

Assessment Report

Level 2 Art History 2017

Standards **91180** **91181** **91182**

Part A: Commentary

The new format for the Level 2 examination applied to all standards. The range and presentation of the coloured plates provided a high quality visual resource, with very clear instructions. Responses from candidates generally demonstrated some preparation, understanding, Art History language and clear interest in the subject Art History. Supporting evidence and specific detail enriched answers and the chosen plates were generally familiar to the candidates.

The new format for 91181 allowed candidates the opportunity to select a named work and use it in conjunction with a plate from the booklet to answer one of two questions. While this allowed candidates to bring to the exam an art work they were familiar with, very few took this opportunity.

Over ninety percent of candidates answered questions from the area of study, Towards Modernism and chose art works from the selected plates. The plates successfully provided a breadth of symbolism and meanings and were key works from most of the movements within this area of study. This may have been the reason why most chose to select both plates from the booklet.

The smaller number of candidates that sat the Aotearoa and the Pacific area of study, selected the works of Charles Heaphy (plate 13) and Augustus Earle (Plate 18). The range of art works did not seem as assessable as key works for this area of study and may have been challenging for candidates in providing the same level of depth, understanding and evaluation of meanings in relation to the contexts, themes, ideas required for excellence.

There was only one examination script for the area of study, Aspects of Gothic Art.

Part B: Report on standards

91180: Examine the effects of formal elements of art works

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- wrote in a descriptive style about the formal elements and their effects in the two art works chosen from the resource booklet, sometimes in a more general than specific way and not always evenly
- provided some evidence from the art works - an important aspect to support the discussion

- demonstrated understanding of the effects of formal elements, indicated by the use of some terms and specific detail
- focused on the question, sometimes more so at the beginning and end of the response than throughout.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- identified rather than described, sometimes making statements or writing generally without sufficient evidence or detail to support the discussion and demonstrate understanding
- misunderstood keywords, effects or ideas that prevented the candidate demonstrating 'some understanding' sufficiently
- discussed, disproportionately, meanings, context and background information rather than the effects of formal elements
- wrote about one work only
- did not sufficiently answer the question.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- wrote in an explanatory style about the formal elements and how they created effects in the two art works chosen from the resource booklet, generally evenly
- provided evidence and pertinent detail from the art works, sometimes integrated into the discussion
- demonstrated (some) in-depth understanding of the specified elements and effects related to the question, sometimes widening the discussion to support the explanation
- focussed on the question and kept it and the art works central to the discussion of the effects of formal elements
- used some Art History terminology to support the expression of understanding of formal elements and the role they play in art works.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- described the formal elements in detail and explained with (some) insight how formal elements created effects the art works, generally evenly across the response and the chosen artworks
- provided evidence and well observed detail from the art works, sometimes synthesised into the discussion
- demonstrated perceptive understanding of the specified elements and effects related to the question, sometimes contextualising the discussion to support the explanation
- focussed on: the question, the formal elements, the effects and the art works to provide a perceptive evaluation of the importance of formal elements in creating specific effects in art works
- used Art History terminology to express perceptive ideas confidently.

Standard specific comments

The skill of visual analysis is the focus of this standard at whatever level of achievement and understanding. In having to choose both works from the resource booklet, students are encouraged in this. Using and understanding Art History terms relating to the description and effects of formal elements is very helpful. By far the majority of students wrote from the Towards Modernism option, using a range of combinations of plates.

91181: Examine the meanings conveyed by art works

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- described meanings convincingly in the chosen art works

- described two motifs clearly and attempted to link them to the meanings of the art works
- used some evidence from the plates to expand on points made
- used appropriate art terminology when describing motifs and meanings.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- described motifs and not the meanings of an art work(s)
- discussed content not asked for in the question
- discussed formal elements and effects rather than meanings
- wrote a lot about the artist, art work and other art works, without addressing the question.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- explained meanings of chosen art works with specific links from two selected motifs
- used supporting evidence from the plates to expand on points made
- understood art terminology and used it convincingly
- structured their responses to evenly address both plates when explaining selected motifs and meanings
- supported their responses with evidence from the plates when expanding on points
- expressed ideas clearly.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- demonstrated perceptive interpretation of meanings in chosen art works
- explained the importance of meanings with detailed reference to motifs and expanded the response by interpreting relevant contexts and influences
- constructed sound responses, effectively supported by clear evidence from chosen art works
- expressed ideas fluently and with competence, using accurate and well understood art terminology.

Standard specific comments

The majority of candidates chose questions from Towards Modernism, with question three, conveying meaning about women, the most popular choice. There were few answers from the Aotearoa and Pacific area of study and almost none from Aspects of Gothic Art. Most schools are offering Towards Modernism over the two other areas of study.

While the new format for this standard allowed candidates to select a work of their own choice against a plate work, most of the responses used two plates from the question booklet. It may take time to see a change in the examination practice from this format change.

Successful candidates demonstrated convincing understanding of the meanings conveyed in art works, describing chosen motifs in both art works. The best answers differentiated between the first part of the question in describing symbols/motifs, and the second part, explaining the meanings in relation to the question topic, either women or modernity. Competent answers addressed the questions about meanings and were supported by relevant contextual influences.

Some candidates discussed in length formal elements and effects, not asked for, or answered too briefly how symbols/motifs were important in conveying meaning in relation to the question topic, thus not gaining credit.

Achievement answers were more descriptive, while explanation and interpretation provided the level of depth required for Merit and Excellence answers

91182: Examine the influence of context(s) on art works

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- wrote in a descriptive style about the influences of context in the chosen art works, not always evenly.
- provided (some) evidence and specific detail from the art works - an important aspect to support the discussion and can be observed in a variety of ways
- demonstrated (some) understanding of the context specified in the question
- demonstrated (some) understanding of the influences of the specified context as seen in the chosen art works
- focused on the question, sometimes using the wording of the question, for example 'The urban context has influenced the choice of subject' or 'The context of social class has influenced the classical depiction of Paolina.'

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- showed a misunderstanding of keywords or ideas that prevented the candidate demonstrating 'some understanding' sufficiently. (This did not include minor errors such as The Crystal Palace being in Paris)
- provided prepared responses or information that was not relevant to answering the question
- discussed, disproportionately, meanings, formal elements or setting rather than context and influences
- wrote generally without evidence and specific detail to support the discussion and demonstrate understanding
- ran out of time or wrote about one work only.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- wrote in an explanatory style about the influences of context in the chosen art works, not always evenly
- provided evidence and pertinent detail from the art works, sometimes integrated into the discussion
- demonstrated (some) in-depth understanding of the context specified in the question
- focussed on the question and kept it and the art works central to the discussion of contextual influences
- used Art History terminology to support the expression of understanding.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- explained with (some) insight how the context influenced the art works, generally evenly across the chosen artworks
- provided evidence and well observed detail from the art works, sometimes synthesised into the discussion
- demonstrated (some) perceptive understanding of the context specified in the question and its impact on the art works
- focussed on the question, the influences, the art works and the context to provide an insightful explanation
- used Art History terminology to express perceptive ideas confidently.

Standard specific comments

For 91182, candidates are required to demonstrate an understanding of the specified context and its influences on art works. This is quite challenging but overall, many candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the impact context has on art works. Keeping discussion specific rather than general helped them demonstrate their understanding, as did keeping in mind the essence of this standard which is about the influences of context.

The new format of the resource book provided choice for both the question and the plates. By far the majority of students wrote from the Towards Modernism option, using a range of combinations of plates. Students could choose their second art work from the resource booklet or their own choice and most chose their artworks from the resource booklet but some presented discussions on works of their own choice.

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