



*Let the mind manage the body
Que l'esprit gère le corps*

**MAURITIUS
EXAMINATIONS
SYNDICATE**

**NCE 2025 GRADE 9
Art and Design**

Subject code: N580

EXAMINER'S REPORT

NCE ART AND DESIGN (N580)
Examiner Report 2025
Component 1

GENERAL REMARKS

Component 1 is the practical paper that assesses the candidate's ability to respond to a selected optional question. It evaluates their capacity to conduct appropriate research and investigation, demonstrate the development of ideas and concepts, explore media and processes in an informed manner, and present a well-organized final work. The process begins with the pre-released question paper, allowing candidates sufficient time to complete preparatory works before producing the final artwork under examination conditions.

In general, most candidates made appropriate choices of question, and their attempts were relevant to the selected themes. Only a small number of candidates appeared to have made random choice, resulting in limited or superficial exploration of the themes.

Candidates demonstrating excellent and outstanding abilities worked with confidence throughout the process. Their responses were focused, coherent and well organized at every stage, from research and development to final execution. The resulting artworks were of a very high standard and reflected strong conceptual understanding and technical competence. A considerable number of scripts at this level were highly accomplished, indicating the effective guidance and support provided by Educators.

Candidates performing at an average level generally attempted all the required stages and completed both preparatory and final work competently and proficiently. However, some uncertainty in decision-making and repetition of ideas were observed in a number of submissions at this level.

Lower-level submissions required greater engagement and commitment from candidates. In several cases, responses were isolated and showed limited, minimal or no evidence of research. Some candidates failed to submit preparatory works which had a negative impact on their overall performance.

Comments on individual questions

Question 1

Observational Study: Drawing and Shading / Painting from direct observation

Make a study or studies on one of the following:

- a) A textured vegetable

- b) A toothpaste tube

(a): A textured vegetable

This question required candidates to explore various artistic elements, including shapes, forms, lines, illustrations, perspectives, tonal values, media exploration, and in particular, texture. Candidates selected vegetables such as bitter melon, capsicums, onions, pumpkin and ladyfingers among others, and developed their ideas using both primary and/or secondary sources.

Observations

Quality artwork

It was encouraging to observe several submissions that demonstrated an in-depth exploration of the specified elements, reflecting strong engagement with drawing and painting media. Compositions were carefully arranged, ensuring visual balance and harmony. Effective use of tonal values and colour application was evident, and candidates displayed confidence in selecting and manipulating appropriate media and techniques to convincingly depict textural qualities, whether soft or rough.

Unpolished artwork

Candidates who relied heavily on secondary sources demonstrated limited originality. In some cases, ideas were directly borrowed or copied from existing imagery with minimal personal interpretation or transformation. Such approaches are not commendable, as they negatively impact candidates' performance.

A lack of experimentation with different media was also noted, often resulting in flat and unresolved outcomes. Candidates should be encouraged to experiment with different media during preparatory studies before choosing the most suitable media for their final work.

Suggestions for Improvement:

Use Research effectively: Draw inspiration from both primary and secondary sources to plan compositions and develop accurate observational drawings.

Develop Measuring Skills: Practice using accurate measuring techniques to establish correct proportions and structure. Regular engagement in observational studies strengthen technical discipline and visual accuracy.

Experiment with Media: Explore a variety of media to enhance the depiction of volume and surface quality, thereby improving both aesthetic and technical outcomes.

(b): A toothpaste tube

This question attracted considerable interest, as the object selected is familiar, easily accessible, and part of candidates' daily lives.

Quality artwork

High-performing candidates successfully represented squeezed toothpaste tubes, capturing both cylindrical and flattened surfaces. Careful rendering of white and light tones was evident, and the use of personal photographs contributed to originality and authenticity. Perspective was carefully considered, with lettering diminishing or distorting appropriately across the surface of the object.

Unpolished works

Some candidates produced simple outline drawings of toothpaste tubes, often based on secondary sources. Difficulties with layout and angles of observation were noted, with repeated compositions and little variation from start to finish.

Suggestions for improvement

- Studies of readily available man-made objects need to be encouraged as it proves to be accessible and caters for original arrangement(s) together with unique studies.
- Use of varied media helps the candidate to opt and best present the final work. Working on tinted paper/coloured paper helped candidates to achieve background effect or made the object project out from the background.

Question 2

Still Life: Drawing and Shading or Drawing / Painting a group of objects

Make a composition based on any **one** of the following:

- a) A flower vase with leafy plants

- b) An opaque bowl with three different fruits

Question 2 required candidates to create a still life composition based on either 'a flower vase with leafy plants' or 'an opaque bowl with three different fruits'. This question assessed the ability to observe and organise objects convincingly while demonstrating understanding of form, proportion, perspective, light, texture and colour. As in previous years, this question provided substantial opportunity for candidates to demonstrate direct observational skills and technical discipline.

Overall performance for this question was mixed, with a clear distinction between

candidates who demonstrated strong observational ability and those whose responses lacked structural accuracy and depth.

Highly accomplished submissions reflected careful planning, confident arrangement of objects, and a sophisticated use of tone and colour to define volume and spatial depth. These candidates showed authentic engagement with their subject matter through well-constructed preparatory work and consistent visual investigation.

However, many responses revealed recurring weaknesses. Inaccurate ellipses, disproportionate object relationships, and inconsistent shading were common issues. Several compositions appeared flat, awkwardly spaced or unbalanced, often due to the absence of cast shadows, surface indication or a clearly defined light source. Weak tonal variation further limited the sense of three-dimensional form. Some candidates relied heavily on secondary references, reducing observational quality. In several cases, preparatory studies did not correspond to the final outcome, indicating poor planning or unconsidered changes.

Despite these difficulties, the question continued to provide a solid platform for demonstrating technical and observational competence. Candidates who worked consistently from primary sources and developed the composition thoughtfully. They produced stronger and more convincing outcomes.

(a) A flower vase with leafy plants

Observations

Quality artwork

- Effective depiction of foliage: Strong candidates demonstrated close observation of leaf shapes, curvature, overlapping forms and vein patterns, adding depth and natural variation to their compositions.
- Convincing vase structure: Successful works showed accurate elliptical rims, symmetrical proportions and clear indication of the vase opening and rim thickness. Some candidates effectively captured reflections and surface qualities.
- Tonal sensitivity: Layered tonal application helped define the three-dimensional form of the vase and foliage. Controlled use of light and shadow produced convincing realism, particularly on reflective surfaces.
- Balanced composition: Strong responses showed thoughtful arrangements of leaves that complemented the vertical structure of the vase, maintaining rhythm and balance without overcrowding.
- Use of references and media exploration: Candidates who supported their work with both primary and secondary sources produced stronger outcomes. Preparatory sheets included varied media trials, colour tests, and annotations explaining artistic decisions.

Unpolished artwork

- Inaccurate or distorted ellipses: Many candidates struggled to draw vase openings accurately. Ellipses were often tilted, uneven or inconsistent with the perspective, weakening structural credibility.
- Stiff or repetitive leaves: Some works displayed identical or overly stylised leaf forms with little variation in direction or size, resulting in unnatural or mechanical appearances.
- Weak tonal control: Inconsistent shading and unclear light sources led to flat and lifeless foliage. Poor contrast reduced the sense of volume and depth.
- Floating objects: The absence of tabletop indications or cast shadows caused the vase and leaves to appear suspended. Stems were sometimes drawn without convincingly entering the vase.
- Over-reliance on secondary images: Candidates who relied solely on downloaded pictures produced weaker observational outcomes. Work based on direct observation was noticeably stronger.
- Poor preparatory alignment: Some candidates prepared studies of one flower type but produced final works depicting different species, indicating inadequate planning or rushed decision-making.
- Ineffective use of space: Several compositions suffered from awkward spacing, with objects placed too small within the page or lacking a clear focal point.

(b) An opaque bowl with three different fruits

Observations

Quality artwork

- Accurate modelling of fruit forms: Strong candidates convincingly captured spherical or oval shapes through smooth tonal gradations, creating realistic three-dimensional volume.
- Textural awareness: High-achieving responses clearly differentiated textures such as smooth surfaces of apples and pears, roughness of citrus fruits, and the softer matte qualities of plums or similar fruits.
- Correct bowl structure: Successful works showed accurate ellipses, believable rim thickness and stable bowl placement. Perspective was well understood and consistently applied.
- Depth through overlapping: Effective arrangements of fruits placed in overlapping positions, avoiding linear formations and creating depth within the composition.
- Confident colour blending: Subtle colour transitions were used to define ripeness, reflected light and natural surface variations. Candidates explored colour using a range of media, including watercolour, ink and oil pastels.

- Ambitious fruit selection: While common fruits were often used, some candidates attempted more complex textures such as pineapples and melons, demonstrating creativity and confidence.

Unpolished artwork

- Flat, outline-driven drawings: Many weaker responses relied heavily on outlines with minimal tonal development, resulting in flat and unconvincing forms.
- Ellipse and perspective errors: Incorrectly drawn bowls too pointed, too open, or skewed, were frequent and compromised structural accuracy.
- Limited tonal range: Weak application of highlights, midtones and shadows reduced form. The absence of cast shadows caused fruits to appear disconnected from their surfaces.
- Static arrangements: Fruits were often placed separately without overlap, producing dull and static compositions.
- Lack of background and surface indications: Many works omitted tabletops or background values, reducing contextual coherence.
- Weak preparatory practice: Preparatory studies often lacked investigation, planning or media exploration. In some cases, preparatory work was stronger than the final examination piece, showing difficulties in execution under timed conditions.
- Technique limitations: Restricted media use and limited blending resulted in patchy or inconsistent colour application.

Suggestions for Improvement

To improve performance in still life compositions, Educators are encouraged to:

- Strengthen observational drawing skills through regular practice using real objects, focusing on proportion, form and light.
- Reinforce understanding of ellipses, perspective and foreshortening through targeted classroom exercises.
- Develop students' tonal modelling skills, emphasising highlights, midtones, shadows and reflected light.
- Encourage thoughtful composition planning using thumbnail sketches and structured arrangement exercises.
- Ensure preparatory studies include relevant media trials, annotations, and colour planning that align directly with the final work.
- Promote a consistent use of cast shadows and background tones to ground objects spatially.
- Cultivate originality by prioritising primary sources rather over downloaded images.
- Provide exemplars and regular formative feedback to clarify assessment expectations.

In conclusion, it is recommended that still-life tasks continue to present accessible yet skill-testing objects that challenge candidates to demonstrate observational accuracy, tonal precision, textural awareness, and compositional control, while remaining appropriate across the full ability range.

Question 3

Interpretative composition: Drawing and Shading with coloured pencils/ Painting a composition in colour

Create an interpretative composition based on any **one** of the following titles:

- a) My dream
- b) An accident
- c) My hero

This question required candidates to demonstrate their ability to analyse, understand and creatively interpret a selected theme. While many candidates engaged meaningfully with the task, less skilled candidates showed incoherence in their preparatory work, along with limited development of ideas and insufficient experimentation with media and processes.

Observations

Quality artwork

- Strong creative responses demonstrating imagination and effective media exploration.
- Clear coherence and progression evident throughout preparatory studies.
- Thoughtful consideration of layout and composition, reflecting sound planning and visual thinking.
- Confident mastery and manipulation of chosen media.
- Appropriate and insightful interpretation of the selected theme.
- Good manipulative skills and aesthetic judgement consistently demonstrated across studies and final outcomes.

Unpolished artwork

- Difficulties in rendering human figures accurately and convincingly within compositions.
- Poor organisation and sequencing of ideas in preparatory.
- Over-reliance on secondary sources, with excessive copying from internet-based imagery.
- Limited experimentation and lack of clear development proposals.
- Oversized preparatory work that lacked focus and clarity, often diluting conceptual intent.

Suggestions for improvement

- Encourage the use of appropriate, good-quality paper suited to the chosen media.
- Avoid unnecessary or excessive research that does not contribute meaningfully to idea development.
- Promote focused and purposeful development of concepts rather than broad or unfocused exploration.
- Emphasise the importance of first-hand studies to strengthen originality and personal engagement.
- Teach candidates how to identify and apply emphasis within effectively a composition to guide visual impact.
- Increase classroom exposure to human anatomy and human figure drawing to support more confident inclusion of figures in compositions.
- Discourage copying, over-reliance on internet sources, the use of AI-generated imagery, and excessively large formats, as these practices often detract from originality and conceptual control.

Question 4: Design on paper

Attempt any **one** from **A, B or C**

A. Create a repeat pattern based on any one of the following themes:

- a) Patterns from any animal of your choice
- b) Irregular shapes from nature

You may choose from

- Either (i) drawing and painting technique(s)
Or (ii) block printing (vegetables printing)
Or (iii) relief printing (string on wood).

B. Design a poster in colour on any one of the following events

- a) 'Food Day' at school
- b) A concert on the occasion of the National Day celebrations

Lettering and illustrations should be included

Note: Mixed media may also be used.

C. Design a logo for any one of the following

- a) An NGO named 'Marine Warriors' dedicated to the protection of oceans and marine life
- b) A company specialised in selling sports rackets named 'Racketworld'

The size of the logo should be approximately 15 x 21 cm.

Note: A maximum of five colours may be used.

A. Repeat Pattern

This was a popular choice and elicited a wide range of responses, primarily within the proficient to average performance levels. Candidates were asked to develop repeat patterns based on either animal motifs or irregular natural shapes.

Patterns from any animal of your choice

Observations

Quality artwork

- Demonstrated focused investigations and in-depth exploration of motifs through observational studies.
- Showcased successful repetition with rhythm, flow, and balanced arrangement.
- Effective use of contrasting colours enhanced natural patterns, even in irregular shapes.
- Preparatory work was thorough, with clear progression from research and initial sketches to final design proposals.
- Stylization of motifs was logical, creative, and supported by both primary and secondary sources.

Unpolished artwork

- Limited or absent preparatory work, weakening the conceptual and technical quality of the final piece.
- Uneven or inconsistent repetition; motifs were often redrawn individually without proper use of tracing or grid methods.
- Neglect of stylisation led to repetitive or unimaginative designs.
- Poor colour choices, with clashing or overused vibrant colours, resulted in visually untidy outcomes.
- Incomplete use of the page, with small designs that lacked strong composition or balance.
- Over-reliance on secondary images restricted originality and independent creativity.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Encourage less experienced candidates to attempt repeat patterns, as realistic drawing skills are less critical.
- Promote the use of grid planning and tracing paper for accurate and uniform motif repetition.
- Ensure motifs are developed from direct observation rather than copied from internet sources.
- Emphasise stylisation processes in preparatory studies to transform original observations into creative patterns.

- Teach candidates to maximise page use and thoughtfully arrange elements for balanced compositions.
- Guide appropriate colour choices aligned with the motif while encouraging creative experimentation.
- Reinforce those preparatory studies should inform and directly support the final design.

B. Design a poster

The question required candidates to explore visual communication themes based on two distinct events:

(a) "FOOD DAY" at school

(b) A concert for the National Day Celebration

The theme encouraged candidates to think creatively about the event representation, poster layout, colour harmony, text hierarchy. Additionally, candidates were expected to demonstrate their understanding of composition, lettering and graphic communication.

General Performance

Question 4B(a) attracted the highest number of responses. Students were generally more familiar with school-based events, resulting in more ideas, vibrant colours, and engaging imagery.

Question 4B(b) received fewer responses, possibly due to limited exposure to concert themes or challenges in representing sound, rhythm, movement, and national symbolism visually.

Observations

Quality artwork

- Demonstrated thorough preparatory investigations, including sketches, brainstorming, colour trials, and layout variations.
- Strong creative ideas with expressive lettering, well-considered typography, and visually rhythmic composition.
- Accurate inclusion and placement of key information (title, date, location) for clarity and readability.
- Clear progression from primary observations (e.g., food items, musical instruments, school scenes) to final design.
- Balanced integration of text and graphics, with effective use of symbolism, contrast, borders, and guiding lines.

Unpolished artwork

- Over-reliance on copied images or clip art from the internet, limiting originality.
- Repetition of similar preparatory sketches without exploring alternative layouts, colours, or designs.
- Weak text hierarchy and poor placement of slogans and event details, reducing clarity.
- Poor spacing, alignment, and overuse of dark or clashing colours.
- Lack of focal point and inconsistent shading diminished aesthetic quality.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Plan layouts carefully, using grids, guiding lines, and thumbnails to enhance composition and readability.
- Encourage harmonious colour schemes aligned with event themes (e.g., fresh colours for Food Day, patriotic tones for National Day).
- Identify a clear focal point and organise secondary elements to support visual hierarchy.
- Promote original sketches and primary observations over secondary sources.
- Encourage students to brainstorm multiple layouts before selecting the final design.
- Train students to self-evaluate using simple checklists for composition, colour, and text clarity.

C. Design a logo

Overview

Candidates were asked to design a logo for an NGO named “Marine Warriors”, dedicated to the protection of oceans and marine life. The task assessed creativity, simplification and stylisation of imagery, integration of typography with symbols, and overall visual coherence.

High Achievers

- Produced logos of commendable quality with clear progression from preparatory sketches to final design.
- Observational drawings of marine life were accurate and well-developed.
- Demonstrated effective stylisation, simplifying complex forms while integrating text harmoniously.
- Final logos exhibited aesthetic quality, compositional balance, and technical mastery.

Mid-Range Achievers

- Completed preparatory work but relied heavily on downloaded images.
- Copied or modified existing logos, sometimes changing only the name.
- Final logos were technically acceptable but lacked originality and personal visual research.

Low Achievers

- Logos showed poor technical skills, distorted shapes, and unbalanced composition.
- Many designs resembled posters rather than logos, with scattered elements and weak typography integration.
- Preparatory work was minimal or absent, limiting development and refinement.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Avoid copying or modifying existing logos from the internet; use them only as inspiration.
- Conduct thorough research and investigation to develop coherent, original ideas from both primary and secondary sources.
- Focus on visual aesthetics: organise elements for balance, clarity, and harmonious integration of text and symbols.
- Emphasise simplicity, cohesion, and clear communication in logo design.

Question 5: 3D Works

Attempt any **one** from either **A** or **B**.

A. Create an assemblage based on any one of the following:

- a) Boat
- b) Spaceship

The size of the assemblage should not be less than 15 cm and not more than 40 cm in any direction.

B. Create a relief carving on a soap bar based on any one of the following:

- a) Sea animals
- b) Plants and ferns

The size of the final carving should not be less than 3 x 3 x 10cm.

A. Create an assemblage

This question assessed candidates' abilities to assemble diverse materials into an original three-dimensional composition, highlighting creativity, structural soundness, and visual impact.

Overall Performance

- There was an increased quantity of three-dimensional work produced, indicating progress in imaginative interpretation.
- Candidates successfully repurposed everyday objects into structurally sound and visually engaging artwork.
- Effective application of symmetry was observed, particularly in boats and spaceships, with some candidates incorporating LED lighting elements.

Quality artwork

Materials

- Candidates predominantly used recycled materials such as buttons, muslin paper, and cardboard from packaging.
- High-quality assemblages demonstrated creativity in material selection and robust structural stability.
- Select works, such as boats and spaceships, displayed well-defined silhouettes and careful attention to three-dimensional form.
- Candidates showed foundational competency in combining multiple components into cohesive structures.

Investigation and Development

- Candidates documented the evolution of their preliminary work with photographs, illustrating the construction process step by step.
- Strong conceptual development was evident, with thorough exploration of core ideas leading to sophisticated and well-considered final pieces.

Unpolished Artwork

Materials

- Several assemblages were unstable or used inappropriate materials for mounting purposes, resulting in structural weakness.

Preparatory Work

- Preparatory studies were often limited, with restricted exploration of colour, materials, media, and technical skills.
- Conceptual development and experimentation were minimal, leading to weaker final outcomes.

Suggestions for Improvement

- **Material Selection and Construction Techniques:** Provide structured guidance on selecting appropriate materials (cardboard, sticks, plastics) and applying reinforcement strategies such as internal supports, layering, and proper joining.
- **Planning and Design Process:** Encourage creation of multi-view sketches (front, side, top) prior to construction and exploration of surface finishing techniques using paint, collage, or textured materials.
- **Research and Documentation:** Strengthen preparatory sheets with comprehensive sketches, mock-ups, and material experimentation. Conduct thorough research into assemblage techniques to support creativity and informed decision-making.

B. Create a relief carving on a soap bar

This question measured candidates' proficiency in subtractive sculpting methods on soap, focusing on accuracy, artistic expression, and dimensional variation.

Strengths and Weaknesses

- **Materials and tools**
Candidates effectively used soap as a carving medium to depict sea creatures and botanical forms.
- Works demonstrated smooth surfaces, clean cuts, and well-defined textures such as scales, shells, waves, and layered leaves.
- Some candidates explored depth and projection through voids and areas of high relief.
- Use of appropriate carving tools enabled distinctive texture and refined surfaces.

Investigation and Development

- Observational research informed carvings of dolphins, sharks, turtles, seahorses, and plants.
- High-level candidates documented steps using photographs and preparatory sketches, showing a clear development from initial concepts to final work.

Weaknesses / Unpolished Work

- Carvings were occasionally fragile, undersized, or incomplete due to poor material handling or insufficient structural consideration.
- Limited preparatory sketches reduced accuracy, richness, and creativity in final works.

- Inconsistent refinement of shapes, form details, and proportions resulted in overly simple carvings.
- Reliance on narrow or secondary references limited originality.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Conduct thorough research and produce multiple preparatory sketches before carving.
- Include sketches of all sides of the intended object, with annotations highlighting key features.
- Use a wider variety of carving tools to explore diverse textures and improve dimensional quality.
- Practice techniques to reduce fragility, ensuring secure and durable final pieces.
- Effective time management is essential for complete and refined submissions.

Recommendations for Ethical Practice

- All carving work must be performed by the candidate. Authenticity of submissions is mandatory.
- Instances of preparatory work containing contributions from adults or professionals, including photographs or written annotations, are unacceptable and unethical. Such practices must be strictly avoided.

Overall Pedagogical Recommendations

- Provide regular classroom practice in observational drawing, design planning, and 3D construction.
- Encourage experimentation with media, processes, and colour to build technical confidence.
- Use exemplar works to demonstrate expectations and inspire creativity.
- Implement structured formative assessment using checklists for composition, technical skills, and creativity.

NCE ART AND DESIGN (N580)
Examiner Report 2025
Component 2

GENERAL REMARKS

Component 2 assesses the student's knowledge and understanding of art-specific terminology to analyse artworks. It also evaluates the candidate's ability to express the appreciation of 2-Dimensional and/or 3-Dimensional works in written form with due consideration of the historical context and period in which the artworks were produced.

Educators and candidates are therefore encouraged to familiarise themselves with existing question papers, while also anticipating emerging trends and keeping abreast of the essential assessment requirements.

SECTION A

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Question 1 (4 Marks) - True or False Statements

Indicate if the following statements are True or False by ticking [✓] the correct box

Overview:

In general, candidates appeared familiar with this type of exercise and demonstrated a sound understanding of the **True** or **False** format. Difficulties encountered were largely linked to unfamiliarity of certain statements, which led some candidates to select incorrect responses or show hesitation when ticking the boxes.

General Performance

Very few candidates were able score the full four marks. A significant number obtained three marks, demonstrating a good understanding of key concepts such as perspective, aquarelle techniques, and tonal gradation. However, knowledge related to high and low relief sculpture was generally weak, resulting in many incorrect responses for this item.

Common Challenges

- Double answers: A noticeable number of candidates ticked both the True and False columns for a single statement. This suggested indecisiveness or uncertainty rather than a clear judgement of the statement's validity.

- **Cross Marking:** Some candidates used crosses instead of ticks, reflecting confusion or hesitation in selecting an answer.
- **No response:** A small number of candidates did not tick any box. This may indicate difficulty in reading or understanding the statements. Candidates are reminded that at least one box must be ticked in order to be awarded a mark.

Specific Observations

Item (a):

Most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the concept of the vanishing point and selected the correct answer. Only a very small number of candidates responded incorrectly.

Item (b):

The majority of candidates answered this item correctly. However, some candidates showed limited or uncertain knowledge of aquarelle techniques, as evidenced by erasures or crossed out answers on their scripts.

Item (c):

Most candidates selected the correct answer. However, a few candidates displayed limited understanding of tonal degradation, multiple ticking attempts or cancellations ultimately leading to incorrect answer.

Item (d):

The item proved to be most challenging. Many candidates demonstrated limited understanding low or high relief sculpture and were unable to interpret the more complex phrasing of the statement. Only high-achieving candidates were able to answer this item correctly.

Recommendations for improvement

To address the challenges in this question, the following strategies are recommended:

- **Emphasize Clarity:** Candidates should pay close attention to the phrasing of questions and be prepared to interpret complex or nuanced language.
- **Strengthen Reading Comprehension:** regular practice in reading and interpreting art-related terminologies will help candidates better understand statements and avoid misinterpretation.
- **Develop Critical Thinking skills:** candidates should be encouraged to evaluate statements carefully rather than responding impulsively.
- **Increase Practice opportunities:** exposure to structured examples and practice questions will help candidates become more confident and accurate when answering True or False items.

Question 2 (4 Marks)

Fill in the blanks with the correct word.

General Performance

Overall performance in this question was mixed. While many candidates demonstrated satisfactory knowledge, a number of weaknesses were identified, particularly in the use of specific art terminology and theoretical concepts.

Specific Observations

Most candidates were able to select the correct answers from the list, indicating a reasonable understanding of the content assessed. However, a significant number of candidates struggled with specialised art terminology. In particular, many candidates were unfamiliar with the term ‘plein air painting’ and showed confusion in attempting to associate it to ‘Impressionist’ and/or ‘Fauvist’ movements.

A notable number of candidates also displayed limited knowledge of elements of art and the principles of design. Despite the provision of a word list, spelling errors were frequent in written responses, which affected the accuracy of answers.

Incorrect responses further highlighted candidates’ limited understanding of art history and a restricted art repertoire. This suggests a need to strengthen candidates’ basic knowledge of art concepts. Broader and more comprehensive coverage of art history would support deeper understanding and greater familiarity with a range of artists, artworks, movements, civilizations, techniques and other theoretical aspects of art studies.

Recommendations for improvement:

To improve performance in this area, the following measures are recommended:

- Deliver structured and engaging lessons in art history with a strong focus on art terminology and vocabulary.
- Reinforce the distinctive characteristics of major art movements through visual comparisons, image analysis, and guided classroom discussions.
- Include both local and international artists and artworks to broaden candidates’ artistic exposure.
- Place greater emphasis on the elements of art and the principles of design, supported by detailed discussion and application to selected artworks.

Section B

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Question 3 (a)

The name of the artist, The year of the artwork and the medium used.

General Performance

This year, a greater number of candidates selected **Artwork 2** compared to previous years, suggesting increased familiarity with three-dimensional artworks. Overall, candidates responded well and demonstrated close attention to the information provided beneath each artwork.

This question consisted of three sub-parts: the name of the artist, stating the year (or period) it was produced, and naming the medium used. Overall, candidates performed well, as the questions were clearly phrased and accessible. However, a small number of candidates did not achieve full marks due to confusion between ‘the medium used’ and ‘the category of artwork’.

Artwork 1

Overall, responses reflected a strong ability to accurately record factual information.

- Most candidates correctly identified **Henri Matisse** as the artist.
- Only a few errors were made when recording the year of the artwork indicating that most candidates referred carefully to the visual source.
- The majority stated the correct medium as ‘oil on canvas’ or ‘oil paint’. A small number of responses were invalid, with candidates writing ‘oil pastel’ or simply ‘oil’.

Artwork 2

Candidates again demonstrated strong factual knowledge.

- Most candidates accurately recorded the artist’s name, ‘**Yayoi Kusama**’, showing reference to the given source.
- Very few errors were observed in stating the year of the artwork, although some candidates mistakenly wrote 2025 instead of 2023.
- Most candidates correctly identified the medium as *stainless steel and urethane paint*. However, a small number confused the medium with the dimensions of the sculpture.

Suggestions/Recommendations

- Candidates should read both the question and the accompanying information beneath the artwork carefully.
- Awareness should be raised that the focus of questions in this section may vary from year to year.
- Exposure to a wider range of artworks across different art periods, movements, and media is strongly encouraged.

Question 3(b)

Describe how one Art Element and one Principle of Design have been used by the artist to communicate his ideas.

Artwork 1: ‘Woman in the Purple Coat’ (1937)

- In general, candidates demonstrated a strong understanding of art elements and principles of design.
- High-performing candidates clearly explained how selected elements and principles were applied, using accurate art-specific vocabulary and analytical language.
- Candidates of average often identified relevant elements or principles but failed to justify or explain their application within the artwork.
- Low-ability candidates showed confusion between art elements and principles of design, frequently interchanging the two, indicating weak foundational knowledge of visual language.

Artwork 2 – “I Spend Each Day Embracing Flowers” by Yayoi Kusama

Many candidates demonstrated a solid grasp of the art elements such as colour, line, form and texture as well as principles of design, including balance, contrast, repetition, and rhythm. Strong responses went beyond identification, offering insightful explanations of how Kusama’s vibrant colours, repetitive floral motifs and flowing forms conveyed joy, vitality, and harmony.

- High-achieving candidates moved beyond identification to provide insightful explanation of how Kusama’s vibrant colours, repetitive floral motifs, and flowing forms conveyed joy, vitality, and harmony.
- Some candidates demonstrated interpretative depth by linking recurring motifs and luminous colour palettes to concept of infinity and emotional expression.
- A good number of candidates provided very brief responses consisting of only a few words, limiting their ability to score higher marks.

Areas for Improvement

- Confusion between art elements and principles of design was common.
- Many responses consisted solely of lists of terms without explanation or justification.
- Literal observations such as “*there are many flowers*” or “*the sculpture is red*” lacked analytical engagement.
- Misuse of terminology (e.g. identifying balance as an element or colour as a principle) was frequent.
- Several responses were overly brief, linguistically inaccurate, or irrelevant to the question.
- A small number of candidates did not attempt the question.

Recommendations

- Clarify Core Concepts: Reinforce the distinction between art elements and principles of design through visual examples and guided practice.
- Develop analytical skills: Encourage candidates to explain *how* and *why* visual features are used.
- Promote 3D understanding: Increase exposure to sculpture and installation art to build vocabulary related to form, space, proportion and others.
- Strengthen written expression: Support candidates in constructing clear and concise responses using accurate art terminologies.
- Encourage regular practice: Incorporate frequent short analysis exercises to build confidence and critical engagement.

Question 3(c)

According to you, what does the artist want to express through the artwork?

Overall, candidates approached this question with confidence and offered personal interpretations. The responses reflected a developing critical perspective and an improving command of art terminology.

Artwork 1: ‘Woman in the Purple Coat’ (1937)

- High-performing candidates demonstrated perceptive analysis, identifying themes such as women’s empowerment, independence, and confidence.
- Average responses focused on descriptive interpretation, linking posture, clothing, and setting to ideas of wealth, strength, and relaxation.
- Weaker responses were superficial, lacking emotional depth or critical engagement.
- A few candidates provided one-word or overly brief answers such as “beautiful,” “queen,” “power,” “freedom,” “relaxing,” and “feminist”.

- Some candidates gave overly brief or one-word answers, while others focussed excessively on background elements instead of the main subject.
- At lowest level, language difficulties hindered expression, resulting in responses written partly or left unanswered.

Artwork 2: “I Spend Each Day Embracing Flowers” by Yayoi Kusama

The majority of candidates demonstrated strong understanding of three-dimensional artwork and applied concepts such as balance, harmony, proportion, perspective, rhythm and movement effectively.

- High-scoring responses were well-structured, creative, and expressed using appropriate art vocabulary.
- Many candidates recognised symbolic meanings related to nature, emotion, joy, and inspiration.
- Some imaginative interpretations, such as metaphorical readings of entwined forms, reflected creativity and engagement.
- A few responses were written in Creole; while ideas were clear, candidates are reminded that answers must be written in English.
- Lower-achieving candidates relied on isolated words or brief phrases and showed limited development of ideas.

Question 3(d)

Describe what you like or do not like about this artwork.

This question proved to be the most challenging.

Artwork 1: ‘Woman in a Purple Coat’ Henri Matisse

- Strong responses demonstrated depth of understanding, supported opinions with visual evidence, and used appropriate terminology to describe colour, pattern, focal point, mood, and emotion.
- Average responses described likes or dislikes clearly but lacked depth or detailed justification.
- Weaker responses were vague, incomplete, or contradictory, often addressing both likes and dislikes despite the question’s instruction.
- Frequent spelling errors, language mixing, and unanswered responses were noted.

Artwork 2: 'I spend each day Embracing Flowers' Yayoi Kusama

- High-quality responses highlighted aesthetic qualities such as colour harmony, repetition, pattern, proportion, and texture.
- Many candidates successfully used terms such as *polka dots*, *shades*, *contrast*, and *scale*.
- Some candidates expressed dislike due to lack of realism or excessive brightness, providing valid personal viewpoints.
- However, many responses lacked explanation, consisted of one-word answers, or were left incomplete.

General Observations

- Candidates show improved familiarity with 3D artworks and analytical engagement.
- Common challenges include confusion between art elements and principles, limited vocabulary, brief or superficial responses, and inconsistent language use.

Suggestions

- Candidates should read and interpret questions carefully before responding.
- Responses should be clearly structured and supported with justification.
- Candidates should focus on either *likes* or *dislikes*, as instructed.
- Educators should encourage analytical thinking, emotional engagement, and consistent use of appropriate art terminology.