

Housing and Design

Course Code: HDS315113

Written Examination

Fewer candidates answered Question 1 than Question 2.

Generally the question was well answered, with stronger candidates structuring their responses to show their advice through clear annotations and detailed justifications.

Weaker responses showed limited understanding and linking to the actual question – some entirely ignored the fact they were meant to be starting with a shipping container. Weaker responses included annotations explaining what they would do, but little justification as to **why**, which is pivotal to demonstrate understanding and appropriate application. Students who did not complete a cross-section missed a significant part of the question, and thus a proportional amount of marks.

Linking responses to the containers and the site, especially the breezes, trees and orientation were key to sound responses. High level responses included all aspects required, considered realistic modifications to the shipping containers where appropriate and fully justified their design decisions based on passive solar design.

Question 2

Overall students experienced problems in responding to question 2 as the majority of students were clustered around the B- to D grade levels. The largest number in the C- and D+. Examiners thought these results were due to a number of factors:

- legibility of handwriting and reading annotations to the drawings
- lack of planning their response, repeating the same responses or the response being incomplete
- a number of students misread the question and only worked out the solution with one shipping container when they were asked to use two. This problem was less apparent in Question 1.
- a less able student experienced difficulties in understanding the direction of the wind and did not evaluate the difference or significance of the wind in summer or winter and if this was favourable.
- Some students experienced problems with drawing to scale and particularly drawing sections.

Excellent responses took account the construction of an existing shipping container and the conditions of the site (ie, orientation, views, vegetation). These students commonly approached the siting of the containers to the end nearest to the mountain and acknowledged the problem of over shading from the eucalypts.

Question 3

143 students attempted this question.

The standard of drawings was very varied with some students struggling with drawing on a grid and at scale 1:100.

Some students mis- read the question and designed Andrea's apartment over two levels and some students applied passive solar design principles to the question rather than focus on functionality of space, flow and ergonomics.

Students who used coloured pencils/highlighters to emphasise key design features conveyed important aspects of their designs which assisted in the interpretation of their work. Eg zoning, flow, light.

A and B responses had a command of 1.100 scale with all aspects of the drawing accurately completed. Also included were clear and concise annotations which made design decisions more apparent and justified design decisions as well as adding wheel chair turning circles and movement patterns.

Most A and B responses also included additional sketches to highlight the key features of their design.

Many C and D students did not show the detail necessary to explain the design and annotations were limited to stating what had been included in the unit layout without explaining why design decisions had been made.

A and B students also included detail in the drawing and annotations with placement of light switches, power points, plumbing needs, windows at appropriate height as well as knee spaces required for ease of movement and comfort

Question 4

130 students answered this question.

Students awarded C and below had scale inaccuracies with furniture and fittings. There were many instances of lounge furniture being represented as too small. These issues led to problems with communicating spatial relationships. Another common mistake was representing kitchen benches with a width of 500mm or less.

Examiners noted various interpretations of 'sitting space' and 'galley kitchen'. It appears that some students were unfamiliar with these terms. Students awarded C and below also occasionally misrepresented the scale of beds, either drawing them too large or too small. There were also some responses where the study in particular was drawn too small to fit the appropriate furniture.

Students awarded C and above generally included graphic information to explain design solutions, for example sections and diagrams were used to help explain their answers.

Students awarded B and above demonstrated a creative use of space, layout, private and public zones, repositioning the front door to suit their response, and access to natural light. Drawings were accurately drawn to scale, with many examples showing detailed planning and creative approaches.

Stronger answers also considered laundry requirements, either by including these in the apartment or by annotating that they would be elsewhere in the building.

Folio

Folios produced again encompassed a wide variety of topics. Most students demonstrated a range of communication techniques as folios incorporated a combination of hand sketching, drawing and computer generated design.

Overall presentation needs to be considered. Weaker projects had quite small drawings with minimal detail that were difficult to interpret clearly. Stronger projects included either hand drawn or computer generated images that were accurately presented and contained appropriate supporting annotations.

The choice of topics in some cases made it difficult to assess some projects. Students should carefully check the guidelines to determine what is required in a project. They should also consult with their teachers to confirm the appropriateness of their topic prior to starting their projects.

Nearly all folios included the required/suggested sections. Many confused Context and Site Analysis elements. In most cases when confusion occurred the basic aspects were covered in some way. Site Analysis was more likely to be correct. Context tended towards a further discussion of the aims of the folio rather than relating to the site and the type of development proposed.

Generally, the final checking and editing of many projects continues to be poor with numerous spelling errors and other minor errors which could have easily been avoided with more attention to detail.

Brief and aims

Briefs should be a brief one or two sentence statement. Some projects had quite long briefs that contained information that was best suited to the context, space analysis, or site analysis sections.

A number of students had a long list of aims. This made it difficult to achieve a satisfactory outcome, as not all aims were achieved. In some instance candidates did not address all the aims or were limited in their response to those aims as there were too many to fully address in any detail.

Precedents

Weaker precedents were often reflecting products rather than design precedents. In design precedents would really like to see students analysing the elements and principles being portrayed in the samples selected along with linking it into their own brief.

Students should avoid the use of first person language. The students too often used statements like "I love this part of the kitchen shown in the picture" or "I am really sold on this sort of design" or "I really like the ". It is far better to use impersonal language such as "...this part of the kitchen may be relevant/appropriate/adapted to the user needs". Some precedents focussed too much on what you could buy to use in new spaces, rather than the elements contributing to the spaces themselves.

Strong folios relied on using the web, text books, interviews and personal photos taken by the candidate and well annotated. Weaker folios relied on the web only with little or no annotations as to why the images were relevant.

Context

Some candidate were confused over what constitutes a context statements. A number of students incorporated the site analysis into the context statement. However, context for some students was completed to what appeared to be a formula that had been predetermined and followed irrespective of the folio topic which resulted in a weaker folio.

Students and teachers need to ensure the folio guidelines are followed regarding the content each required section.

Site Analysis

In the site analysis section, stronger projects detailed what impacts or influences the site may have on it. For example, prevailing winds, orientation to north, shading from existing structures or trees, slope, access to the site, views, and privacy. Weaker projects included superfluous information such as location to the nearest bus route, supermarket or schools and data such as population census details – these are only useful if they are relevant to the actual brief and usually fit within context.

A number of site analysis showed little or no evidence of the candidate visiting the site. Evidence was either obtained from google earth or not at all. In order to design for a specific purpose site analysis is critical as this predetermines the elements for a good design resolution.

Design Development

The design development stage is one design that is developed and progressed a minimum of three times, with appropriate supporting annotations, rather than three totally different designs.

Design development drawings need to be clearly presented. Strong folios included a scale bar, dimensions, and a north arrow to explain their ideas, and were accurately drawn, rather than been presented as a thumbnail sketch. Strong folios had clear links to their precedent research and were clearly able to demonstrate how and why they

were used. Strong folios had a logical progression with their concepts, and it was evident how the final design was decided.

Weaker folios often had their third, or even a fourth option as their final design, but with no explanation or justification as to how this was determined. A good deal of candidates did not utilise scale bars or dimensions accurately (if scaled indicated) within their design development work. Criterion 7 requires use of scale even at a C standard so it is important all candidates demonstrate use of scale throughout the development phase.

The standard of concept sketches was extremely varied and by with many being unclear with little annotation to explain what the sketch was trying to convey. Many students work lacked evidence of design development and evolution to a final design.

Too many folios had ideas that were "setup to fail". A typical example is when a room does not have a door for access... then the next concept has a door to the room, this is almost like constructing design flaws so they can be improved in the next iteration.

Design Resolution

Weaker folios lacked evidence of design development and evolution to a final design. Very little discussion and analysis was undertaken and aspects that students considered to be negatives of one design appeared in the following concepts and even in some cases in the final design.

At the final design stage, strong folios clearly showed a resolution to their design problem. The use of a north arrow, scale, dimensions, or a scale bar was generally quite good. Clear and appropriate annotations help to justify design decisions. Weaker folios still contained listed design negatives.

Strong folios clearly outlined how they had considered and met the aims of the brief, with some students opting to present this information as a chart. This made it clear to markers what had been achieved in the project.

Referencing

Referencing, or lack of correct referencing, was still an issue in folios this year. Students are reminded that anything that is not their own original work must be referenced. This includes the text that is used to describe any precedents that are used in a project.

Harvard referencing is the system to use for folio referencing. Students should allow time to do this properly. It is recommended that referencing is done throughout the duration of the project, rather than trying to compile a list prior to the submission of the project. Strong folios had clear referencing, either in text, under photographs, at the bottom of each page, or as a final page by page summary at the end. These folios made it very easy to determine where each reference has been sourced. Students need to be reminded that any piece of work that is not their own, whether it is information, diagrams or photographs must be clearly acknowledged and appropriately referenced. This also includes cover photographs, as many folios did not acknowledge this.