

# **Scholarship**

## **2009 Assessment Report**

### **Visual Arts: Design**

## COMMENTARY

Overall, the Design Scholarship cohort was extensive in its representation of current trends with many performing at an extremely high standard. There was a wide range of types represented in the field, which strongly reflected contemporary design contexts i.e. graphics, advertising, magazine, illustration, typography, formal concerns, fabric, furniture and spatial design. Subject matter, topics and issues addressed were widely varied and inventive in approach.

Candidates would have been aware that layout of the portfolio is crucial, and of the need to analyse the effect layout has on understanding (readability) of work produced, particularly in the design stages of each individual brief.

Candidates who created their own imagery through photo shoots or 3D, sculptural, installation or time-based avenues performed well, setting up rich and sustained topics for research that were easily 'topped up' throughout the investigation. This mode of operation also demonstrated a real sense of ownership and attitude that promoted diversity and individuality on the part of the candidate. In many instances ideas were playful, humour being employed both intelligently and inventively.

Many candidates achieving Scholarship set themselves challenging and ambitious briefs that they were able to unpack in numerous ways. Some limited themselves by asking very little, e.g. by virtually building a series of templates for a business, hotel, restaurant. Most candidates worked with the conventions and constraints of particular briefs, e.g. DPS, leaflets, etc. It was also good to see candidates understanding genre and extending their enquiry through the inclusion of other modalities and the generation of a range of potential options (both 2D & 3D).

The overall standard of workbooks was pleasing. The best discussed alternative possibilities, explored decision making or other briefs (further options), or profiled key thinking and developments. In most cases discussion of established practice was intelligent, analytical and reflective with many candidates clearly identifying where they saw relevant links. It was good to see workbooks where the candidate was clearly in charge of what they chose to include. In many cases links were made to established practice, suitably backed up by the candidate's own work.

Repetition was a downfall for some candidates, or the choice to enlarge one piece over another, which was weaker than other options.

## SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

### **Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:**

- confidently exploited formal design elements and employed type, image and materiality with skill and sophistication
- continuously researched to locate artistic references, which were appropriate and in some cases surprising
- employed presentation and layout strategies to enhance visual communication
- expressed creative ideas, visual look and sensibility conjointly
- operated with a complete sense of ownership and purpose throughout the enquiry.

## **SCHOLARSHIP**

### **Candidates who were awarded Scholarship but not Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly:**

- provided contextual information to foster a deeper reading and understanding of the portfolio
- fine-tuned their approach to style and ensured that visual language appropriately related to their concepts
- presented multiple options suggesting more than one right answer
- generated imagery through photos/drawings, which extended ideas with intention and purpose
- employed effective editing and selection processes to critically move the investigation forward.

## **OTHER CANDIDATES**

### **Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship or Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly:**

- did not reach the calibre of design process required at this level
- designed a brief that did not provide sufficient intelligent starting points
- used only a limited number of design/artist models
- did not create personal work that synthesised and extended beyond initial research
- presented workbooks which duplicated portfolio work, or explained step-by-step technical decisions, which read as unedited and an unnecessary filler
- did not arrange the layout of their workbooks to help the logical reading of ideas
- had difficulty taking ownership of the images used, which signalled authenticity issues
- used poor quality photographs
- did not advance the holistic nature of the portfolio and workbook relationship.

**Recommendations for 2010, arising from Scholarship 2009 Assessment Process:**  
**Visual Arts: Design**

All images should be kept to a reasonable scale in order to be seen clearly. Shifts made should be signalled through careful management and arrangement of work.

Editing by the candidate is essential to demonstrate criticality.

Candidates who are performing at Merit or Excellence throughout the year should be encouraged to enter for the Scholarship examination. Even with a somewhat limited workbook it is still possible to be competitive within the field, given that it is a holistic picture with two sites of evidence (portfolio and workbook) that is in consideration for Scholarship awards.