Government of **Western Australia**
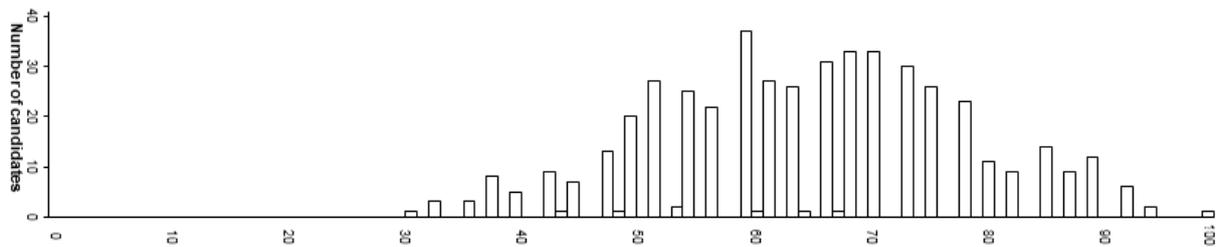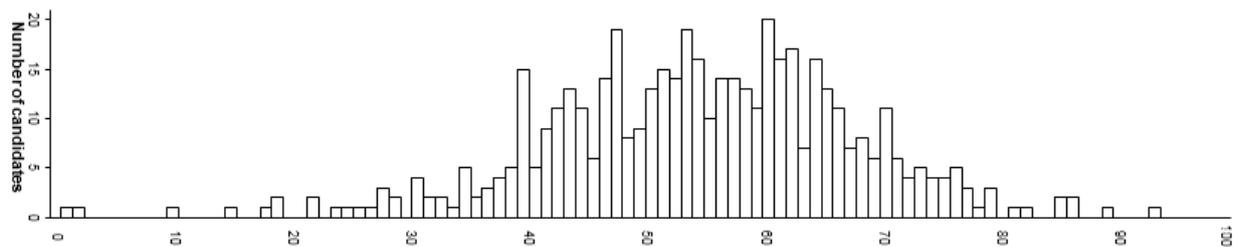School Curriculum and Standards Authority

Summary report for candidates on the 2015 WACE examination in
Design Stage 3

Year	Number who sat all examination components	Number of absentees from all examination components
2015	477	7
2014	300	5
2013	473	9

Examination score distribution - Practical

Examination score distribution - Written

Summary

The Stage 3 WACE Design course is examined through a practical and written component, each worth 50%. Candidates select to work in one of four chosen contexts, including Graphics, Photography, Technical Graphics and Dimensional. The standard of portfolios demonstrated a marked improvement this year, although referencing of sourced images continues to be an issue. In the written examination, candidates struggled to answer questions that required them to explain how their own or others' designs communicated messages through different aspects of the design. Responses revealed a lack of understanding of design as a communication tool. Candidates this year had a greater opportunity to demonstrate their context specific knowledge in the Section 2: Extended response context specific questions.

Practical (portfolio) examination
Attempted by 480 Candidates   Mean 32.64%(/50%) Max 50%   Min 15.48%

Section means were:
Dimensional Design attempted by   41 Candidates Mean 33.19%(/50) Max 44.05% Min 22.61%
Graphics   attempted by 148 Candidates Mean 32.26%(/50) Max 47.62% Min 15.48%
Photography   attempted by 220 Candidates Mean 34.15%(/50) Max 45.24% Min 16.67%
Technical Graphics attempted by   71 Candidates Mean 34.68%(/50) Max 50% Min 16.67%

Written examination

Attempted by 480 Candidates   Mean 27.48%(/50%) Max 46.85%   Min 0.69%

Section means were:

Section One: Short response   Mean   8.09 (/15)   Max 15 Min 0
Section Two: Extended response   Mean 19.39 (/35) Max 32.43 Min 0

General comments

Practical (portfolio) examination

The practical (portfolio) examination comprises of a 15-page portfolio of the candidates development of a design process used to arrive at a completed design solution/s. The portfolio is used to demonstrate candidates understanding and practical skills in the generation and production of design. The overall standard showed a marked improvement on previous years. Candidates need to reference correctly as required in the practical portfolio requirements document. Evidence showed that the practical nature of the portfolio is easily stifled by a text-heavy approach. The elements and principles need to primarily be demonstrated in the application of a well-polished, final design rather than in written analysis. The portfolio should show the candidate's practical application of design process activities. This was also reflected in the written component of the examination where candidates were asked to express reasoning for different aspects included in their design solutions.
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Advice for candidates

- Every resource and image that is sourced and not created by you must have its reference directly under the image in your portfolio as well as on the References/acknowledgements form.
- Your annotation should explain how your choices communicate the message within the design brief, not simply describe how you have used them.
- Present every part of your design process in your own individual style rather than downloading pre-existing resources for activities such as planning.
- Experimentation with your idea at different stages of the design process is very important and allows the markers to see your creativity.
- Remember that completed design solutions should be creative and original, because of and related to, the design process you have used.

Written examination

The written examination tested the syllabus and was inclusive of all contexts. A range of easy to difficult questions was presented, with the length of the paper being appropriate. Most candidates attempted all questions. Candidates were given the opportunity to demonstrate and apply their design knowledge rather than rely on portfolio notes for answers to questions.

Questions that required candidates to explain their reasoning for use of particular design concepts, strategies or materials presented the most difficulty. Candidates' responses indicated that they struggled to understand the terminology used in the questions. The context based questions in Section Two catered more specifically to the four contexts than in previous years and enabled most candidates to elaborate on their knowledge and skills appropriate to their context.

Advice for candidates

- Use Design terminology and concepts wherever possible in your answers.
- Always answer questions from the viewpoint of a designer.
- Understand the design briefs you worked on during the year and how the design decisions you made influenced the success of the communication to your intended audience. For example why you used a particular type of shape or line and how it influenced the audience's understanding of the image and therefore, the message.
- Terminology from the syllabus is used to construct questions and you need to read the question carefully, answering all aspects of the question to the depth required.

Comments on specific sections and questions
Practical (portfolio) examination
Attempted by 480 Candidates Mean 32.64%(/50%) Max 50 Min 15.48
Practical activities in all aspects of the design process should be encouraged; some portfolios could have achieved additional marks with the inclusion of more sketching/rendering/3D sketches/use of a wider variety of software editing skills. Candidates need to be able show experimentation that is relevant and considered for completed design solutions. The elements and principles need to primarily be demonstrated in the application of a well-polished, final design rather than in written analysis.

Written examination
Section One: Short response
Attempted by 480 Candidates Mean 8.09%(/15) Max 15% Min 0%
Section comments
Candidates need to read the questions carefully and answer all aspects of the question using terminology and concepts appropriate to the study of Design; also being aware of the mark allocation as a guide to the depth of response that is required.

Section Two: Extended response
 Attempted by 479 Candidates Mean 13.82%(/25) Max 24.31% Min 0%

Candidates generally did well in part (a) of these questions and were able to demonstrate their understanding of design elements and principles from a specific perspective by referring to the context appropriate images. Some candidates did not come prepared with standard examination materials allowed i.e. coloured pencils, to be able to apply colour to their responses. Candidate responses for the Photography context indicated that there was a lack of knowledge of planning documents used in projects and photographic lighting setup. Candidates' ability in the drawing part of these questions varied in ability across all contexts.