2018 VCE VET Creative and Digital Media examination report

General comments

Students attempted most questions on the 2018 VCE VET Creative and Digital Media examination. Students seemed to have a good grasp of most units of competency, although knowledge of the 'Create visual design components' unit could be improved by practice in applying the underpinning knowledge to real life examples. Students should ask themselves how a particular piece of theoretical knowledge would apply in the digital design industry.

Students need to answer questions succinctly. Overly long answers meant that students sometimes made contradictory statements and the point they were trying to make became unclear. Students are reminded that if a question asks for two reasons, factors or principles, for example, they should respond clearly with that number. It is quite permissible for students to use numbers or dot points to help them stay on track with these sorts of answers. If the student gives more than is required, only the required number of points will be assessed. In this examination, lengthy, essay-like responses are not required.

Many questions on this examination did not assume knowledge of specific design principles, screen and animation principles, delivery platforms, creative thinking techniques and writing techniques, but rather asked students to discuss an example of one they could apply to the situation given in the question. This gave students a good opportunity to display their knowledge of these terms. Students would be well advised to practise this style of question in preparation for the examination.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A – Multiple-choice questions

The table below indicates the percentage of students who chose each option. The correct answer is indicated by shading.

Question	% A	% B	% C	% D	Comments
1	3	3	91	3	
2	8	2	6	84	
3	69	4	12	15	
4	96	0	2	2	
5	86	8	4	2	

Question	% A	% B	% C	% D	Comments
6	0	3	0	96	
7	30	42	19	9	The term '24-bit colour' refers to over 16 million colours. The colour depth is calculated by 2 to the power of 24. The popularity of option B (256 colours) indicates that many students do not understand this concept as 8-bit colour (or 2 to the power of 8) yields 256 colours.
8	9	59	30	2	
9	1	11	87	1	
10	33	12	45	10	Students should know key typographical terms such as leading, alignment, tracking and kerning. The most obvious feature in the design given was that the two lines of text were touching, therefore leading (space between lines of text) has been manipulated to achieve this.
11	18	71	2	10	The key to this question was the use of the term 'reviewed', which meant that a colleague was going to look at the design and evaluate it, but not edit or create new options. A pdf file would allow the colleague to see the design clearly and give feedback, but not to make changes or create other options easily.
12	41	48	7	5	Students' selection of options A and B indicates that they understood that 'p' is the selector used in CSS to denote a paragraph. However, they were not as clear on the property that applies to the styling of paragraph text, which is simply color (spelt without the 'u').
13	4	6	3	87	
14	89	4	6	1	
15	24	15	7	54	
16	10	66	24	1	
17	46	34	20	0	Students struggled with this CSS question, which required an understanding of the Box Model for page layout. This div had a width of 450 px and an extra 25 px of padding on all sides, therefore effectively adding 25 px to the left and 25 px to the right of this div. All together, 50 px must be added to the width, giving a total of 500 px (option C).
18	21	15	5	59	
19	10	19	63	8	
20	3	96	1	0	

Section B – Short-answer questions

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	51	18	31	0.4

Students are advised to read questions carefully. Students were provided with a sample logo for a car loan business and were asked to describe two characteristics of the target audience that the designer is appealing to with the logo.

A number of students described aspects of the logo and how this related to the company or business such as the winding road representing car travel, and, while this was true, it did not answer the question about target audience characteristics. Target audience characteristics include age, gender, occupation, income level or hobbies, and so on. The characteristic given needed to be related to an aspect of the logo.

To achieve full marks students had to describe two distinct target audience characteristics and describe the way in which the logo suggested that characteristic. It was not correct to simply say 'the target audience for this logo is predominately male'. A high-scoring response such as 'the designers use of blue which is traditionally considered to appeal to a masculine audience would suggest the target audience is probably male' was much more appropriate.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	24	18	57	0.4

This question required students to apply their understanding of writing styles to a specific example, that is, writing copy for a DIY web page to explain simple bike maintenance procedures to mountain bike enthusiasts.

Students were required to identify which writing style they would use and justify their response. The most straightforward style to justify was an expository/explanatory/descriptive/instructive/technical/educational writing style.

The justification needed to be along the lines of 'Because its main purpose is to explain, describe, give information or inform' or 'Because the writing is trying to explain a concept, imparting information'.

Other possible styles included formal or professional, but students often struggled to justify these.

Some students gave responses such as active or passive, but these were not considered a writing style. However, students could have given a response such as, 'This could be written in an instructional style using passive voice as step-by-step technical instructions are required'.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	27	61	1.5

This question was answered well by many students. There were many reasons for including captions or subtitles with media assets including:

- to aid accessibility for people with hearing impairments
- translating foreign languages

- for viewability in a no-noise environment or when the sound was unavailable for a technical reason
- increasing audience engagement, interest or understanding
- required by accessibility laws in some jurisdictions
- opportunity to create a customised and stylised caption, for example, italics for emphasis
- increasing key word searchability.

Students who did not achieve full marks often did not give two distinct reasons, merely repeating their first reason in different words.

It was clear that other students did not know what captions are.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	1	64	1.3

Design principle: balance (albeit asymmetrical), contrast, emphasis, figure/ground, cropping, scale, movement and hierarchy.

Many students were able to name a relevant design principle but some identified a design element such as colour.

The majority of students who correctly identified a design principle in the poster were able to describe its use, for example, 'Contrast is shown as the red background clearly contrasts with black/white elements' or 'Scale is used to add interest and attracts viewers through the use of the enlarged legs of a ballerina at the top of the poster'.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	Average
%	45	55	0.6

A number of students did not understand the function of a MovieClip symbol in Adobe Flash/Animate. The term 'function' could have been interpreted as meaning how a MovieClip works or the reason MovieClips are used, so a wide variety of responses were acceptable. Possible responses included:

- MovieClip symbols run independently to the main timeline.
- Useful for cyclical animations that play no matter what else may be going on in the current timeline.
- MovieClips only display their timeline contents when exported.
- MovieClips allow for the addition of filters.
- You can control the timeline and properties of a MovieClip with actionscript.
- Helps keep the main timeline clear and easier to work with.
- Saves time as you only have to animate once but it can be used over and over again.
- Using MovieClip symbols in your animation reduces file size.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	20	32	47	1.3

For full marks, students needed to give a response such as, 'The links will appear dark grey, Arial font and centred. When the mouse hovers over the link, the text will change from dark grey to red'. Some students claimed that the styling would not work due to an error in the code, but this was

incorrect. Others described the link appearance without considering the hover or rollover part of the styling.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	30	19	51	1.2

Students were given a short sample animation. They were required to identify one of the techniques and describe how it had been used to create the realism of the motion of flight. A number of students described an animation principle rather than a technique, indicating that students need to be clear on animation terminology. Techniques that could have been used in this animation include:

- frame by frame
- motion tween/classic tween
- rotoscoping
- hinges and pivots
- motion path
- keyframes

Students also needed to clearly describe an example of the use of the technique identified in the animation. For example, 'Hinges/pivots were used to ensure the wings flapped realistically at the point they move up and down', 'Rotoscoping could have been used to obtain the accuracy of the movement in the bird's wings and body position' or 'Motion tweening is used to create the fluid arc of the bird's path across the stage'.

Answers that referred to principles such as staging, squash and stretch, exaggeration and others were not acceptable.

Question 8a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	64	36	0.4

A number of students did not know the Box Model for web page layout. Students needed to identify the grey area (labelled D) as the margin, a key component of the Box Model.

Question 8b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	59	30	11	0.5

Margins can have different values for top, bottom right and left or margin values can be expressed as pixels, percentages or ems. Margin values can be set to auto. The margin does not increase the size of the element but controls the space outside the border or element.

The main purpose of the margin is to achieve a pleasing layout and separation of content on a web page. Margins also allow the web designer to create a responsive or fluid web page.

Students found it difficult to describe two characteristics and the purpose of the margin when creating a layout for a web page.

Question 9a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	26	74	0.8

Most students identified legal considerations around copyright/issues of ownership/intellectual property or moral rights. Another legal issue some students noted was to do with payment and working conditions.

Question 9b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	16	31	53	1.4

Students could have given a wide range of design considerations that need to be taken into account before starting to design a logo, including:

- Who you are designing for? Who is the target audience?
- Function or purpose of the design/Where the logo will be used?
- company colours
- fonts
- When it is needed by?
- How many designs they would like to choose from?
- format
- resolution
- delivery platform
- existing logos/material
- scope of the project
- timeline

Question 10a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	5	95	1

Students responded well to this question, explaining that it is important to test a website to ensure that it can be accessed, loaded and used as intended by all users regardless of platform/ browser/operating system/user ability and so on. If the student response was about the need to correct errors, the student needed to refer to the fact that errors can limit user access or the functionality of the web page.

Question 10b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	15	85	0.9

A wide range of valid and useful testing techniques were identified, including:

- checking the site's appearance in different browsers
- checking all images/animations/videos load as they should
- checking all links work
- checking the load time of the site
- testing that forms work
- search engine compatibility
- user satisfaction, for example, design, navigation, ease of achieving aims

- spelling and grammar/readability of text
- testing accessibility for users with a disability
- security testing
- checking the live site once it is on the web
- validation software/online validation such as W3C to see that code meets the correct standards.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	8	14	40	39	**2.1**

Students were required to choose one of the following principles and explain it: staging, timing, anticipation or exaggeration. They needed to describe two examples of where the principle they explained was used in the animation, for example, the broken 'closed' sign as the character enters the pier, which he doesn't notice but the viewer can anticipate the danger, and seeing the hole in the pier, which leads us to anticipate the character is bound to fall through the hole.

An example could have been, 'Anticipation helps to prepare the viewer for what's about to happen. When applied, it has the effect of making the object's action more realistic'.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	19	42	39	**1.2**

Reasons included:

- so that it is easy to read/increase readability
- so it is easy or logical to navigate/easier to locate information
- so that all assets are in the correct location, making it easier to update
- so readers are more engaged with the content because it is clear and logically arranged.

Most students gave at least one reason for why it is important to classify, structure and sequence content when writing content for the web. However, some students were not able to give two different reasons and simply rewrote/reworded their first reason.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	21	42	37	**1.2**

Typography influences a product's appeal to the consumer because:

- the appropriate typography will suit or appeal to the target audience; for example, if marketing a toy to young children you should not use a serious, formal font
- the right typography conveys information about the product or company that produces it; for example, a funeral company would be unlikely to attract customers if its promotional material used a horror-type font
- appropriate typography helps to convey a message/appropriate typography assures that the message is readable.

Some students struggled to express two reasons why typography is a major influence in a product's appeal to the consumer. Although the question did not ask for an example, high-scoring answers used an example to illustrate the response.

Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	12	30	58	1.5

This question included a diagram showing some of the stages in the design process, and students should have had an understanding of the design process and the stages shown in the diagram. They should clearly understand that all aspects of the design process must focus on the client brief. Expressing two distinct reasons was challenging for some students. Some examples include:

Creative Thinking stage

- presents a range of solutions but these must meet key needs of task as outlined in the brief
- designers need to challenge assumptions and evaluate ideas as they relate to the brief

Design Development stage

- the design must meet the primary need as given in the brief
- it must achieve communication of concepts required by the brief

Prototype stage

- needs to realise the concept expressed in the brief and reveal any problems with the current design
- avoids costly mistakes such as sticking with an idea that does not meet the brief for too long

Testing stage

- ensures that the design works in terms of brief
- investigates how a sample of users think and feel about a product and whether this meets the brief

Section C – Practical task

The animation task proved to be the more difficult task, with Step 5 being the most challenging for students. Many students were not sure how to use easing, or could not make the rocket loop smoothly. Timing was also an issue throughout the task, where elements of the objects were not in the correct positions when required. It was also observed that some students tried recreating the orbiting planetoid in a 'live' sense, when it was actually a MovieClip, consequently the planetoid rotated when the animation was exported, but remained stationary in the .fla working file.

Website

Step 1

Marks	0	1	Average
%	16	84	0.9

One mark was awarded for the correct linking of the CSS style sheet *style.css* to *index.html*.

Step 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	4	7	29	60	2.5

Students needed to complete three elements: placement and scaling of the moon, Saturn and the text. The main problems observed were incorrect scaling and placement of the text, where the 'E'

and 'T' in the word 'PLANETARIUM' were not above the summit of the mountain. Sometimes the layer ordering was incorrect, so that the tail of the 'P' was behind the horizon.

The scaling and placement of the moon and Saturn were generally done well.

Step 3

Marks	0	1	Average
%	44	56	**0.6**

Of those students who completed a radial gradient, it was observed that it would have needed to be a reverse radiant gradient. This was a rare occurrence – most students who were successful in this step added a simpler shading to the left side of the moon, which matched what was shown.

Step 4

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	27	67	**1.6**

Students needed to save the space image as a .jpg or .png file and then place it in the correct banner div in both pages. Some students modified the banner div's background in the css file to incorporate the picture and this was acceptable.

Step 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	15	19	67	**1.5**

Students had to create a promotional heading that was fewer than eight words. Occasionally this word limit was exceeded. Students needed to write something positive and enticing about the planetarium, such as '*The best time under the stars!*' or '*It will be out of this world*', and generally did this well. The key words were mostly about space, the planetarium or aspects of astronomy.

Step 5b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	24	76	**0.8**

Regardless of what was written for step 5a, as long as the h3 tag was applied successfully in this part, the mark was awarded.

Step 6

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	20	38	41	1.2

Students were generally quite successful in placing the text in the correct location. Astute students would have observed the grey comment in the html coding of where to place the paragraphs, as shown below:

<div id="content">

<div id="animation">

</div>

<!-- Insert 4 paragraphs here-->

</div>

The mark was not awarded if it was outside of this div, or inside the animation div. A few students formatted the text incorrectly, such as all italics or h1 size.

Paragraphing was generally done well, but some students used the <br> break tag instead of the <p> tag for paragraphs.

Step 7

Marks	0	1	Average
%	53	47	0.5

This step was generally not completed successfully. Some students applied a normal html tag instead of a class. The name of the class was not important, as long as it linked to "a_sky". Examples of successful classes being used include:

- <h5 class = "a_sky"> </h5>
- <p class = "a_sky"> </p>
- <div class = "a_sky"> </div>

This may indicate that students' knowledge of classes requires improvement.

Step 8

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	34	20	47	1.2

Most students gave good responses for this step. Sometimes a class or ID was attempted (such as .h2 or #h2), but the styling was correct. A common mistake was to set the font size incorrectly. Students are reminded to read the specifications carefully.

Step 9

Marks	0	1	Average
%	64	36	**0.4**

The creation of unordered lists was generally completed well. The list needed to start with the <ul> tag, each line needed <li> and to enclose it and the whole list needed to end with a tag.

Step 10

Marks	0	1	Average
%	62	38	**0.4**

Creating an email link was done reasonably well. The following correct code was required:

info@mp.vic.gov.au

Some students misspelled the email address or code. Others attempted a hyperlink or an anchored link, which were all unsuccessful.

Step 11

Marks	0	1	Average
%	55	45	**0.5**

Linking the two pages was not done well. Hyperlinking pages is a basic step for websites. Often students created the pages then moved the files, causing links to be broken. Students should ensure that if they move files they must check in a browser to see if the links still function and take corrective action if required.

Step 12

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	31	37	32	**1**

The resizing of the photo was done very well. As it was a picture with a low number of colours, it was acceptable to save it as a .gif; however, most students saved it as a .png or .jpg.

Most students were able to insert the photo into the div #map placeholder: however, they struggled to create an appropriate ALT tag. Many students simply had 'map' as the tag, which isn't descriptive enough. Students must consider how this would be read out by a screen reader for people with a vision impairment, for instance. They needed to provide at least 'planetarium map' or more descriptive words that described the picture adequately. File names such as 'planetarium_map.jpg' were not acceptable.

Animation

Step 1

Marks	0	1	Average
%	5	95	**1**

Almost all students were able to import the image to the library.

Step 2

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	8	6	86	1.8

A minority of students did not resize the stage to the correct dimensions. Placing the image was done extremely well – it simply needed to be in the top left corner regardless of the stage dimensions.

Step 3

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	17	76	1.7

Most students inserted the MovieClip in the correct position; however, some placed it at x = 255 instead of x = 225.

Step 4

Marks	0	1	Average
%	62	38	0.4

A number of students correctly modified the MovieClip *rocket*, but put the rocket flames above the rocket. Some students duplicated the MovieClip and gave it a new name, such as '*rocket with flames'* or *'rocket + flames'*, which was acceptable. Some students had the flames on the timeline itself and attempted to have them 'follow' the rocket, but this often proved ineffective.

Step 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	28	17	17	14	13	8	3	2

Few students achieved full marks for this question. Generally, students who used a motion guide scored well, but it was possible to score highly without a motion guide if motion tweens were used, as putting easing on a motion tween was observed.

Getting the rocket to make a smooth circular loop proved difficult for some students, whose rockets made jerky, haphazard loops and missed out on some marks. Often the rocket did not stay oriented to the path, and 'jiggled' around. The use of motion guides is highly recommended and should be a priority to master for the examination as they can incorporate easing and orient to path easily.

Step 6

Marks	0	1	Average
%	43	57	0.6

This step was done very well, with the majority of attempts successful.

Step 7

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	43	21	36	0.9

Students were generally able to achieve the timing of the Planetarium tween as well as the alpha settings.

Step 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	56	15	19	11	**0.9**

Creating the INTERSTELLAR text proved difficult for many students. Frequently, spelling errors such as 'INTERSTELLER' and 'INTERSTELLA' were given. Some students used a serif font and the size of the text was incorrect.

Frame timing was quite a significant problem. Many students had the slider bar on frame 227. This can be easily avoided by looking at the frame counter at the bottom of the screen; alternatively students could manually type '226' in the frame box to ensure they are at the correct frame.

Rotation of the text was generally completed well.

Step 9

Marks	0	1	Average
%	52	48	**0.5**

Generally this was done well; however, some students had either the text or background disappear before the animation finished. Other students had the animation finishing before 8 seconds.

Step 10

Marks	0	1	Average
%	64	36	**0.4**

This step was not completed well. If students find that they have not completed the animation before the end of the examination, they can still achieve a mark if they export their unfinished file as a .swf and add it to the website. If the student did export the .swf, sometimes they did not put it in the #animation div.