### Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of candidates</th>
<th>Level of achievement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>VHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>2005</td>
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### General comments

The concept for the 2009 examination was *Collections*.

Candidates demonstrated a range of standards in their visual responses to the concept in Paper One and solved problems using visual language to reproduce meanings in Paper Two.

All candidates described and interpreted artworks to give an opinion of the artworks presented but generally needed to demonstrate greater analysis and validate interpretations to evaluate meanings or justify positions.

### Paper One: Making (Practical response)

Candidates were required to respond to one or more of the three questions by completing and “resolving” an artwork or artworks in any predominantly two-dimensional medium (e.g. painting, drawing, collage, assemblage).

Candidates were to communicate something about “Collections” (literally, representatively or abstractly) based on their interpretation of one or more of the focuses developed from the concept.

The stimulus provided consisted of a range of artworks reflecting various interpretations of the concept. This allowed for responses such as:

- interpretations of the focus concept that depicted images and objects that were literal representations of the concept (Question 1)
- abstract, non-representationals or symbolic interpretations that dealt with highly personalised relationships with the focus concept (Questions 2 and 3).

Most of the visual responses to Paper One were literal interpretations that used one or more of the stimulus items suggested. Candidates were allowed to use materials (preliminary sketches, painting, collage/assemblage items etc.) that they had collected or developed and brought to the
examination as the basis of their response to the concept. Most candidates appeared to have limited source materials for use in the examination. A wider range of materials may have assisted candidates to generate visual responses. However, Paper One provided a range of stimulus items broad enough for candidates to make links easily to their previous art-making experiences.

The most common stimulus used by candidates was “Words, symbols and signs”. They demonstrated better achievement in the Application criterion than in the Visual Literacy criterion, using strong drawing and sound compositional skills but to a lesser degree visual problem solving and communication of ideas and intentions.

It is recommended that prospective candidates are given opportunities to understand how work developed during the year can be used to relate to examination stimulus material. Use should be made of the sample examination paper published in 2006 as well as the 2007 examination paper. Teachers could also develop practice examination papers, enabling candidates to become more experienced in developing a response under examination conditions based on previous work. Strategies for candidates to complete a resolved artwork in the time allocated should be developed.

Paper Two: Appraising (Written response)

Candidates responded at a satisfactory standard to the questions in both parts of this paper.

Generally, candidates wrote satisfactorily about the physical characteristics and visual elements of the work but demonstrated limited analysis that was not clearly linked to the cultural and historical context of the stimulus artwork. The information provided with each artwork was not always considered in a candidate’s response when justifying artworks or validating interpretations of each artwork.

Part A (Question 1)

All candidates responded at a high or very high standard to Question 1. The stimulus artworks reflected the concept and two artists’ interpretation of “collections” through installation artworks. The subquestions required candidates to analyse the subject matter, media and context of each installation in a short response to each artwork. Those candidates who responded at a high standard in this section were able to provide only literal interpretations of the artist’s depiction of the concept. Candidates attempted to analyse the symbolic meaning of each artwork but were not able to clearly articulate the meaning created by the artwork in their written responses. Most responses to this question lacked depth of knowledge of what the symbols meant and did not evaluate the compositional arrangements or context of each of the artworks.

Part B (Questions 2, 3 and 4)

Candidates were required to write an extended essay of 400–600 words in response to one of three questions.

In Question 2, candidates were provided with three artworks that depicted aspects of still life and the arrangement of objects in spaces to construct meaning for the audience. Each artwork is sculptural in form and installed in a space to impact on the way the viewer sees the work, i.e. as an environment, as a projection or as a low relief on a vertical surface. This question required candidates to describe the common elements that each artist has used and how each artist communicates their ideas through the display of their artwork.
Each artwork in this question utilises everyday objects and seeks to engage the viewer emotionally. Artwork A (by Sze) presents everyday objects suspended in space as a tangled and intricate network. Artwork B (by Noble and Webster) could be interpreted as a social commentary about consumerism, while Artwork C (by Cragg) explores social concerns and the relationship of people and place.

To achieve highly in this question, candidates were required to compare and contrast their interpretations by referring to the stimulus and the contemporary context in which each of these sculptural works has been depicted.

In Question 3, candidates were provided with three sculptural artworks based on “multiples” made by artists who live in different cultures. Candidates were required to evaluate how effectively each artwork communicates the artist’s obsessions/passions within the cultural context in which it was made. Candidates responding to this question were asked to justify their views by analysing and interpreting the works of Do-Ho Suh, Ault and Marcus to construct an extended written response exploring how each artist brings memories of the past into a new context. All three artworks contain an element of time, social and historical events occurring and the use of multiples, commenting on humanity through the channels of their own culture.

Question 4 consisted of three artworks that explore words, symbols and signs. Each artwork is a representation of the artist’s perspective of ideas and issues, using text and symbols to communicate cultural stories and social events. Candidates responding to this question were asked to describe the symbols that each artist used and justify their responses by analysing and evaluating the work. The information provided for each of the works provided a context for the candidate to interpret these works in relation to the historical and cultural context in which they were made.