

The School-assessed Task has two components. They relate to Unit 3 Outcome 1 and Unit 4 Outcome 1.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Unit 3 Investigation and interpretation

Outcome 1

Undertake a broad and innovative investigation, trialling materials and techniques within selected art form/s and/or media to explore ideas, directions and personal concepts in a considered and insightful way.

Nature of task

A body of work presenting broad and innovative explorations within selected art form/s and/or media which clearly demonstrate the development of the student's thinking and working practices.

Scope of task

A range of visual solutions should be developed from personal art responses and observations, to demonstrate the student's understanding and application of materials, techniques and aesthetic qualities in a considered and insightful way. This practical body of work must document a broad and innovative investigation, demonstrating exploration and experimentation in art form/s and/or media leading to the progressive resolution of concepts and skills. Considered and appropriate use of formal elements should be demonstrated.

These explorations and experimentations contribute to and constitute the student's body of work. There is no separate folio of 'support work'.

The body of work may have a number of starting points and multiple 'solutions'. Starting points might involve:

- experimental exploration of media and materials
- investigation into the qualities of art form/s and/or media
- exploration of themes/concepts through a variety of approaches.

Refinement of ideas leading to the realisation of concepts, observations and directions might occur through:

- trialling and refining of techniques and processes
- consolidation and progressive resolution of ideas and skills
- progressive annotation and evaluation of explorations and investigations
- realisation of defined objectives, experiments, explorations and/or concepts.

The effective communication of student's thinking and working practices in the refinement of ideas, concepts and/or observations must be documented with visual and written material.

This might include:

- grouping, numbering, dating and/or commenting on specific units of work from initial concept to the resolution of ideas
- related photographs, models and/or experimental proofs explaining the sequential development of work/s in progress

- progressive annotation, explanation and evaluation of ideas, concepts and visual solutions
- work organised thematically and/or stylistically rather than through a chronological presentation.

Investigations begun in Unit 3 are progressively resolved to realise the Unit 4 body of work. The student's investigative beginnings are not limited to the work in Unit 3, nor are resolutions of the student's ideas specifically a Unit 4 task. Teachers must sight and monitor the development and documentation of the student's thinking and working practices. Authentication forms can be found on page 217 of the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook 2009*.

Presentation framing of artworks is not required and should not be encouraged. However, in the preparation and/or development of the body of work framing may be a consideration in the student's development and refinement of ideas. In deciding whether to frame their work students should be made aware that the use of glass, plastic, perspex, laminating and other such materials may obscure the surface and obstruct the close examination of the techniques and texture of the medium/media used in the work and may affect the assessment.

Unit 4 Realisation and Resolution

Outcome 1

Progressively realise and resolve with technical skill and awareness of aesthetic qualities a sustained and articulate body of work to communicate ideas, directions and/or personal concepts.

Nature of task

A sustained and articulate body of work which progressively realises and resolves the student's responses and which reflects personal concepts, ideas, direction, aesthetic qualities, art form/s and/or media exploration and skills in either an innovative and exploratory folio of visual solutions and/or through more finished artworks that resolve the student's intentions.

Scope of task

The student's work should explore and progressively realise and resolve concepts, observations, ideas and skills, documenting thinking and working practices, show an understanding of formal elements and demonstrating effective visual solutions.

All explorations contribute to and constitute the student's body of work. There is no separate folio of 'support work'. The body of work documents the exploration and progressive resolution of responses, concepts, observations, experiments and skills undertaken in Units 3 and 4. The resolution of the student's intentions in the body of work may be through innovative and exploratory visual solutions and/or more finished artworks. Effective written and visual documentation should demonstrate critical appraisal of the resolution of the student's intentions and achievements at various stages in the body of work.

Finished artworks are not a mandatory focus of area of study 1 in Units 3 and 4. Where they are included in the body of work they should have developed from the student's exploratory and investigative beginnings.

The body of work may have a number of starting points and multiple 'solutions'. The focus of Unit 4 might include:

- personal art responses through an in-depth study of a particular art form/s and/or media with a range of innovative and experimental solutions
- experimentation and integration of a variety of media and materials to achieve an artistic purpose in the communication of ideas and concepts

- innovative exploration which culminates in one or more finished artworks in a progressive resolutions of the student's ideas.

The realisation and resolution of the student's thinking and working practices must be effectively communicated and documented. Presentation should consider:

- grouping, numbering, dating and/or commenting on specific units of work from each individual concept to visual solution
- presenting photographs, models and/or experimental proofs of work in progress and comprehensive documentation of thinking and working practices
- progressive annotation and explanation of ideas, concepts and visual solutions clearly articulating the progressive resolution of thinking and working practices.

In the documentation in the folio there should be some indication provided by the student when they consider each of the following occurring:

- initial exploration and development
- refinement of ideas and directions
- resolution of concepts with technical skills.

Teachers must sight and monitor the development and documentation of the student's thinking and working practices leading to the resolution of a sustained body of work. All work produced in Unit 3 should be available to students in Unit 4.

Presentation framing of artworks is not required and should not be encouraged. However, in the preparation and/or development of the body of work framing may be a consideration in the student's development and refinement of ideas. In deciding whether to frame their work students should be made aware that the use of glass, plastic, perspex, laminating and other such materials may obscure the surface and obstruct the close examination of the techniques and texture of the medium/media used in the work and may affect the assessment.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Teachers should note that the comments made in this report are based on the current *VCE Art Study Design* 2004–2009. Teachers should ensure that they continue to follow this study design until the newly revised *VCE Art Study Design* 2010–2014 is implemented in schools next year.

This report is based on the feedback provided by the VCE Art Reviewing team who visited many schools throughout the state. Several schools had not participated in the review process for many years, so it was very pleasing to receive positive feedback from these schools during the 'phone-in' sessions that were introduced at the end of the year. The reviewing team viewed many innovative folios where students developed and refined their ideas working from early exploratory works on paper through to installations, sculpture, multi media or works on canvas, which demonstrated the consolidation and progression of their thinking and working practices. These final resolutions were accompanied by written documentation that contained reflection and critical evaluation of the work. Other higher-scoring folios presented highly effective smaller scale collections that were broad and imaginative and had clearly defined visual solutions that were innovative and fully resolved throughout the body of work.

The School-assessed Task in VCE Art is designed to enable students to develop the technical skills and artistic awareness necessary to produce works of quality by developing and refining diversity in art practice through a sustained investigation of selected art form/s and/or media. Several reviewers noted that there was little refinement of ideas and directions (Criterion 2) in many folios; some schools still appear to simply focus on 'finished artworks' rather than encouraging students to explore and progressively refine each idea.

Teachers should note that personal art responses are the focus of a broad and innovative investigation in Outcome 1 Unit 3, so pages of glossy magazine cut-outs that provide little evidence of the development of personal observations or explorations are simply not relevant to the Study. **Appropriate material collected for inspiration must include annotation of the source and should be used to support the development of the student's ideas.**

Students should not simply follow specific teacher-directed tasks, as this will result in all students producing exactly the same work each lesson. Ideally, teacher-directed trials should occur in Unit 2 so that students can explore their own personal ideas and investigations in Unit 3. All starting points in a folio need effective documentation and personal appraisal to communicate the student's thinking and working practices, not simply descriptive statements of what is visually obvious.

In Unit 4 (Outcome 1) the student refines a number of the ideas explored in Unit 3 so that on the completion of Unit 4 the student should be able to progressively realise and resolve a sustained and articulate body of work that communicates, documents and presents concepts, observations and/or ideas with technical skill and awareness of aesthetic qualities.

Students continued to choose to explore digital and multimedia presentations and it is important to note that these artworks must be supported by the printing of screen dumps/layers (or story boards for film) to support the digital exploration, because without these layers and written material that was considered and insightful, these folios were not able to score highly. All video and multimedia explorations must be accompanied by informative written and visual material to support the refinement of ideas and directions as students explore and investigate their directions and concepts.

Painting, drawing and digital photography are still the predominate art forms explored by VCE Art students; however, a much wider variety of three-dimensional work and multimedia pieces including installations are being explored along with ceramics, textiles and printmaking to achieve highly effective resolutions.

All work from Units 3 and 4 in the School-assessed Task is assessed as one body of work, and the key focus of the study is the progressive resolution of concepts, ideas, direction, technical skills and aesthetic qualities. A critical reflection and evaluation is essential in the written and visual documentation to explain and strengthen the student's investigation of their thinking and working practices with specific reference to a considered and appropriate use of formal elements.

While students explored a wide variety of approaches and directions throughout 2008, there is no specific 'formula' that results in a successful folio. Some worked with a limited range of concepts and ideas but in a sustained and imaginative manner with a broad and innovative investigation into selected art forms and/or media. Others had a number of starting points throughout their folio that evolved and changed as they documented thinking and working processes to progressively develop and refine ideas that lead to the aesthetic and technically competent resolutions presented in artistic and diverse manners. Reviewers also encountered several students who simply used a 'borrowed' image and made no attempt to develop and refine this image, so they could not score highly on each of the criterion provided in the VCE assessment advice on the VCAA website.

Successful folios throughout 2008 presented a body of work that was a broad and innovative investigation demonstrating well-developed technical skills and the insightful application of formal elements, supported by a sustained and critical reflection and/or evaluation of the development of the work.

However, less successful folios did not provide evidence or appraisal of their thinking and working practices and the use of formal elements was inadequately explored throughout the

body of work as well as in the resolved pieces. Some folios demonstrated strengths in one or more criteria, but they were not able to maintain the consistency, breadth or quality required for a higher- scoring folio. Unfortunately some schools are still using terms like ‘Work briefs’ or ‘Design Process’ which are not part of the Art study and this indicates that teachers are not familiar with the current study. It is imperative that teachers support students to use the language and concepts consistent with the study design.

In VCE Art, finished artworks are not a mandatory focus of the School-assessed Task. However, where they are identified and included in the body of work they must have developed from exploratory and investigative beginnings; they cannot simply ‘appear’ without any exploration. These resolutions of thinking and working practices must be documented with appropriate written and visual material throughout the folio and should reflect a broad and innovative investigation involving exploration and experimentation in the development and refinement of the student’s personal art responses.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Criterion 1: Exploration and development of personal art responses, concepts, observations and skills through a broad and innovative investigation.

Many students began by exploring personal responses by creating mind/concept maps, taking digital photographs or collecting visual material in the form of art material from magazines or exhibitions. It was evident that successful students added highly informative written and visual material to communicate their thinking and working practices. However, these were simply starting points for the higher-scoring folios that were focused and imaginative and supported by concise annotation, which reflected the variety of directions that these concepts and directions could lead to as possible resolutions.

Many students used a theme or an issue to generate ideas or a concept, which developed with experimentation of techniques and processes into a broad and innovative investigation. Others explored the work of specific artists as a starting point or personal images from their own life through simple drawings from reality that developed into broad, innovative investigations through the reworking of images and ideas.

The strengths of successful folios were evident in highly informative explorations of personal art responses. High scoring folios demonstrated an imaginative investigation of selected art form/s and/or media and provided insights into concepts, skills and possible directions explored by the student that were later refined as the body of work progressed.

The Art reviewing team noted that less successful students relied on borrowed material and pages of glossy magazine images and did not explore these to make them personal or unique. These limited folios revealed a lack of evidence supporting the generation of the student’s own personal responses and resulted in an inadequate investigation of media and the development of skills.

Criterion 2: Refinement of ideas and directions through the consolidation of thinking and working practices.

In this criterion students were required to communicate their ideas and to develop and refine their concepts and skills through an innovative and sustained investigation. In the refinement of the ideas, techniques and directions students should attempt to acknowledge strengths and weaknesses and consolidate a body of work that shows imaginative refinement of ideas and techniques. This process must be documented and communicated through sustained written and visual material by evaluating their own practical and thinking processes, not simply writing about what they have done.

Successful students were able to demonstrate competency through ongoing experimentation and refinement of techniques and processes that were innovative and highly imaginative. The refinement in these folios was supported by highly informative written and visual material that acknowledged strengths and weaknesses in the body of work.

Less successful students showed inadequate evidence of the refinement of their ideas and directions by not spending enough time investigating possible directions before moving on to a finished resolution. However, students may consolidate thinking and working practices at any time through the year as they explore innovative and imaginative directions, so long as any final artworks that are identified in the body of work are obviously the result of exploratory beginnings. Simply appropriating an artist's image without any exploration or personal investigation does not allow for any development or refinement of ideas and directions.

Criterion 3: Trialling and application of materials and techniques within selected art form/s through exploration, investigation and experimentation.

Students are required to fully investigate materials and techniques appropriate to their chosen art form/s by demonstrating an understanding of the characteristics and processes relevant to their stated intentions. This does not mean simply experimenting with materials; students need to show knowledge of the particular media they are exploring and it is essential that this experimentation is sustained and documented throughout the folio, from the initial exploratory work to the resolved artworks.

Many successful folios demonstrated an innovative exploration of the selected art form/s and/or media, revealing competence and control as they progressed towards a final resolution of skills and ideas. These successful students were also able to communicate this exploration with effective written and visual material throughout the body of work.

Less successful students simply relied on the technical skills demonstrated in the final resolution and revealed limited exploration, investigation and experimentation in the whole folio. These folios often lacked competence and control and were not supported with appropriate written and visual material.

To achieve a 'High' or 'Very High' all trialling and exploration throughout the folio must be demonstrated consistently and show evidence of competence and continuity from the initial exploratory work to the final resolved pieces.

Criterion 4: Understanding and application of formal elements and aesthetic qualities through exploration and refinement.

The whole body of work must demonstrate aesthetic awareness, plus demonstrate an understanding and refinement of formal elements from the initial exploratory work to the resolved artworks. Students must show their awareness of these formal elements and aesthetic qualities through the use of appropriate written and visual material throughout the whole folio.

Students showed their understanding in different ways. Some high-scoring folios provided annotations identifying qualities such as colour variations, or provided images of design concepts that were evident in their experiments and commented on the strengths or weaknesses evident in each exploratory piece. Many students were able to demonstrate their understanding of formal elements in the development of their ideas, but were not able to demonstrate these qualities or awareness in the resolved artworks.

Simply writing definitions of art elements and principles that are generally unrelated to the exploration and refinement of their work does not show awareness or understanding and is to be discouraged. Less successful students often found it difficult to explain and explore the use

of formal elements in their exploratory work and it was evident that there was a lack of understanding of the requirements of this criterion as they approached their final resolutions. Students must be aware that the exploration and refinement of formal elements needs to be accompanied by appropriate written and visual material which explains 'How' and 'Why' they have applied that particular formal element.

Criterion 5: Resolution of concepts, ideas, directions, technical skills and formal qualities.

The body of work begins with an exploration of personal art responses and the *VCE Art Study Design* states that these require that each concept or direction is progressively developed and refined culminating in a broad and innovative investigation. The resolution of these concepts, ideas, directions, technical skills and formal qualities may occur throughout the body of work and students must document these ideas and resolutions with a critical evaluation or reflection.

Students must clearly identify and document with informative written and visual material the point/s at which this resolution has been achieved; unfortunately this was not evident in many of the folios reviewed throughout 2008.

A body of work may be an experimental collection of ideas and concepts that demonstrate well developed technical skills and insightful documentation of how the formal elements are used throughout the folio as well as in the final artworks, or by the evidence of themes or sequences that culminate in resolved artworks.

Higher-scoring folios provided comprehensive visual and critical written material to indicate how the process of the investigation had been resolved by concisely annotating the whole process of the folio throughout the year. These students were able to explain changes and development of the final resolved artworks and commented on the strengths and weaknesses of techniques, processes and formal qualities that lead to the final artwork/s.

Less successful folios showed no evidence of the progressive resolution of concepts and ideas and in some cases the initial idea was presented as the finished artwork without any refinement or development. Simply enlarging a photograph without evidence of the development and context and further experimentation does not show exploration and refinement.

Criterion 6: Realisation and presentation of a sustained body of work communicating thinking and working practices.

The body of work includes all exploration, development and refinement of ideas and concepts and the progressive resolution of those ideas with an effective demonstration of technical skill and aesthetic awareness. The body of work needs to be presented in a manner that demonstrates the student's thinking and working practices, so often simply using bulldog clips to assist this organisation is suitable. Students must be aware that there is no separate support material and that the folio includes all exploration, development and refinement accompanied by reflection and/or evaluation of this process.

It is not necessary to provide plastic-sleeved folios because these sometimes tend to limit the exploration of materials and techniques. Presentation of a body of work may be in a visual diary, or simply on loose sheets that are organised in themes which show the initial starting points of exploratory work through to the resolution of concepts and skills in the final artworks. Loose sheets need to be clearly identified with numbering and identification on the back of each resolution. These folios still need to show effective and progressive documentation that communicates the student's intentions and achievements.

Several schools that were visited presented digital photographs without printouts/screen dumps of layers in computer programs. These are needed to support the development of three-dimensional work, installations or digital imagery to show the evolution of ideas and skills. The folio is like a personal ‘visual journey’ that needs to be understood by the viewer and although it is not necessary, some visual diaries were even ‘book-marked’ to direct the viewer to related explorations.

Many higher-scoring folios were innovative and imaginatively presented with effective visual presentations that consistently and imaginatively communicated their intentions from the early exploratory work to the final realisation of thinking and working practices. These folios were also accompanied by a sustained and critical reflection and/or evaluation of the development the work.

Less successful folios were difficult to ‘navigate’ because there was no annotation to show the relevance of some early exploration and there was little evidence of the progression of ideas and concepts. These folios lacked organisation and had not demonstrated thinking and working practices with any personal appraisal or reflection. Simply stating ‘I like this’ does not show an insightful or informative understanding by the student. Annotations may be brief, but they should be analytical rather than descriptive.

Finally, all starting points in a folio need effective documentation and personal appraisal to communicate the student’s thinking and working practices, but simple, concise statements or reflections that are contextualised are sufficient, rather than pages of written annotation.

Overall general advice on the Art study:

- Teachers and students are advised to log on to the VCAA website www.vcaa.vic.edu.au to ensure they are familiar with the current *VCE Art Study Design 2004–2009*, also the current assessment advice plus the monthly *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* to check for recent updates in all subjects.
- Ensure that each idea is ‘developed and refined’, not simply copied from an existing image.
- Annotations need to contain reflection, aesthetic awareness and self appraisal on the whole development/exploration, not just the process or materials used.
- Supplement 1 ‘2009 Administrative advice for School assessment’ to the February 2009 *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* No. 67 provides specific performance descriptors for each of the six Art criterion developed to assess the body of work. The descriptors contain terms such as ‘highly competent’ or ‘competent’ or ‘limited’ to enable teachers and their colleagues to assess each folio correctly. Simply using the Art assessment criteria sheet alone is not sufficient in the marking of each folio and teachers are advised to cross-mark with another art teacher colleague if possible to support objective assessment. Teachers must ensure that the rank order of folios is correct in each class and it is advisable to highlight the key words in each performance descriptor before the initial marking of folios.
- Teachers and students should also note that life drawings may be useful in the interview process to gain access to tertiary institutions, but where they have no relevance to the ideas explored in the context of the folio, they do not enhance the mark allocation for each criterion unless the human form is the basis of the exploration.
- Attempt to attend a VCE Art workshop that is offered at VCAA and/or with organisations that support VCE Art education such as the Arts Education Victoria, the National Gallery of Victoria or the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.