

Scholarship

2009 Assessment Report

Art History

COMMENTARY

The 2009 Scholarship Art History exam paper provided candidates with a range of opportunity and approach for their answers. The layout was clear, the questions were varied and the language was unambiguous.

In Section A there was a fairly even distribution of responses to the questions. Some candidates did not use correct art historical terminology. In Question 1 for example, the meaning of ‘medium’ was sometimes confused with ‘process’ or ‘technique’, and in Question 4 some misused ‘elements’.

In Question 4 some candidates were not clear as to the stance they were taking on this idea, but showed a shift in attitude mid-question. This suggests that these candidates were developing ideas ‘on the hoof’ rather than thinking through an answer before starting to respond.

In Section B questions 5, 7 and 8 were popular while few attempted Question 6. ‘We need art’ was a most popular concept to address. There was considerable variation in the quality of response to this statement. Some answers were very generalised, and not supported by reference to specific artworks.

Many candidates took a survey approach in their answers, beginning with mention of cave painting and progressing rapidly across centuries making little detailed reference to specific works. This approach resulted in descriptive responses which ignored the need for analysis of specific works to support ideas.

SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- demonstrated all the skills demonstrated by candidates awarded Scholarship

PLUS

- engaged with the question with clear evidence of independent thought
- presented evidence of highly developed critical thinking
- demonstrated originality of approach and outstanding communication skills
- showed flair
- maintained the quality of response in both questions.

SCHOLARSHIP

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

- responded to questions which displayed their knowledge and skills
- analysed the question, noting key words/instructions e.g. ‘justify or refute’
- showed they had planned answers that addressed the key words and focused on the principal issue raised by the question
- selected an appropriate range of relevant works enabling them to illustrate the different facets of their argument
- presented specific and detailed analyses of the selected art works, and related the works knowledgeably to relevant contexts
- demonstrated comprehensive depth and breadth of knowledge of specific areas of content

- were accurate in the information presented.

OTHER CANDIDATES

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

- chose questions they had insufficient knowledge to answer well
- did not show they had planned their answers, e.g. they were poorly structured or drifted from the question
- made sweeping, unsubstantiated statements
- did not support their discussion with specific details
- lacked detailed analysis of art works
- selected art works which were not useful for the question
- presented rote-learned responses, often answering previous years' examination questions rather than the current question
- lacked understanding of art historical terminology e.g. perspective, medium
- included errors/inaccuracies in their responses
- wrote a broad survey-type response, giving a superficial overview which could not score highly
- did not sustain the quality of response across both answers.