignment was limited. In some cases, the use of digital tools and software was not clearly explained, making it difficult to distinguish between candidate-generated work and pre-made resources. Some lower scoring submissions showed potential but would have benefited from deeper exploration of alternative design approaches, more critical interpretation of research, and a stronger link between feedback and the refinement of designs. Some photography presentations included text in a variety of forms including poetry written by the candidate. Candidates are reminded that it is important to consider layout and font style as part of visual work.

Higher scoring scripts demonstrated thoughtful and relevant research and exploration of the assignment. Such scripts effectively developed ideas through exploration of materials and an iterative approach to the development of ideas. Candidates frequently demonstrated how research and the recording of observations informed both creative decisions and the final outcome. Stronger submissions showed a clear conceptual

direction from the outset. Successful candidates maintained this clarity by episodes of focused research throughout the assignment. Typically, candidates focused on messages relating to emotion, communication, personal conflict, or social commentary. These scripts were seen to examine relevant artists, photographers, filmmakers, or designers, and offered critical and analytical reflections that supported the candidate's creative decisions. Many of the higher scoring scripts were characterised by attention to colour, symbolism, and the emotional effect of composition.

Candidates were seen to use photomanipulation, lighting experiments, typography experiments, compositing, or 3D modelling to develop their ideas. Lively and experimental development work was rewarded in AO2 and AO3. Iterative testing – such as reviewing colour distortion effects, experimenting with overlays, or adjusting camera angles, helped to develop visual communication and the candidate's use of visual language. Overall, the strongest responses successfully communicated a curiosity about an exchange of ideas, and a determined creative intent.

Question 3

Timeline blockbuster.

Some excellent responses to the assignment were submitted. There were good levels of engagement in the notion of science fiction. Candidates were keen to show their familiarity with a range of sub-genres. Most candidates used key words in the brief effectively, paying attention to the two lead characters and four timelines as they developed their work. The research and recording of observations and insights was often relevant and purposeful typically focusing on poster designers, graphic designers, photographers, graphic designers and costume designers.

Lower scoring submissions would frequently have benefited from a sufficient development of ideas to enable the work to progress. Where the Supporting Studies were presented in a predominantly text-based format with little visual content, marking was significantly limited. However, the stronger scripts successfully communicated ideas about the chosen sci-fi thriller concept using visual language. Some submissions appeared to lack depth in development and relied heavily on pre-existing imagery, which limited the extent to which a personal digital response could be demonstrated. Candidates are encouraged to research and record observations and insights from a variety of sources, which is relevant to their intentions.

Candidates responded to the Timeline Blockbuster brief with a range of approaches, including promotional digital posters, opening title sequences, digital artwork for contrasting sci-fi urban environments, and photographic portraits of the lead characters. Most demonstrated a clear understanding of the brief and audience, with stronger submissions showing detailed research and thoughtful development of ideas. Higher scoring work reflected experimentation with visual style, composition, and narrative techniques, showing a clear connection between research and the final outcome. More successful candidates demonstrated an understanding of the conventions of the sci-fi genre as they researched colour palettes, cinematic lighting, composition, and associated visual tropes. In several cases, candidates drew from film stills, graphic novels, or their own mood boards to guide their design direction. This approach was seen to positively inform their style choices. Other candidates who experimented with digital painting, photomanipulation, or mixed media approaches tended to achieve more convincing results, especially when supported by iterative sketches, colour experimentation, or revisions based on feedback. Others relied more heavily on the use of secondary images or on repeated techniques. These scripts would have benefited from a broader investigation into the potential of materials and the creative possibilities of design alternatives. Moving image submissions were generally effective when storyboards and test sequences showed evidence of planning, pacing and visual coherence. The strongest outcomes demonstrated confident visual communication and a clear understanding of the brief, often showing maturity in composition, typography, and mood.

DIGITAL MEDIA & DESIGN

Paper 9481/03 Personal Investigation

Key messages

- Submissions showed varied engagement and but with some displaying ambition and technical development
- Submitted work should be organised, focussed and edited. Some submissions were too large, with some exceeding 140 slides.
- All work should be submitted as either .pdf, .pptx .png, .jpeg or .mp4 video files. Supporting videos should be embedded within .pptx files. Videos embedded within .pdf files are not accessible and therefore can not be assessed.
- Duplicates of images embedded within supporting studies or written work as additional .jpg or .png files, should not be submitted.
- Links to files stored on external sites (e.g.: Google drives, Figma or Canva sites) cannot be accessed or assessed.
- All images and videos must be clearly annotated and work of other artists should be attributed correctly.
- If AI tools are used, please reference the tool. For AI generated images include the question or prompt that generated the image.
- Candidates are reminded that to attain the full range of marks across the AOs they need to provide visual evidence of research, stages of development, revisions, and reflections as well as written work.

General comments

Many candidates produced confident and well-developed work. Higher-scoring candidates presented well-structured portfolios that clearly showed the progression of their ideas, supported by relevant research and purposeful experimentation. These portfolios also demonstrated confident use of digital tools and thoughtful decision-making throughout.

Although candidates are invited to develop their own theme or question for paper 3, several candidates were more comfortable developing their theme from paper 01. In this case work from paper 01 should not be re-presented.

To accrue reward in A02 and A03, the best candidates stretched themselves creatively beyond a repetitive, process-based level, instead demonstrating the testing of ideas optimised across a range of mediums. This was the case this series predominantly with 3d animation.

It is helpful to include evidence of the journey and design process so efforts can be rewarded. This includes images and videos of reference material with annotation to show how and why the candidate has made design decisions. However, this should be balanced by demonstrating critical awareness where a key image is showcased without text.

Submission of a body of text and a visual outcome (no matter how good), without supporting work cannot access the full range of assessment objectives and therefore will receive a low mark. Please refer to the Coursework Handbook on the school Support Hub <https://auth.schoolsupporthub.cambridgeinternational.org/>

Comments on candidates work

Candidates showed a clear interest in their chosen subject areas across all levels of ability. In the lower range however, the interest in the subject outweighed the interest in digital art and design. Reference photographs were sourced from the internet, and own photographs were limited to being captured on mobile phones, in portrait mode, in daylight. Additional marks were accrued at mid-level by candidates who studied

animations, films and scripts, evidenced their understanding by notations on camera setups and movements. They utilised this knowledge to create visual interest in their own photography and videography by, for example, shooting at various angles, using a variety of close, medium and extreme wide shots, combined with creative positioning of multiple cameras, day and night shots and the use of slow-motion. Marks were also awarded when candidates explored in-camera effects through the mobile phone's manual mode and the use of ISO, shutter speed, macro, and f-stop. Lighting played a central role in the creation of mood, within horror live action shorts, and in video work that powerfully addressed grief and loss. Candidates who provided clear evidence of development, including iterations, feedback responses, and technical refinements, strengthened attainment across AO2, AO3, and AO4.

Where a candidate had access to photographic facilities (e.g.: studio, lights, dark room, cameras) these opportunities for visual story telling were sometimes utilised, although processed based digital workflows were more popular this series. Domestic setups were also seen for the exploration of lighting, (including home-made matt-boxes), and green-screens for portraits and interviews.

There was a wide range of themes approached in this series, including: AI personal assistants, astronomy and constellation figures, the connection between the natural and digital world, catwalk fashion, consumerism, digital overload, erosion of personal and cultural identity, grief and loss, indigenous crafts, intergenerational family connections, motherhood, nostalgia for childhood, personal development, surveillance, and romance.

A high level of specialist technical knowledge was required to acquire own source photography in underwater and celestial subjects, this and practical constraints were seen to restrict development of the work.

The most frequently used software was Blender, Procreate, Photoshop, Canva, and Adobe Illustrator.

A wide range of reference artists, frequently extending beyond the traditional art cannon, as well as designers and photographers were referenced, including: Barbara Kruger, Geloy Concepcion, Christoffer Relander, Edward Honaker, Luke Gram, Eduardo Recife, Mariyan Atanasov William Eggleston, Roy Lichtenstein, Vivian Maier, Cho Gi Seok, Ellen von Unwerth, Zeka Design, Benedicto Cernal III, Malika Favre, Charlie Davis, Kensuke Koike, Francis Bacon, Zdzislaw Beksinski, Douglas Coupland, Heitor Magno, Michael Kenna, Balazs Csizik, Michael Sterling, Thomas Jorion, Ansel Adams, Nicholas Goodden, Ida Sophia, Marina Abramović, Rachel Perry, Sally Mann, Brook Shaden, Bill Henson, Greta Gerwing.

Popular films referenced included work by Satyajit Ray and Wes Anderson, animations from Studio Ghibli (Princess Monoke, Spirited Away), Disney (Snow White, Pinocchio), and Dreamworks (The Wild Robot), Klaus, and Ice Age. Video games referenced included: The Legend of Zelda, The Wolf Among Us, Genshin Impact, Omori. Some candidates investigated cultural references from folklore and fairytale, classical sculptures from antiquity and medical reference photography. There were also many uncredited images from Pinterest and candidates should use Google lens to reverse search and credit and potentially further research the artist.

2d processes included digital painting – colour picking then overpainting own photographs for portraits, posters, animations, and game apps. The transformation of live action into a cartoon style was generally seen to be effective and aesthetically appropriate for apps and animations alike. Some high-level candidates illustrated short story books; photographed and filmed them being tested by their target audience at key stages of development, using this as an opportunity for feedback and implementing changes. Some included book reviews emulating reviews of commercially published novels which was a creative way to incorporate feedback.

Photomontages of architectural tessellations and portraiture were popular and effective, with strong graphic design, layout and typography work producing focused high-quality outcomes. The inclusion of additional dry or wet mixed media in some cases interfered with the clarity of the message; additional testing and feedback, working beyond the initial ideas would develop competency. 2d work also included analogue and digital combinations, with many portfolios concluding with posters or immersive mock-ups of museums and galleries. Where the submission contained emotional content portrait studies included body language and gestural aspects of hands. Higher scoring candidates showed evidence of a tenacious creative journey by grafting the techniques of other artists into their own photography and staging, scaling and integrating ideas from across disciplines (e.g.: design, fashion, fine-art, and lifestyle).

Some themes lent themselves to the digital manipulation of images through fragmentation, pixilation, and montage. When combined with analogue techniques such as melting and burning, these explorations

pushed the aesthetics beyond the competent, and into the confident in A02. The most mature and accomplished candidates harness this analogue/digital visual language and go on to express and inform their development and outcome at an excellent level. However, test material that is derivative, repetitive, and of the same quality, should be presented in a succinct way, with the best material selected to clearly show the candidate's development arc.

Moving image investigations and outcomes were popular across a range of styles, subjects and media. Candidates began their investigations with simple walk cycles, locked-off camera interviews and live action sequences. Many candidates demonstrated critical awareness in their choice of media appropriate to their theme. For example, live action with highly accomplished use of both artificial and natural light as metaphor for grief and recovery, enhanced the narrative and atmosphere. Animated collage and hand-painted overlays on live action effectively underlined childhood and family themes. Animated fight scenes delivered a level of complexity that would be impossible through live action. Candidates used a variety of styles within one animation to showcase skills and styles, juxtaposing interiors, street-scenes and dream sequences. Some excellent Claymation and stop-frame animation included the use of animated facial expressions, and multiple character heads to express emotions and speech. Candidates produced technically excellent 3d modelling, rigging, texture mapping, animation, motion tracking and compositing into live action scenes. Higher scoring candidates were rewarded for developing their storyline, some of which used interview footage to inform the final video.

Approaches to the written component:

Much of the written work did not go beyond descriptive commentary. The written component should provide a succinct interpretive and evaluative guide to intentions, references, inspirations, processes, outcomes, revisions, and design decisions, with irrelevant text edited out.

More successful submissions integrated the written aspect of this component into their visual work, although some candidates were able to develop compelling longform papers related to their theme.

Candidates are encouraged to go beyond the descriptive and avoid colloquial comments thereby demonstrating critical understanding of the context and content of their work in relation to the work of others. This written aspect can be based on the candidate's own observations, understanding, discoveries, and technical innovations (as well as design decisions informed by feedback).

Biographies of reference artists do not lend themselves to critical and analytical commentary.

The same applies to candidates evidencing interviews and surveys. It is the evaluation of relevant information gained which moves the creative journey forward and takes attainment into higher mark bands.

Lower scoring candidates produced descriptive passages, which were at odds with annotations about their art and design work and the work of others. Insights should be applied directly to the visual reference material to demonstrate understanding. There is room for lower scoring candidates to gain extra marks by not only writing about what is admirable in their artist reference work but by going on to emulate this in their visual work. Marks are given for example, where an auteur's techniques (such as lighting, composition, colour grading, camera moves and editing) are emulated and referenced in the candidates own work, and this understanding is clearly documented as part of the written component.

This series many candidates interviewed or sought feedback from emerging artists and industry professionals on their artwork. They received valuable guidance re: camera position and movement, intercutting, pacing, and overlay, which was included as part of the written work and when feedback was sought in a timely manner allowed for reshoots for the final outcome.

Several submissions included a piece of prose for the written element. Some candidates chose to incorporate texts imaginatively, embedding them within the visual component by incorporating into 2d and 3d artwork. This approach is seen as a development of paper 01 theme of digital poetry, as well as a response to artist's reference material.