

2009
School-assessed
Task Report

Studio Arts GA 1

GENERAL COMMENTS

Throughout the review process, it was pleasing to see evidence of the impact of teacher knowledge gleaned from recent information sessions. It was evident that knowledge and experience gained at the SAT information sessions have led to a better understanding of the application of the assessment criteria. Reviewers noticed a marked improvement in the application of criteria to student work presented. There was a noticeable difference in the reduction of the number of grade difference reports to schools. VCAA information sessions will continue each year and all teachers are welcome and would benefit from attending. A memorandum is sent to schools in the first week of Term 1 notifying schools of the details.

Unfortunately there are still aspects of the study design that are not being followed correctly. There is specific terminology used in the VCE Studio Arts study design and assessment criteria that is not being employed by some schools, this practice is detrimental to students. It is vitally important that teachers are fully aware of the specific terminology used in the study design. Teachers need to impart this knowledge and understanding to their students to support student's best possible results. The terminology ensures a cohesive study across the state and the assessment criteria is used to ensure all students are assessed in an equitable way. At times it was obvious that the assessment criteria had not been used appropriately to mark the student work presented, especially in relation to Criteria 5 and 6; the evaluation of exploratory and developmental work throughout the design process and the identification and development of a range of potential solutions related to the aims and ideas presented in the work brief. The work presented must represent an appropriate standard and reflect sufficient time allocation for VCE level of study. This was not always the case at some of the schools visited during the review process. It is vital that students clearly identify and label their potential solutions and that they substantiate how the potential solutions reflect the aims and ideas in work briefs. All work presented must be undertaken before the assessment date for SAT 1. At times there was evidence that students had worked on SAT 1 after the assessment date. Teachers need to ensure that no further work is added to SAT 1 after the assessment date. It is important for teachers to keep regular authentication records to support students and validate work completed. Information and authentication forms are available in the VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook issued to schools each year. The handbook is also available at the VCAA website: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/schooladmin/handbook/2009/index.html

School-assessed Task 1

The School-assessed Task has two components. Each is prepared in Unit 3. The components are:

- Outcome 1 Work brief
- Outcome 2 Design process.

Outcome 1: Prepare a work brief that formulates the content and parameters of the design process and plan how this will be undertaken

Nature of task

A work brief should create a framework for the design process in which the student plans how the subject matter, ideas, aesthetics and techniques related to the student's aims will be explored and developed.

The work brief needs to be developed by the student on an individual basis. Personal and creative responses should be encouraged throughout the preparation of the work brief.

The teacher and student should negotiate the contents of the work brief and the art form/s in which the work will be undertaken to ensure the student is working within the range of art form/s and facilities the school is able to offer.

(Materials and techniques may not be relevant to all art forms; for example, in digital art forms these could be interpreted as media and processes.)

The area of exploration should be defined in the work brief in enough breadth to allow for substantial exploration during the design process to facilitate the development of a range of potential solutions.

The work brief should be prepared prior to the commencement of the design process but may be expanded during the initial stages of the design process. However, it should be noted that the work brief sets out the content and parameters of the student's work and is not a summary of what has been already completed.

The work brief where possible should be word processed and may be presented as an extended statement, short paragraphs and may include dot points. It may include illustrations or diagrams as a means of clarification.

Criterion 1: Use of a work brief to define the exploration and development of a design process

To score **Very High** for this criterion the student must produce a personal and highly creative work brief that plans how the design process will be explored and developed, explaining the focus and subject matter to be explored. The work brief provides insight into the student's motivation and sources of inspiration to be investigated. A perceptive discussion of the aims to be achieved, conceptual possibilities relevant to the subject matter and art form/s and a range of related ideas to be investigated needs to be included. A comprehensive explanation of the aesthetic qualities to be developed in relation to the student's aims and ideas must also be identified. The work brief describes art form/s to be explored and discusses the proposed exploration of appropriate materials and development of techniques, processes and skills in relation to art form/s, aims and ideas presented.

Students who took an individual approach to writing a work brief saw the task as an opportunity to plan their time and expectations for the design process. It was obvious, through the links in their design process, they continually referred to the work brief to ensure they were following their plans and communicating the ideas expressed in the brief. Any

adjustments to the work brief were clearly labelled and documented. The writing styles and presentation of the work briefs varied, but all work included related directly to the students' aims and ideas. These students demonstrated a very good understanding of aesthetics and the importance of them to the communication of aims and ideas. Students who were not able to discuss aesthetic qualities often wrote a list rather than an explanation of how they would develop and use them. A list without specific context did not offer the student authentic support for their design process and does not allow the student to score highly on this criterion.

The work brief is a major component of this study design and should be seen in this light. It impacts most of the marks allocated to SAT 1 and at times students did not cover sufficient information to score highly in this criterion. Students did not always cover all aspects of this task and some failed to show adequate planning of how they would explore the design process. Those students who used the work brief as the basis for all work and demonstrated throughout the design process clear links to the work brief, scored well.

Teachers are accountable to coaching their students to best achieve the outcomes of the study design. Teachers should be mindful of the following issues that have prevented students from scoring well in this criterion.

Throughout the review there were some issues with the level of writing, specifically when student responses did not give a comprehensive explanation but merely a brief outline of the student's ideas. Students seemed reluctant or unable to go into enough detail about why they wanted to use and explore a particular art form or technique.

Some students listed potential solutions in the work brief as separate ideas and themes and then proceeded to create finished artwork based on these set ideas. Students should not be discussing potential solutions in the work brief. Potential solutions are developed during the design process. By defining exactly what is to be completed at the end of process does not allow for a creative exploration or development. Experimentation and trials are undertaken and the student creates varied directions and possibilities for future art making. The process of setting out a specified set number of ideas to resolve in predestined artworks is an incorrect interpretation of the study design. If students followed this understanding of the study design they did not score well in most criteria. These students usually followed a variety of different themes or ideas instead of one overarching concept or idea and pursued separate art forms for each remotely related idea. An overarching concept that offers a comprehensive inquiry that details the potential for creative exploration is the appropriate model for a successful work brief.

Criterion 2: Exploration and development of subject matter and ideas related to concepts and aims described in the work brief

To score **Very High** for this criterion the student must have approaches in the exploration and development of conceptual possibilities that are creative and insightful, that support a range of ideas. Comprehensive and thoughtful exploration progressively develops, clarifies and refines ideas and subject matter in the development of the student's personal imagery. Includes informative and detailed investigation of sources of inspiration and motivation including evidence of how this will influence the development of the student's personal imagery.

Students are still relying heavily on the use of borrowed imagery without giving adequate explanations as to why they have used these images or identifying how they relate to the aims and ideas in their work brief. Students are expected to annotate sources of imagery and qualify the inclusion with information directly related to the work brief. At times the development of subject matter was not explored beyond merely a reproduction of the images from magazines or downloaded from the internet. Students need to be made aware of the

rights of artists when using images sourced from the internet and should practice a clear understanding of how to use appropriation processes. In these student folios the images did not progressively develop or improve the communication of the aims and ideas discussed in the work brief. At a number of schools students gave too much attention to filling their visual diaries with cut out images from magazines without appropriate context. This detracted from the appropriate focus on developing skills and techniques to create images.

Students who scored well in this criterion developed a wide range of subject matter that supported a variety of related ideas that communicated their aims. They explored a number of avenues for sourcing imagery and if they used another artist's work or photograph they acknowledged them and ensured that the context varied enough to make the image their own through appropriation. It is important for the student to demonstrate how their inspiration has contributed to the development of subject matter and that all work presented reflected the aims and ideas stated in the work brief.

Students who provided detailed contextual discussions about artists were able to directly relate their inspiration to the selected subject matter. Extensive artist biographies downloaded from the Internet without acknowledgment to the context of student work is an inappropriate practice.

Criterion 3: Exploration and development of aesthetic qualities relevant to the aims and ideas described in the work brief

To score **Very High** for this criterion there must be comprehensive visual and written documentation demonstrates how a range of visual and, where appropriate, other elements contribute to the aesthetic qualities related to the student's aims, ideas and subject matter. Consistently creative and individual exploration and development of aesthetic qualities in the student's personal imagery is evidenced. Extensive investigation and use of a range of visual and, where appropriate, other elements, is evident throughout the design process. The visual effectiveness of the student's imagery is progressively developed and refined to effectively communicate ideas.

Students who were not able to discuss in detail how they would use aesthetics in their explorations were unable to score well in this criterion. Students must recognise the importance of how aesthetics play a significant role in the creation of artworks. Students should not be undertaking class exercises without a direct context to the development of their own work. They should be developing their use of aesthetics to communicate individual aims and ideas. It is also important that the exploration of aesthetic qualities is developed further than small samples or trials. Explorations need to be extended to show the development of ideas and skills to communicate aims and ideas. All explorations should have accompanying annotations to support the students' perceptions, understanding and thoughts about how they have used and developed aesthetics in all explorations. At times students wrote lists rather than offering contextual detail, this practice did not allow students to score highly in this criterion

Students who scored well developed a wide range of aesthetics and were able to select and refine them to improve the communication of aims and ideas. They did not rely on borrowed images but developed and created their own. It is important that even in photography students do not merely copying the aesthetics of another artist; this could include the cropping or framing of objects. There needs to be a distinct refinement and extension of the development of the student's own imagery related to their ideas.

Criterion 4: Exploration of materials and development of techniques and processes relevant to the art form/s and ideas described in the work brief

To score **Very High** for this criterion there must be extensive and thoughtful exploration; comprehensive documentation of a range of materials and development of techniques appropriate to the selected art form/s and relevant to the student's ideas. Progressive development and refinement of a very high level of skills in the use of materials and techniques demonstrating sensitivity to the materials and an awareness and understanding of particular characteristics.

Students need to plan their time well to ensure they develop and improve their application of materials and techniques. At times students focussed too much on sourcing inspiration or discussing artists rather than actually developing and making art. Students should avoid trying to master too many different art forms and look to develop and improve their skills in a few. Students who scored well created an extensive number of explorations and all explorations were reflective of the aims and ideas expressed in the work brief. They did not create lots of colour swatches or small squares of formal art elements void of context to their own aims and ideas. Each trial demonstrated a range of skills and techniques that enhanced their specific ideas.

Class exercises are generally not appropriate when they do not allow students to develop skills that are specifically relevant to the communication of their individual aims and ideas. Teachers should try to encourage students to develop skills and use materials and techniques that are relevant to their work brief. It is important for the student to undertake what they have written and set out in the work brief. If a student does not accomplish a specified task then they need to annotate or amend their work brief to reflect this change

Class exercises may be appropriate in terms of teaching students techniques, such as undertaking instruction regarding technology in a digital photography class. However, each student would be expected to demonstrate and annotate the application of the techniques to their own individual exploration work to score well in this criterion.

It is concerning that some schools still endorse the practice that students undertake a variety of technology based samples that bear no relationship to student work or make plans to use ceramics for example, but not actually explore these art forms or related techniques as part of their design process in Unit 3. It appears they are waiting for Unit 4 to apply techniques. These students were not able to score well in this criterion. If a student plans to create a garment or large ceramic forms or film in Unit 4, they must provide and demonstrate an adequate level of preliminary knowledge and skill through the trialling and experimentation with the specific appropriate techniques in the design process of Unit 3.

Students must discuss how they will use materials and techniques to communicate their aims and ideas and demonstrate an understanding of how and why their selected art form best achieves this. They should avoid just writing lists, they must explain the use in more detail offering an understanding of the art form.

Criterion 5: Evaluation of exploratory and developmental work throughout the design process

To score **Very High** for this criterion there must be comprehensive and informative annotation documenting processes of analysis, evaluation and the refinement of ideas, aesthetics and techniques throughout the design process. Clarification and consolidation of the student's thought processes and what they are trying to achieve. Insightful selection of various elements and potential solutions that could form the basis for future artwork.

The detail and degree to which work was annotated varied greatly in the review. At times some students did not write a sufficient amount to explain their use of materials and techniques, development of subject matter and aesthetics or they failed to detail the selection of potential solutions. The selection of potential solutions needs to show that the student has developed the trial sufficiently to be used to form the basis for future artworks. Students who clearly explained why the potential solution had been identified and detailed how it reflected their aims and ideas, scored well. Simply labelling or indicating an exploration does not fully address this criterion or Criterion 6. The exploratory work must be evaluated in relation to the work brief. The work presented and accompanying annotations must have direct links to the work brief to achieve a higher score. At times students did not seem to be able to acknowledge the relationship between the two and therefore were unable to score well on this criterion.

Criterion 6: Development of a range of potential solutions to the aims and ideas presented in the work brief

To score **Very High** for this criterion there must be comprehensive development of a range of potential solutions throughout the design process that provides substantial material on which future artworks could be based. The potential solutions clearly and comprehensively reflected the investigation, development and refinement of ideas, aesthetics and techniques. Effective, creative and original individual approaches in the communication of aims and ideas.

Potential solutions should be developed throughout the design process. They are not discussed in the work brief and should not be seen as set outcomes. In some schools there appears to be a misunderstanding between conceptual possibilities and potential solutions. Students can discuss conceptual possibilities in the work brief and explain how they propose to explore these ideas, materials, techniques and aesthetics, but they should not discuss potential solutions. Potential solutions are created within the design process. They evolve from trialling and experimenting with techniques to support and communicate ideas.

A range of potential solutions is more than two or three and are not necessarily derived from every exploration undertaken by the student. All potential solutions must have accompanying annotations to clarify and explain the student's thought process. Selected potential solutions will form the basis of artworks in Unit 4, therefore, students must have attempted to use aesthetics, materials and techniques during the design process, that reflect their aims and ideas, if they intend to use them in Unit 4. Potential solutions must link to the aims and ideas in the work brief.

If students do not clearly identify potential solutions they will not be allocated a score for this criterion. Unfortunately this was evident at some schools visited.

Students who scored well in this criterion created a variety of exploratory work from which potential solutions could be developed to form the basis for future artworks. They carefully explained the reasons behind their selections including qualification of how the potential solutions effectively addressed the aims and ideas the student planned to communicate.