

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

ART

MAY 2015

EXAMINERS' REPORT

MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE

EXAMINATIONS' BOARD

SEC EXAMINERS' REPORT – May 2015

SEC ART MAY 2015 SESSION EXAMINERS' REPORT

Six hundred and seventy-four (674) candidates registered for the SEC Art examination. The distribution of grades is outlined in the table below:

GRADE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	U	ABS	TOTAL	
PAPER A	13	52	104	111	68				75	10	433
PAPER B				64	80	37	17		27	16	241
TOTAL	13	52	104	175	148	37	17		102	26	674
% OF TOTAL	1.93	7.72	15.43	25.96	21.96	5.49	2.52		15.13	3.86	100

Coursework and Final Project

Portfolio

The candidates with the most successful portfolios presented a range of works based on selected themes. These works showed the candidate's skill in carrying out different practices and techniques, such as drawing, painting, printing and collage. Different media which included pencil, charcoal, pastels, poster colours, acrylics and coloured paper were used. These portfolios had a selection of imaginative work as well as work from observation, and showed evidence of the artistic growth of the candidate.

Project

Final projects are expected to be focused and personally meaningful to the candidate. They should show a systematic study of a specific theme or idea. There were cases where final projects consisted of only two works, indicative of negligence and lack of focus. The best projects were well presented, with a cross-section of interesting studies exploring the chosen theme. In such cases the final work was very often of a very good standard. It is important that the final project is labelled so that it can be identified. Some projects included three-dimensional studies/work which were/was displayed near the candidate's portfolios.

This year it was noticed that while some school-based assessments still tended to be rather generous, there was the occasional case where the opposite situation prevailed and candidates deserved higher marks.

Paper 1

Work from Observation

The quality of the work presented for this paper in this year's session was, on the whole, of a very good standard. The majority of the candidates used pencil and opted for still life. Some of the candidates using paint worked in full colour while others worked in monochrome. Other colouring media were also used. It is good to point out that it is more challenging to carry out work from observation in full colour.

Some candidates' works showed clear problems with basic drawing skills and intelligent use of space, placing very small compositions in the middle of the paper. Some had problems with the shape of the objects, such as that of the hand-brush. The cardboard box was rendered quite well although there were still some cases of inverted perspective. The proportions of the objects were sometimes inaccurate. Some drawings tended to be flat with no variation in tones. As regards texture, that of the glass bottle and the skin of the lemon and apple were quite successfully handled. However, the bristles of the hand-brush and the texture of the duster proved more difficult to depict. In some cases, candidates made gimmicky use of harsh and lost edges, evidently not properly understanding when to employ such a technique.

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The candidates who opted to tackle the human figure had a good grasp of human anatomy and structure, giving a good rendering of the pose of the model. On the whole the drawings were of a good standard with occasionally very successful results.

Paper II

Composition from a Theme

The three general themes that the candidates receive three weeks in advance should be used to study and explore various aspects and possible ways of tackling the theme. This **preparatory work is not an end product and should not be copied** during the examination but should be used creatively to create an original composition about the chosen title. As happened in previous years, a number of candidates downloaded pictures or photos from the internet resulting in the same images being presented as preparatory work by more than one candidate. Some of these images were copied and presented as the examination work. This is a practice which should not be encouraged as it shows lack of creativity, imagination and originality on the part of the candidate. Work receives higher marks if it is both technically accomplished and approaches the question creatively, originally and imaginatively.

There was the occasional work where a candidate reached the standard of Paper A but could not be given a higher grade since s/he chose to sit for Paper B. Inversely, there were candidates who opted to sit for Paper A and obtained an unclassified grade; should these candidates have chosen to sit for Paper B, they might have done better.

Paper II A

In Paper A, it was observed that too many images came up repeatedly, obviously coming from the same source. A number of works were out of point. In fact, there were candidates who composed a sort of jigsaw puzzle with all the sketches they prepared without really thinking if the final composition made any sense or was a valid response to the title chosen.

It was evident that some candidates do not know the difference between creating **a design for a particular purpose** and composing **an imaginative picture**. There were instances when question 4 was rendered as an imaginative picture. With regard to designing a poster, some candidates still do not know how to create a good attractive poster which includes all the necessary information in clear, readable well-designed letters, e.g. question 6.

It was noticed that some candidates were unable to draw the human figure. As regards questions 1, 5 and 3, there were instances where figures were rendered as silhouettes or from the back. Some figures were even depicted without heads or limbs.

On a positive note, some candidates tackling question 5 came up with a number of creative and imaginative approaches ranging from close-ups of arms and legs to proper figures of people in the required setting. With regard to question 2, there was a small number of very interesting compositions, some rendered in a semi-abstract manner, which were highly successful. There were also a few candidates who showed exceptional skill in the use of colour.

Paper II B

A good number of works presented for Paper B showed lack of knowledge of painting, how to use colour and how to create a good composition.

Candidates opting to tackle this paper still tend to rely too much on the sketches they bring with them, copying them without really thinking about what is being asked of them.

In question 5, some candidates responded by creating a painting instead of a poster. Future candidates should learn the requirements of designing a good poster especially what text to include and the basics of creating clear readable lettering. Question 6 proved to be quite a popular choice and some of the designs were quite successful.

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Many candidates opted to tackle question 1. Most of the work related to this question was quite good with one exceptionally successful rendering. Some candidates who attempted questions 2 and 4 had difficulty depicting perspective. Question 3 was not a very popular choice. Again some of the candidates who chose to tackle this question had difficulty in depicting perspective.

On the whole Paper B candidates are still finding it very difficult to draw and paint figures. As happens in Paper A, they tend to hide this fact by rendering figures as silhouettes, from the back or lacking heads or limbs.

*Chairperson 2015
Examination Panel*