

Graphic Communication

Candidate A

68 marks were awarded.

Level 6

Exceptional Ability

**Knowledge, understanding and skills are in-depth,
perceptive and accomplished throughout.**

Examiner commentary

The candidate was awarded **68** marks.

Keyword descriptors from the taxonomy: Highly skilled, Inspired, Intuitive, Sophisticated, Unexpected, Outstanding

- The candidate develops ideas with a focussed approach to research and investigation, demonstrating mostly exceptional critical understanding of the context of their own ideas and the sources which have informed them.
- They refine their work through a convincing process of experimentation and review using a range of digital media and processes and techniques.
- They record ideas through personal observations and evidence insights about the work of others through visual and other methods.
- They present a mostly exceptional outcome, realising intentions within the discipline of Graphic Communication
- To gain full marks in performance band six, the candidate's approach would need to be more insightful, unexpected, powerful, and daring.

AO	Marks	Level
AO1	17	Mostly Exceptional ability
AO2	17	Mostly Exceptional ability
AO3	17	Mostly Exceptional ability
AO4	17	Mostly Exceptional ability
Total	68	

Preparatory sheet 1



OLYMPIC BALANCE 40
 OLYMPIC BALANCE 40
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For the shadow regions of the background, I incorporated "linear" techniques by overlapping several margins with different gradients and applying the "multiply" effect. I also worked on white or red to create the spotlight effect. However, the final version used as the polygons in the shadow background had a more subtle effect. I then tried increasing the effect by overlapping the polygons and making them slightly transparent, but this seemed the opposite effect as it reduced the contrast between the spotlight and the shadow regions. It also added too many colours into the design. I wanted to achieve that the gymnast became the subject of the design, and I tried using fewer colours in my spotlight. This still made the spotlight too light and made it hard to see the outline of the gymnast. Eventually, I decided to only incorporate the polygons into the background, and to use a gradient for the spotlight.

Idea for different fonts that would also fit my typography. I realised that in order to maintain the simplicity of my design, I needed a sans serif font that could be changed throughout. As I had, when I was experimenting different fonts, I stayed away from those which were too thin and narrow as they would appear very condensed. However, I discovered that by increasing the tracking between each character, I can create a wide variety of effects with just one font. Experimenting with this feature, but ultimately, I realised that I needed a thick, bold font so that the text stands out with the rest of the design. This is why I settled for the font 'L20070' (MSA - Bold).

My design brief is to make four stamps, which are part of one set. I decided to keep the shape of each stamp the same by using the same border and font, but in order to have some variety, I used each stamp with a different colour scheme. This is very similar to what I had done in my 2017/18 projects. For each stamp, I chose two shades more from a lighter shade for the spotlight, and a darker shade for the background.



I really liked the idea of using polygons in the background, as it made the design more dynamic. However, the triangles were limited to just the small, middle section of the stamp, so I tried expanding the triangles all the way to the edges. I really liked this as the triangles didn't seem cramped and out of place.

I also tried changing the colour of the feet and borders to white. However, I felt that the feet were slightly distracting and took away the attention from the gymnast. I remembered that the reason why the gymnast's feet are white is to contrast and stand out from everything else. It used too much white, but I would define the whole design of incorporating white into my design.

Since my borders were composed up of thin lines that weren't filled in, I thought that I could do the same thing for my feet by only using the outline, although this looked nice, I realised that it seems strange even to be printed, the feet would be very difficult to read due to it's small size. The legs in the corner were already fairly readable as my laptop screen, so I would be impossible to see on a small stamp.

I decided to just use white borders with black, black before when as this would be the easiest to read on a stamp. For the borders, I added them to ensure that everything aligned perfectly so that there were no gaps between lines. I also added the perforations on the edges of the stamp, so that they were previously easy to pop and collect.



Every stamp has a price on it, so I experimented with placing the price in different locations. First I tried repeating the circles with the price, but this just seemed odd. Then I tried to outline the stamp with the price, but this made my price very chaotic and messy. I then tried to incorporate it into the subject of the stamp that the gymnast and the spotlight. However, I realised that the only suitable way to place my words was at the end of the spotlight, as the viewers have an already clear view. Placing it anywhere else would seem forced and out of place. I then experimented with offsetting words to create my logo, and eventually came up with a way to combine the logo and the price so that it would place them both at the bottom of the spotlight.












Preparatory sheet 2

Nicholas Stiller

Stiller created a stamp design for a brand known as Social Brand Design. The tagline illustration follows a winding path, giving it a hand-drawn feel. The use of framing in the stamp creates an effect of visual hierarchy. First, the viewer's eye is drawn to the outer edges of the stamp, along with the text surrounding it. Our attention is then drawn inward to the words, and then to the illustration itself. The illustration is very accessible, only presenting the necessary outlines and colors, avoiding unnecessary illustration in the way which Stiller created the design. Colorful, contrasting colors are used in this stamp.

Notes to take forward: Use of framing in the way of stamps. Use use of a white frame, making the work with something along the lines of "Symmetric Balance" or "Olympic Balance". Use work with contrasting colors in order to be able to quickly deliver its message to the audience.

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Charis Tsavis

Charis Tsavis is a Greek visual designer based in Athens, Greece. He studied graphic design at the National Technical University of Athens. He is currently working as a Designer at the National Technical University of Athens. He is currently working as a Designer at the National Technical University of Athens.

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Preparatory sheet 3

Malika Favre



Malika Favre is a French designer based in London. In 2011, Favre worked alongside Anselme George at the studio of her former partner, graphic designers and illustrators, now unique work that often been described as 'Pop Art meets Op Art' due to her use of positive and negative space, as well as colour.

In 2014, Favre was asked to make illustrations for the five best film nominees for the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) awards. Out of the five nominated posters, the one that I found the most intriguing was the poster for 'The Invention of Solitude'. In this design, Favre places her subject in the corner, but also includes a diagonal spotlight, giving it a dynamic composition. The purpose of the spotlight was to incorporate the theme of the BAFTA awards, which was 'The Big reveal'. The spotlight creates a sense of visual hierarchy, so it creates a point which the viewers eyes are immediately drawn to. Although these posters were created as separate entities, Favre designed them in a way that they could be brought together and look like they are all part of one set. One way that she did this was having the spotlight surround throughout all the posters. The placement of the BAFTA logo in the bottom left corner further unifies the posters. The words in the BAFTA logo are written in a serif font, adding a formal touch to the illustrations. Furthermore, I noticed that although the colour scheme in each poster differs, all of them include some form of this triangular shape, another commonality. Favre designs these posters in a very minimalist manner. She keeps the design simple by only using three or four colours. She works alongside the guide 'less is more' as her entire illustrations are very simple in their shape. They don't include too much intricate detail, yet in my opinion, the poster still delivers its message very successfully.



To recreate Favre's work, I copied the image of a gymnast holding a beam pose in the beam. Favre's art looks very much digitally created, so I used Adobe Illustrator and created a beam outline of the gymnast using the pen tool. I then coloured each shape. I first tried using colours which were more realistic and natural looking.

I then created the balance beam in a similar manner, and even added a small olympic ring on the end. For my background, I decided to use pink as I thought that this would look nice with the gymnast's purple leotard. However, this didn't work at all and the spotlight had no effect. My recreation of Favre's dynamic, bold work looked dull and boring. I thought that this could be because the spotlight was coming in from the wrong angle, or the gymnast was too small, or the beam had too many colours and was distracting from the gymnast. Perhaps my colour scheme was just completely off and I needed to choose a background which was less grey. Taking all of these factors into account, (colouring with an attempt to make it seem more like Favre's)



is why I decided to change the skin colour to white, contrasting the dark background. My first attempt at incorporating the spotlight was not very successful. I realised that, again, this was because I wasn't, maintaining the aspect of contrast that Favre used in her designs. By moving the spotlight closer to the gymnast, incorporating a gradient to the shadow regions, and by including a small shadow into the balance beam, I was able to amplify the effect of the spotlight. I also tried raising everything slightly so that the beam was at an angle. This made my work much more dynamic.



Steps to take forward: 1) spotlight revealing the subject, 2) keeping the placement of the logo consistent throughout all my designs, 3) create each stamp focused on one colour



For the main one, I didn't really like how my last month's turned out, so I decided to combine Favre's style with different concepts from Favre and Thoms. I decided to increase Favre's spotlight using only one colour. I made the background more simple in order to create the more pronounced effect of the spotlight showing through. I used the same colour palette as I did for my Thoms recreation as I had as these colours did a very good job of contrasting each other and the background. However, I felt that the contrast with the plain background was a bit too much and I didn't really have the 'spotlight effect' anymore.



To reduce this contrast, I replaced the black background with more triangles, I copied the purple effect onto these triangles in order to detach them, and separate them from the triangles within the angle of the spotlight.



I was quite pleased with the spotlight, so I wanted to make the gymnast into it. Everything looked too chaotic, so the bright background, I then placed the gymnast away from the gymnast. There are just two very small shapes which wouldn't even be able to be seen on a small stamp.



I then increased the size of the triangles behind the spotlight and changed its colour to dark blue to help reduce the glare and to return the visual focus back to the gymnast.



To match up Dora and Thoms' work, I placed the line only gymnast I created into a landscape version of Dora's stamp.



Despite making several alterations to the design, the gymnast still seemed very out of place. I realised that this was because the shapes which it is composed of made it too angular.



I had the transparent shapes, so I played around with the different transparency effects, such as the overlay effect, the multiply effect, and the colour design effect. I also added a blue-to-white gradient to the background, rather than just using a solid colour. After experimenting, I ended up with this piece, where the gymnast looked like it was being illuminated from a light in the corner.



I then changed the colour of the background so that it would contrast more with the gymnast and the balance beam. However, now the design seemed somewhat blurry and although the colours I used were all dark colours, the gymnast still didn't seem to sit right. Also, here, I had a different diagonal background effect, which seemed to be more dynamic than the previous effort.



For this, although I made the background a gradient, I still didn't have enough contrast between the gymnast and the background. I then changed the colours of her leotard as I wanted it to stand out as much as possible. However, this just made her blending in less and didn't help with the situation at all.

Despite making several alterations to the design, the gymnast still seemed very out of place. I realised that this was because the shapes which it is composed of made it too angular, which means the whole design seems strange. That's either made the gymnast seem 3D or 2D, it can't be a mix of both. That's why I decided to follow the line only gymnast with the flat vector gymnast. This is created. I also ensured that these appear less many colours used in the design. This immediately made the stamp more minimalist and simple, in a good way.

I wanted to apply Favre's spotlight effect, actually having to create a spotlight. I did this by creating a gradient in the background, starting with a bright light colour in the corner of the rectangle which faded to a dark colour in the opposite corner.

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Outcome sheet

