

Pearson Edexcel GCE

Art and Design

Advanced

Unit 4: A2 Externally Set Assignment

Timed Examination: 12 hours

Paper Reference

6AD04-6CC04

You do not need any other materials.

Instructions to Teacher-Examiners

Centres will receive this paper in January 2016. It will also be available on the secure content section of the Pearson Edexcel website at this time.

This paper should be given to the Teacher–Examiner for confidential reference **as soon as it is received in the centre** in order to prepare for the externally set assignment. **This paper may be released to candidates from 1 February 2016.**

There is no prescribed time limit for the preparatory study period.

The 12-hour timed examination should be the culmination of candidates' studies.

Instructions to Candidates

This paper is given to you in advance of the examination so that you can make sufficient preparation.

This booklet contains the theme for the Unit 4 Externally Set Assignment for the following specifications:

9AD01	Art, Craft and Design (unendorsed)
9FA01	Fine Art
9TD01	Three-Dimensional Design
9PY01	Photography – Lens and Light-Based Media
9TE01	Textile Design
9GC01	Graphic Communication
9CC01	Critical and Contextual Studies

Candidates for all endorsements are advised to read the entire paper.

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Each submission for the A2 Externally Set Assignment, whether **unendorsed** or **endorsed**, should be based on the theme given in this paper.

You are advised to read through the entire paper, as helpful starting points may be found outside your chosen endorsement.

If you are entered for an **endorsed** specification, you should produce work predominantly in your chosen discipline for the Externally Set Assignment.

If you are entered for the **unendorsed** specification, you may have been working in two or more different disciplines in Unit 3. **For the Externally Set Assignment, you may choose to produce work in one discipline only.**

The starting points in each section will help you generate ideas. You may follow them closely, use them as background information or develop your own interpretation of the theme. Read the whole paper as any section may provide the inspiration for your focus.

You should provide evidence that each of the four Assessment Objectives has been addressed. It is anticipated that A2 candidates will show in the Externally Set Assignment how their knowledge, skills and understanding have developed through their work in Unit 3.

The Assessment Objectives require you to:

Develop your ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.

Experiment with and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining your ideas as your work develops.

Record in visual and/or other forms ideas, observations and insights relevant to your intentions, demonstrating your ability to reflect on your work and progress.

Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating critical understanding, realising intentions and, where appropriate, making connections between visual, oral or other elements.

Preparatory Studies

Your preparatory studies may include sketchbooks, notebooks, worksheets, design sheets, large-scale rough studies, samples, swatches, test pieces, maquettes, digital material... anything that fully shows your progress towards your outcomes.

Preparatory studies should show:

- your development of a personal focus based on the theme
- a synthesis of ideas
- evidence of your development and control of visual language skills
- critical review and reflection, recording your thoughts, decisions and development of ideas
- the breadth and depth of your research from appropriate primary and contextual sources
- relevant selection with visual and/or written analyses rather than descriptive copying or listing processes.

Timed Examination

Your preparatory studies will be used to produce an outcome(s) under examination conditions in **twelve hours**.

The Theme: TRUTH, FANTASY OR FICTION

The ability to reproduce a true likeness by hand holds a magical fascination; as testified by the subconscious urge to view the work of any artist caught working '*en plein air*'. Certain artists' candid honesty create disturbing imagery whether illustrative or political. Jenny Saville's self-portraits and Otto Dix's *Stormtroopers Advancing Under a Gas Attack* are examples. The latter painting exploits abstraction to emphasise the true reality of the horror of war.

The desire to produce true representations of objects, people and landscapes has been one of the driving forces behind the refinement of a wide range of media available to the contemporary artist/designer. Some of the most notable advances have been in oil paint, originally developed from the 15th to the 19th century, and more recently, plastic-based paints and synthetic resins. The photorealist paintings of John Baeder and Ralph Goings, along with the super-realist sculptures of Ron Mueck, demonstrate just how sophisticated these developments have become.

Baudelaire suggested that artists must be truly faithful to their own nature. Artists have often been singular in pursuing their personal vision of the world. William Blake argued that he did not want to observe the human figure because that would get in the way of his own inner vision of how people looked. 'I will not reason and compare: my business is to create.'

Artists in many other cultures such as Aboriginal, Inca, Aztec and Polynesian seem to consciously resist trying to produce faithful likenesses of their subjects. Their objectives often intend to depict spiritual qualities, perhaps in response to a fear that any accurate rendering of a living being may somehow capture its soul or spirit.

Scientific analysis and documentation has resulted in some exquisite studies of both flora and fauna. The faithful rendition of insects in William Jones and Cath Hodsman's paintings, for example, demonstrate meticulous observation and sensitivity. Leonardo da Vinci, Rodin and Michelangelo's studies of the human form also demonstrate these qualities of analysis and discovery. Contemporary artists Danny Quirk and Gunther von Hagens continue to be driven by this fascination for human anatomy.

Written propaganda has been used to influence and steer public opinion with many political and religious movements claiming to possess the only true path or philosophy. Each movement has commissioned artists to embellish texts and illustrate their beliefs for public consumption and maximum impact. The communist and fascist posters of the early 20th century exemplify the power of this form of communication.

Here are some further suggestions related to the theme that might inspire your journey:

- life, death, interrogation, torture, war, intolerance
- discovery, dissection, archaeology, astronomy, astrology
- magnifying glasses, microscopes, binoculars, computers
- mirrors, reflective surfaces, lights
- love, trust, marriage, divorce, conciliations
- synagogues, churches, mosques, cathedrals
- conspiracy, slavery, politics, corruption, money, power
- detectives, police, law, justice
- science, maths, theories, measuring instruments, calculators, books
- folk tales, myths, sagas, poems, tapestries

Fine Art

Optional disciplines:

- Painting and drawing
- Printmaking
- Sculpture
- Alternative media

Possible starting points:

Picasso famously said 'We all know that Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realise truth'. Magritte's painting *La Trahison des Images*, in which he painted a picture of a pipe with the words 'Ceci n'est pas une pipe' (This is not a pipe), goes some way towards an explanation. Art is not reality but can examine and model reality. Charles Ray, Charles Simonds, Karin Sander and Thomas Demand played with this idea by literally making models. For other artists such as Richard Estes reality is modelled through a very detailed photographic representation of the world. For expressionist painters such as Edvard Munch, Francis Bacon or the contemporary artist Billy Childish, reality is expressed subjectively through feelings, evoked by colour and brushstrokes.

Artists have long been interested in portraying social truths. Xu Zhen's *In Just a Blink of an Eye* recently presented migrants from Manhattan's China Town leaning at crazy angles, held motionless by hidden supports. This represents their situation, trapped in a kind of suspension between two different societies. His work is part of a long tradition of art that engages with social and political reality; from Goya's *The Disasters of War* etchings through Manet's *Olympia* to Mark Wallinger's *State Britain*.

'Humankind can bear only so much reality... ' wrote TS Eliot. Perhaps we all eventually retreat in some way towards a fantasy world of our own making. From Hieronymous Bosch to the contemporary artist Beatriz Milhazes, fantasy is preferable to reality at times of stress. Paintings inspired by the Pre-Raphaelites, such as *The Lady of Shalott* by John William Waterhouse, imagined a medieval world unsullied by the industrialisation of the 19th century. More recently, in a career lasting 70 years, Louise Bourgeois relentlessly examined the fantasies of her own inner world of phobias and trauma.

A common phrase is to 'shed light on a situation' meaning to find out the truth. Light has been a symbol for the truth for centuries. Georges de la Tour's *La Madeleine à la veilleuse*, Joseph Wright of Derby's *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump*, and Picasso's *Minotaure* are all examples of this recurring symbol. In stories such as *Snow White* and the artwork *Vanitas II* by Helen Chadwick, mirrors also lend themselves to a contemplation of truth.

Three-Dimensional Design

Optional disciplines:

- Scenography
- Architectural, environmental and interior design
- Product design

Possible starting points:

Designers often talk about being true to the nature of the material they are working with. This intrinsic understanding of the characteristics of substances allows them to explore the strengths and unique aspects of materials in the design of the product. David Savage exploits the nature of woods such as ash and elm for their strength and flexibility in creating his furniture. Allan Lake uses yew for grain and colour; Philip Watts uses bronze for its range of patinas, and aluminium and chrome for their resilience and colour. Contemporary designers exploit both traditional and modern materials, such as plastic and resin, which allow for weather resistant, smooth and elastic surfaces and expand the possibilities of construction to endless permutations. Iris van Herpen is now exploiting 3D printers to produce haute couture garments. Embracing the characteristics of materials in the design of everyday objects was fundamental to Shaker philosophy and these continue to have a popularity that transcends time.

Fantasy rides and fictional environments provide endless opportunities for unique design in theme parks and funfairs. Modern materials allow for spectacular constructions that allow the passengers of ghost trains and roller coasters to experience terrifying thrills. Nate Naversen's work on the Disneyland rides *Jungle Cruise*, *Haunted Mansion* and *Pirates of the Caribbean* epitomises the potential offered by these environments for the imaginative designer. The Thinkwell Group's design team has exploited unique locations across the world to produce a wide variety of themed entertainment parks. These parks use cutting edge materials to create sophisticated and visually spectacular environments.

Set designers use their full powers of creativity and imagination to stage environments that create a 'suspension of disbelief' in the mind of their audiences. One of the most spectacular examples of this is the current production of *War Horse* which uses puppet horses without concealing their construction. They are so skilfully manipulated and closely observed that the audience temporarily forgets they are made of steel, leather and aircraft cables. The National Theatre has used puppetry to create evocative and engrossing productions such as *Or You Could Kiss Me* 2010, *Ouroboros* 2011 and *I Love You When You're Breathing* 2011.

The concept of giving inanimate objects anthropomorphic characteristics has had an important impact on the design of many household appliances. Various products from Johnson's toilet duck to vacuum cleaners such as the *Henry*, *Hetty* and *James* by Numatic are good examples. The commercial value of comedy has often been recognised and exploited by designers; even the potters of the 18th and 19th centuries discovered this with their puzzle jugs that delighted and frustrated their users. It is interesting to see how seriously designers take this genre; Alessandro Mendini was a keen exponent of the human form in his designs such as his *Guerriero di Vetro*, *Vase*, *Venini*, and the *Anna G. Corkscrew* produced by Alessi.

Photography

Optional disciplines:

- Film-based photography
- Digital photography
- Film and video

Possible starting points:

In *Camera Lucida* Roland Barthes wrote that a photograph could be a 'certificate of presence' – an unbiased record of reality. Is this the case? Do we still look to photographs to show a true image of the world around us or has the digital age brought the whole notion of photographic truth into doubt? The fashion photographer Nick Knight's statement 'I think photography has been wrestling with a burden of telling the truth, which I don't think it was ever particularly good at' implies a sense of possible liberation from the need to record 'reality'. His own images, such as *Antony Hegarty* for SHOWstudio in 2006, are fantasies of colour and imagined forms often closer to the appearance of paintings than photographs.

Photography is the ideal medium in which to project and create fantasies. It promises 'an accurate record' but often delivers the unexpected. Surrealists such as Man Ray, Wanda Wulz and later Erwin Blumenfeld, used photograms, montage and double exposure to play with expectation and narrative. Refined in the 1970s by photographers such as Jerry Uelsmann and Duane Michals, fantasy and surrealism continue to be a fertile ground for experimentation. For instance, John Stezaker's combined faces are just the starting points for unexpected and surreal departures into fantasies of the unconscious.

Edward Weston's photographs are in some ways a response to an age-old criticism of photography – 'it's easier to take a photo than paint a picture; you just press a button'. Initially a 'Pictorialist', creating soft focus photographs looking like Impressionist paintings, he had a moment of transformation in which he realised that the photographic image could be celebrated just as much for its own inherent qualities, for instance sharp detail and fine shades of tone. In photographs such as *Pepper*, he established a new way of depicting beauty that was 'true' to the photographic process. He founded the Group f/64 movement with others such as Ansel Adams to exploit this aesthetic.

Documentary photography shows the world 'the truth'. Lewis Hine showed the shocking reality of child labour in America in the early 1900s. In different ways photographers such as Dorothea Lange, and more recently Paul Graham and Simon Norfolk, approach the need to document 'real' situations. Bernd and Hilla Becher, photographing seemingly mundane forms such as industrial water towers, famously attempted to produce a 'typology' of forms. They were partly inspired by the photographs of August Sander, in which the essential nature of a person is presented to us with simplicity and dignity. Irving Penn's photographs of cigarettes achieved a similar sense of monumentality and timeless presence.

Textile Design

Optional disciplines:

- Constructed textiles
- Dyed textiles
- Printed textiles
- Fine art textiles
- Fashion textiles

Possible starting points:

In what sense can fashion explore 'truth' or is fashion itself a form of escapism? Derek Lam and Erdem Moralioglu design garments that are 'true to the form of the human figure', enhancing and subtly flattering the physique. However, Rei Kawakubo's company Comme des Garçons has consistently challenged this intention, taking delight in deconstructing the conventional sense of a garment, sometimes with outlandish bumps and swellings, relishing asymmetry and apparent discord but always with superb tailoring. Ganryu Watanabe, Sandra Backlund and Hussein Chalayan have also taken challenging approaches to the form of the figure. Fashion can be the ultimate expression of individuality, liberating the designer to explore their wildest obsessions and fantasies. This is typified by Alexander McQueen whose dark fantasies of vulnerability and desire were revealed in the *Savage Beauty* exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum in 2015. Vivienne Westwood, Dolce & Gabbana and many others are known for similar flights of personal fantasy.

Every house should have the best – this was a central idea of the Arts and Crafts movement, often expressed in the idea of 'truth to materials'. Designers like William Morris and CFA Voysey believed that every material had its own particular quality, which the designer should aim to work in harmony with to create beauty. Morris's *Trellis* of 1862 is a justly famous example of pattern making inspired by nature. Today, by contrast, new technologies such as digital printing give designers an almost limitless freedom to choose their own way of working with a single material. Faboria designers Fabiana Chang and Victoria Kao take delight in reproducing three-dimensional effects on fabric, their speciality being the surreal and fantastic. In one of their trademark pieces Queen Elizabeth I stares out from the centre of a skirt wearing pink sunglasses.

'Upcycling' revitalises the concept of truth to materials. Ruth Holland's company Waste Away gives new life to materials such as discarded electrical cables, worn plastic and rope, to make accessories and jewellery whose inherent qualities are exploited for their potential beauty rather than their utility. Kerry Howley with jewellery made from hair, and work by the companies Hibrida and Otra, are further examples. Open-ended exploration of materials can also be the basis for playful fantasy. In a recent exhibition called *Black Sheep: The Darker Side of Felt*, artists such as Marjolein Dallinga and Elodie Antoine have constructed mysterious organic forms out of felt, inspired as much by dreams as by reality. Barbara Keal's hats manage to be both grotesque and cute, based on imaginary animal heads.

In Louise Richardson's pieces butterflies emerge with delicacy from ballerina dresses. She describes their fragility as being like memories. Yinka Shonibare often uses 'Nigerian' fabrics bought in London, which have been manufactured in Manchester from Dutch designs, to create sculptures that both combine and juxtapose African and Western styles. In this way he makes reference to the mixture of cultures that can make up any one individual identity.

Inspired by artists such as Alighiero Boetti, mixed media artist Sumi Perera uses processes with paper and stitch to explore the truth of 'socio-politics'. In *Shattering the Glass Ceiling V* she creates books that unfold and untangle as they are examined. Both Yinka Shonibare and Sumi Perera make strong political statements derived from their own individual and collective backgrounds.

Graphic Communication

Optional disciplines:

- Advertising
- Illustration
- Packaging
- Typography
- Interactive media

Possible starting points:

Letter forms for prestigious documents have always been considered with great care and thought, especially those that purport to contain a set of truths or moral guidelines. Ancient illustrated manuscripts and maps such as the *Mappa Mundi*, *Magna Carta* and *Book of Kells* demonstrate this. Religious texts such as early copies of the *Bible* and the *Koran* show the diversity of these letter forms. Contemporary calligraphers are more frequently commissioned to place inscriptions on significant buildings such as law courts and assembly buildings. The power of these can be seen in examples such as the façade of the Wales Millennium Centre and the text from the Marbury v. Madison trial on the Supreme Court Building in Washington DC. The letter forms are influenced by the tools used to create them, with the most successful embracing the lines of the brush or the unique cut of the chisel.

Recruitment posters for the armed forces have always presented great challenges to graphic designers, especially now that the truth of armed conflict can be accessed at the click of a button. Whilst sharing the same intention to attract recruits, posters of different eras and nations have presented the role of the military in many diverse ways. For instance, from 1900 to 1945 they depicted the need to protect and defend the homeland and family, whereas earlier examples extolled the glory of death in battle. Currently the armed forces advertise their training facilities and career opportunities with the prospect of travel and adventure. Specialist military hardware and exotic locations have provided an excellent resource for designers. However, the images on the posters are often contradicted by those created by the official war artists who accompany the armed services in times of conflict. Peter Howson's paintings from the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict of 1993 are a good example.

The covers of biographies and autobiographies often use portraits of their subjects and typography in unique and creative ways. The essential restriction of having to use a portrait as the primary image, forces the designer to come up with imaginative and creative typographical and layout solutions; for example, Victoria Pendleton's *Between the Lines*, Neil Armstrong's *A Life of Flight*, Baroness Cox's *A Voice for the Voiceless* and Nigel Slater's *Toast*. Biographies of famous people with few or no images, such as William Cobbett, Attila the Hun and William the Conqueror, allow more creative freedom to designers.

Web designers frequently explore animation to capture the interest and imagination of their audience. Factual information is delivered with a unique twist on Google's web pages. Here a specially employed team redesigns the Google logo to represent a topical theme. These animations called Google Doodles are interactive, delivering the information and sources when you click or hover over the logo. Yahoo uses snippets of news with pertinent images and animation on its homepage, which is primarily used for advertisements.

Critical and Contextual Studies

Possible starting points:

Many forgeries of paintings and works of art attributed to famous artists have given substantial pleasure to their owners prior to the disclosure that they are fakes. This raises debate over the true value of art and the reasons for buying and owning it. One of the greatest forgers of art in the 20th century, Ken Perenyi, said he had no regrets about his actions and claimed in his book *Caveat Emptor* (let the buyer beware) that his intention was merely to produce as faithful a copy as his skill would allow. Some of the most prestigious art galleries and auction houses in the world cannot identify forgeries and undoubtedly many fakes are still giving pleasure to oblivious audiences and owners. If the intention of the original artwork is to evoke positive emotions, then surely the more accurate the forgery, the closer it is to fulfilling its purpose.

Digital images can be convincingly altered using image manipulation software, which raises ethical issues when used in advertising and publication. Fashion magazines for example will readily remove blemishes and adjust the figures of models to fit pre-determined stereotypes. The pressure this places on the consumer to conform to these fake examples of perfection is considerable. Artists and film makers use these same software programmes to create extraordinary creatures and a plethora of convincing humanoid aliens. These range from terrifying to humorous as demonstrated in the films *Alien* and *Dave*.

Advertisement designers are regulated by law and a code of practice that forbids them from making false claims about the products they are promoting. It is interesting to see how far designers push the boundaries of these restrictions and walk a fine line between the truth and fantasy. Car advertisements exemplify this distortion of truth, an example being the Citroen C4 advertisement that showed the car changing into a 'Transformer'. Did anyone actually believe that their C4 had the technology to achieve this? Many of these advertisements show vehicles coping with impossible situations such as outrunning helicopters and escaping from natural disasters. Creative possibilities and challenges for the designer are provided by exploring how far one can push the suspension of disbelief.

Certain artists use their skills to expose the truth and bring attention to controversial political issues. The graffiti artist known as Banksy has a worldwide reputation for putting images on buildings in public places that highlight and comment on current affairs. Political satirists throughout history, from Honoré Daumier to Stéphane Charbonnier and Ai Weiwei, have been prepared to take great personal risks in the pursuit of their right to visually express observations on society, key issues and personalities of the day.

Reference material

Please note that URLs are checked at the time of printing but are subject to change.

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Endorsement specific reference material

Fine Art

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Critical and Contextual Studies

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