

Paper 1 THE RENAISSANCE

MARKER'S COMMENTS

The most popular Options in the Renaissance paper were Option 2 and 3 with only a few candidates answering questions from Option 1 and 4. A few answered questions that were from Options obviously not studied which is a grave mistake.

An interesting range of questions were set for this paper, although several were rather long due to the addition of quotes, such as in Q9 and Q10 in Section A.

Also Q8 did not specify that examples of specific art works be included in the answer, which may have confused a few candidates as they limited their answers to a general overview.

Some spelling and terminology confusions that require constant revision;

1. Words like medieval, divine, chiaroscuro, tempera, and Venetian were often spelt wrongly.
2. The use and understanding of the terms humanism and humanity need more clarification with many students, especially in a discussion about portraiture. The Tondo plate question revealed this concern as well.
3. Many students were unable to discern the differences between terminologies such as realism, naturalism and idealism.

A number of candidates answered the Section A and B questions from the same Option, and tried not to repeat relevant concepts, analyses of the same artists works, or theoretical developments of the period. One school of 25 candidates all answered the Section A and B questions from the same Option. This implies that maybe only one Option was studied, which is not the intention of the course. This practise does disadvantage student learning, understanding and being able to articulate the broader aspects of the Renaissance period rather than focusing on one narrow section of it.

Many Section B answers were limited to mere descriptions of the plates, with very general comments demonstrating a limited understanding of the artists' ideas and approaches. It is so important that students develop an understanding that works of art are products of their time and reflect the context of the social, cultural, religious and political events of that time.

Transitions in style between the various time periods from Medieval through the early Renaissance period and into the high Renaissance were sometimes expressed in very black and white terms by the candidates, particularly in religious subjects that were revealing aspects of naturalism as the concepts of humanist philosophies started to be implemented in art works. The influence and use of the International Gothic style also needs to be understood more fully within the context of the Early Renaissance up to 1500.

It is important that students broaden their reading to incorporate a wider field of influences and possible developments. This was noticeable in the portrait answers (Q8), where there was no mention of the impact of Northern portraits and oil painting techniques in particular from the 1430s onwards, on the development of the individual Italian Renaissance portrait in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

It was uplifting to read many well planned, thoughtful and coherent essays where the students demonstrated excellent understanding of the question, used relevant works to illustrate their arguments, wrote legibly and with an obvious passion about the subject.