

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 2017. 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 2017.**

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. In the Externally Set Assignment it is anticipated that A2 candidates will show 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: NATURAL AND/OR ARTIFICIAL

Mankind's ability to mimic the natural world has resulted in some remarkable achievements, such as wing suits that allow skydivers to glide like flying squirrels, and wetsuits that enable divers to withstand freezing oceans. Many articulated joints in heavy machinery work on exactly the same principles as joints in the human body. Technological advances have resulted in the development of sophisticated alloys, enabling doctors to implant and replace organic joints with mechanical ones when they become damaged or diseased.

The desire to create permanent images of the transient elements of the visual world, such as water and light, inspired alchemists to develop a vast array of drawing materials and colours. Although early colours came from earth minerals, many such as cobalt green and Prussian blue are now synthetic, allowing a brilliance of hue previously unattainable with naturally occurring minerals. These colours add vibrancy and energy to the artist's palette.

Human artefacts, whether modest or grandiose, have a powerful impact on the natural landscape. This can be intentional as in the case of Antony Gormley's *Angel of the North* or a by-product of industrialisation such as Berkeley Nuclear Power Station. The latter building is a massive concrete tomb encasing the disused reactor cores. These cannot be removed for decades, due to radiation contamination. Architecture often makes impressive statements with massive structures such as the Severn and Forth Bridges, and the Heydar Aliyev Centre in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Our desire to stay connected with the natural world is evident from our demand for parks and open spaces in cities. Landscape photographs and paintings adorn office walls whilst film and television provide endless wildlife programmes such as *Life on Earth*, *The Blue Planet*, and the *Autumnwatch* and *Springwatch* series.

The precarious balance of demands between nature and man often provides a strong political focus for artists. The Arte Povera movement and contemporary work such as *Green Leaf Barrel* by Sokari Douglas Camp and *Double Negative* by Michael Heizer explore these issues.

Here are some other suggestions that may stimulate your imagination:

- Crash test dummies, dolls, puppets, cartoons, animation, robots
- Floodlights, golf courses, municipal parks and lakes, facades and follies
- Fake: Christmas trees, fruit, flowers, fur, wood
- Prosthetics, make-up, clowns, actors, ventriloquists, holograms
- Oculus Rift, simulators, myths, religion, storytellers, books, films, television
- Tanning creams, wigs, silver and gold plated plastic, fashion
- Animal skin prints, toys, Astroturf, concrete, inflatables
- Greenpeace, politicians' spin, newspapers, propaganda, advertising, social media
- Topiary, reflections, perfume, camouflage, masks, food additives

Fine Art

Optional disciplines:

- Painting and drawing
- Printmaking
- Sculpture
- Alternative media

Possible starting points:

Portrait painters have always recognised the importance of controlling light and how it can change the mood of the finished work. They often manipulate both natural and artificial light to achieve their desired effects, in much the same way as commercial studio photographers. The striking use of light in Caravaggio's *Boy with a Basket of Fruit* and Ken Howard's *Sarah at Oriel* demonstrates the tension and drama created by the careful consideration of chiaroscuro techniques.

Sculptors who choose to work with natural materials such as wood, marble and limestone are forced to embrace and utilise any natural flaws such as knots, veins or fissures in the material. These are often skilfully incorporated into the design and enhance rather than detract from the work. Those sculptors working with synthetic materials such as glass, plastic or steel can revel in the perfection that is achievable with these materials. Rodin was a master at embracing the imperfections of marble; Anish Kapoor and David Harber are masters at exploiting the reflective qualities of polished stainless steel and glass.

Nature has tremendous power to heal and repair the landscape after industry or habitation has scarred it. Any site, no matter how heavily tarmacked or concreted, will show signs of nature reclaiming the ground if it is left unattended for any length of time. Weeds pry apart the masonry and erupt through the asphalt slowly undoing the damage. Ironically the abandoned nuclear disaster site at Chernobyl, deadly for humans, has become a wildlife haven. Artists such as John Piper, J.M.W. Turner, Thomas Cole and Claude Lorrain, are just a few who have been inspired by the visual effect of this phenomenon. The work of contemporary artists Tricia Middleton and Jonas De Ro follows this genre.

The juxtaposition of artificial and natural objects in still life painting can produce powerful imagery. The harsh geometric shapes and polished surfaces of man-made objects contrast with the soft flowing forms of organic materials. The Dutch still life painters produced remarkably skilful compositions that demonstrated their control of paint. This genre has remained popular through many art movements with William Nicholson showing his prowess in depicting pewter and glass in the 1930s and Audrey Flack's contemporary superrealist work continuing to fascinate and impress. Add to these paintings the dimension of narrative and the objects become poignant metaphors for the fragility and transience of life.

Three-Dimensional Design

Optional disciplines:

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

Possible starting points:

A reawakening of interest in ancient traditional building materials has caused contemporary designers to create architecture that embraces the characteristics and quirks of unconventional products. Cob, turf, straw and wattle and daub have been used to produce some unique and environmentally friendly buildings. At the other end of the scale, revolutionary new composites are also allowing the construction of designs that are both economic to run and embrace the characteristics of the materials. Keppel Gate in Ottery St Mary, built by Kevin McCabe out of cob, is a fine example of the former; and The Taliesin Mod.Fab Modular Home by Jennifer Siegal and Michael P. Johnson, built with structural insulated panels (SIPs), is an example of the latter.

Robotics and artificial intelligence have raised challenges for designers seeking to create socially acceptable forms for machines. An initial desire to make them as humanoid as possible produced some fairly strong negative reactions from the general public. It seems that the more human they become the more they scare the audience. The Japanese android ChihiraAico was installed as a receptionist in a department store and provoked mixed reactions from shoppers. Science fiction film writers may have fuelled this phenomenon. In a number of films, such as *A.I.* and *I, Robot*, androids malfunction and attack humans.

Ceramic designers seem to have a very close bond with the natural world, probably because clay comes from the landscape and also because of pottery's long association with food and drink. Consequently, the designs of pots and ceramic sculptures often draw on the natural world for inspiration. The fascinating zoomorphic vessels of Pre-Columbian South America use abstracted animal forms as necks, handles and spouts. The quirky Victorian charm of The Martin Brothers' pots continues to attract admirers and contrasts strikingly with Charles Baldwyn's swan paintings on Worcester porcelain of the same period. Contemporary ceramicists Gaynor Ostinelli and Paul Priest continue this tradition of using animals as inspiration.

3D modelling in stop frame animations such as *Creature Comforts*, *Chicken Run* and *Fantastic Mr Fox* has become very popular. The characters are effectively transformed into 3D cartoons that are only successful because of the close observation of the living creatures they represent. These animals are only a small part of the production, as each scene is staged in an environment as closely observed as the main characters. Science fiction films often use modelled and sculpted sets to create alien landscapes, as in those designed by H.R. Giger for the film *Alien*.

Photography

Optional disciplines:

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

Possible starting points:

The idea of what makes a good family portrait constantly changes over time, as notions of formality and informality shift and change. In Victorian times the long length of exposure and social convention required an extremely formal, stiff grouping of people with the father figure dominating. Smiling was forbidden. Mark Twain wrote, 'A photograph is a most important document, and there is nothing more damning to go down to posterity than a silly, foolish smile caught and fixed forever.' In our own times the need to smile and seem happy is unquestioned. Having 'fun', often with young children as the centre of attention, is now an equally rigid social convention and may baffle future generations in the same way as we find Victorian formality unnatural. The Malian photographers Seydou Keïta and Malick Sidibé are famous for the grace and pride of their formal family portraits.

The debate between artifice and natural 'candid' photography is as old as the medium itself. Oscar Rejlander presented a montage of over 30 negatives to tell a moral story in his *The Two Ways of Life*. Paul Martin hid a camera in a Gladstone bag and became one of the earliest 'candid' photographers in Victorian London. In recent times, Gregory Crewdson is known for the elaborate care and expense that goes into his carefully staged shoots. Robert Doisneau's *Kiss by the Town Hall*, celebrated for many years as a spontaneous and natural picture of two Parisian lovers, was later revealed to have been carefully set up by the photographer.

In Roman Polanski's film *Chinatown* the lead character played by Jack Nicholson chases a suspect through a building, in a scene of great urgency and realism. The camerawork is hand-held and shaky, contrasting with the smooth quality of previous scenes. This early example of 'naturalistic' hand-held camerawork has been much copied. The 'Nouvelle Vague' cinema of Jean-Luc Godard made a distinction between naturalism and realism. This difference is shown in a later film – *Days of Heaven* by Terrence Malick – where the lush 'naturalism', showing farm work in late 19th century America, begins to take on a distinctly affected and unrealistic style.

Colour and lighting in photographs influence our perception of the naturalism of a photographic image. In black and white photography there is a further remove from reality – and yet paradoxically this can often make the image seem more natural. Henri Cartier-Bresson explained his reluctance to use colour: 'The reason is that you have been shooting what you see. But then there are the printing inks and all sorts of different things over which you have no control whatsoever... nature gives us so much... You have to select things.'

Boris Mikhailov took a series of highly naturalistic and gritty black and white photographs of everyday life in 1980s Russia. He then very obviously tinted them by hand, adding a strangely discordant sense of artifice, perhaps drawing attention to the sense of 'unreality' in actual life under communism.

Textile Design

Optional disciplines:

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

Possible starting points:

Natural fibres from diverse sources are being used creatively in interior furnishings and homeware. Ella Doran's *Natural Collection* for WovenGround uses a variety of ecologically produced fibres from sustainable sources. Some of these fibres, such as kesav and okra, are traditionally used in rope-making. The leaves of the water hyacinth plant are normally used in the biofuel industry but are also employed to make durable floor coverings.

Catarina Riccabona's range of sustainable textiles is created from undyed recycled linens and alpaca wool. She also uses wool from Finland dyed with mushrooms, bark and leaves. Felicity Irons' company makes woven rush products, plaited by hand and interwoven with lavender, artemesia and camomile, hand sewn with jute twine. The rushwork can be rejuvenated by watering using an atomiser, which also brings out the natural perfume of the products.

The idea of adapting patterns from nature runs through all historical periods. In the 20th century the French painter Raoul Dufy expressed a love of nature that was both joyful and uncomplicated. Austrian Josef Frank's designs inspired by flowers and fruit, provided a counterbalance to the austerity of the prevailing modernist style. More recently Clover Canyon, headed by chief designer Rozae Nichols, has employed digital printing techniques to create outlandishly 'neo-baroque' prints using symmetry and bright colours. Agi & Sam have brought humour and dare to menswear with bold floral patterns. Mary Katrantzou, Peter Pilotto, and Masha Reva have all taken unique and imaginative approaches inspired by the natural world.

Fashion has thrived on artifice and excess from the outset. From 17th century ruffs, Victorian corsets and top hats, to the shoulder-padded power dressers of the 1980s. Counter-cultural styles such as Punk rock have often been a reaction to the prevailing fashion. Punk brought tribalism, the street and sadomasochistic style into fashion. Elizabeth Wilson said at the time, 'What was important was that nothing should look natural.' Hussein Chalayan, Georgina Godley, Issey Miyake, and Alexander McQueen have all experimented with extremes of artifice, whilst Iris van Herpen has used digitally printed structures to create garments of paradoxically extreme artifice.

Kathleen McFarlane created a series of extraordinary woven hanging textile pieces inspired by nature. She constantly experimented and created works that are evocative of bursting spores, flesh-like protuberances or the flayed skins of animals. Ernesto Neto fills whole galleries with hanging organic forms, inviting the audience to clamber over and through the work. In these ambitiously scaled sculptures, sometimes filled with spices, all the senses are stimulated. Both of these artists could be contrasted with Sonia Delaunay's more abstract textile wall hangings inspired by geometry and formal relationships of colour.

Graphic Communication

Optional disciplines:

- Advertising
- Illustration
- Packaging
- Typography
- Interactive media

Possible starting points:

Graphic designers' development of simplified signs and symbols is crucial in enabling the target audience to recognise companies, products and 'find their way' through complex environments, such as airport terminals. Some symbols rely on realistic visual clues as well as a learned association, for instance the almost universally recognised symbol of a seated figure above a circle to represent wheelchair access. The designers of the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Tangent Graphics, attempted to distil the 'key decisive moment' of each sport into a logo. This was a simplified graphic form, successfully combining naturalism with abstraction.

The concept of personalised marketing has grown in recent years. Internet searches enable advertisers to target your preferences and potential choices with ever greater accuracy. However, there is evidence that there is an 'uncanny valley' effect that can operate. The marketing department of Qantas airlines, for example, has very detailed data on their frequent fliers, which is now provided to the flight attendants serving them. Far from creating a positive effect, passengers began to feel 'creeped out' and disconcerted by attendants knowing so much about their preferences. Urban Outfitters also recently adapted its website to its customers to such a degree that it began to put them off.

Children's book illustrations tend to become more realistic as the audience get closer to teenage years. Dick Bruna's simplified rabbit *Miffy* and David McKee's patchwork elephant *Elmer* appeal to young readers. Naturalistic illustrations in *Amazing Grace* by Caroline Binch, the *Alfie* series by Shirley Hughes and the *Katie Morag* books by Mairi Hedderwick target older, primary school age children. *Hello Kitty*, originally by Yuko Shimizu, bears many similarities to *Miffy* but is in fact aimed at older teenage girls or adults, perhaps already nostalgic for their early childhood.

Japanese packaging has employed natural materials with great economy, simplicity and beauty for hundreds of years. Bamboo leaves, for instance, have often been used to wrap whole meals of sushi, or individual portions of adzuki beans. Hideyuki Oka wrote *How to Wrap Five More Eggs*, explaining how for the Japanese the process of both wrapping and unwrapping was bound up with ritual and spirituality. To many Japanese it seems that Western packaging often appears 'locked', as if the contents are unable to escape. In contrast, Japanese packages are frequently described as animated or alive, with a 'spirit' inside.

Critical and Contextual Studies

Possible starting points:

The invention of plastic in the early 1900s brought about a revolution in product design, as many household products traditionally made from natural materials were superseded by plastic. Some designers tried to mimic the shape and texture of traditional materials: attempting to recreate wood grain, fabric weave and the subtle effects of ceramic glazes by casting and staining. Other designers seized on the materials' own characteristics, enjoying the smooth, flexible and slightly soapy quality of early plastics. Swedish, Italian and Japanese designers were the first to embrace the potential of the new material in the 1950s. Natural materials are still being replicated in plastic, such as Mazanetti's range of rattan weave garden furniture.

Artists have often made powerful political statements in their work about mankind's disregard of the Earth and its resources. L.S. Lowry, George Bellows, Edward Burtynsky, Peter Prendergast and Charles Sheeler have all produced thought-provoking work that highlights these concerns. The artificial reconstruction of lakes, hills and wooded areas, with carefully planned landscaping, is going some way to reversing the impact of industrial exploitation. This is exemplified by new environments and constructions such as the Eden Project and the Millennium Dome.

The development and manufacture of artificial dyes and pigments had a dramatic effect on the work of designers and artists in the late 1800s. New synthetic fabric dyes were developed at the same time as the art world was undergoing revolutionary ideas and philosophies. Early 20th century artists and designers utilised the brilliance of these new colours to create dynamic patterns and shapes that strongly influenced the Haute Couture of the day. This joy of colour culminated in the visual explosion of the 1960s, where Pop and Op art exploited the full potential of pure colour. Contemporary fabric designer Saini Salonen continues to develop patterns that show this juxtaposition of vibrant colours and shapes.

The idea of rural life and people working in harmony with nature has often been romanticised and can become an idyllic ambition of those living in urban communities. Contemporary television programmes such as *Escape to the Country* expound the virtues of what is perceived by many as the simple life. The English Romantic Movement portrayed a pre-industrial world of balance and harmony in paintings such as *The Hay Wain* by John Constable. The reality, however, often bore little resemblance to this. Many painters chose to portray a different and perhaps more accurate picture of rural life: *The Potato Eaters* by Van Gogh; Jean-François Millet's *The Gleaners*; *Agricultural Workers in Parson Drove* and *Balling the Woad* by James Doyle Penrose; *A Faggot Gatherer* by Wally Moes tell a different story.

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

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Textile Design

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Graphic Communication

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