



## GENERAL COMMENTS

Teachers should note that this report is based on the current *Studio Arts VCE Study Design* that is accredited for the period 2004–2009. A new study design will be published in 2009, to be implemented in 2010. This report is designed to provide valuable information to students and teachers on the performance of students in the 2007 examination. The information is given in such a way that students and teachers should understand the importance of the key knowledge areas of the study design.

The 2007 examination drew upon the knowledge and skills required for Outcome 3 of Unit 3 and Outcome 3 of Unit 4. As indicated in the study design, all questions on the examination were compulsory. The paper allowed for both short and extended responses to questions. Visual material was used for Questions 1 and 4, and included a range of art forms. A total of 50 marks was available, and students were given 90 minutes to complete the examination. The *Studio Arts VCE Study Design* covers a wide area of key knowledge involving research and investigation. Students must be prepared to demonstrate their knowledge in all of the areas covered in the study design.

The structure and format of the Studio Arts examination has remained reasonably consistent over recent years. While this has advantaged some students in their preparation for the exam, others continue to struggle to understand the benefits of this consistency. However, in general, students seem to be taking heed of examination advice and learning material in such a way that they can adequately demonstrate their knowledge. In 2007, students were able to provide responses to questions that were of a higher standard to previous years, due largely to an improved understanding of the key knowledge areas.

The 2007 written examination tested students' ability to **apply** the knowledge learnt in Outcome 3 in Units 3 and 4. One of the major factors in determining how well a student does in an examination is their ability to understand the specific requirements of a question and answer according to these requirements. Too often, key terms used in the question, such as 'analyse' and 'explain', were overlooked and a general and/or what appeared to be a pre-prepared answer was given. Responses that failed to address the question could not be awarded high marks. In this exam, bolded text was used to indicate key areas of the question that students needed to be aware of and were expected to address.

It is strongly recommended that students practice on past exams to improve their skills in responding to unseen artworks. The critical aspect in responding to unseen images is the student's capacity to demonstrate their ability to analyse and discuss factors such as aesthetic qualities comfortably, using the skills of observation and analysis acquired during the year. Teachers could communicate this knowledge by practising this through group discussions in class. It is important that students are supported to take active notes during discussions to support the development of their written skills.

As in previous years, Question 1 focussed on students' ability to determine ways in which an artist had created aesthetic qualities and a distinctive style in the artwork. The depth of skills in analysis required is quite specific, and it was important that students' analyses went beyond mere description and included annotation on how the artist had achieved aesthetic qualities and a distinctive style. Students must be more aware of the nature of the question and prepared to think deeply about each question in order to determine the required response. Many of the average responses to this question had difficulty linking the ways the artist had used materials and techniques in making the artwork. The instructional word in Question 1b. was 'explain'; however, many students described the use of materials and techniques rather than explaining how the artist used them.

One of the key requirements of Outcome 3 in Unit 4 is to study and research an art industry issue that has arisen in the current and/or previous year. In previous years some students approached this question without specifically focusing on why the issue under discussion was an art industry issue. Although this was still a problem to a degree, students' responses were generally better than in previous years. It is important that students understand the content of specific aspects of the art industry that relate to the issues selected for research. Advice was given in last year's assessment report that students should be prepared to quote their media sources.

Students must ensure that the knowledge that they have acquired throughout the year is applied to the specific requirements of each question. An example of this was Question 4 in the 2007 examination. The key knowledge related to the role of a curator, conservation and storage and marketing factors in relation to a commercial gallery. Too often, students struggled to demonstrate the knowledge which they should have acquired in relation to a specific art form. Students should have been able to discuss conservation and promotional considerations in relation to a specific art form.

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Many students seemed to have taken the advice in previous assessment reports and completed the extended response first. Time management is critical in this examination, and it is vital that students preparing for the 2008 examination sit practice exams (for example, past VCE papers) to test their ability to write against the clock. It is also important that students practise responses to a wide range of question types.

## Areas of strength and weakness

Students who were awarded high marks consistently:

- understood the need to use appropriate art language and terminology that was applicable to the question
- demonstrated a sound understanding of the knowledge required to answer each question
- responded to the key words in the question and applied their knowledge to the specific requirements of the question
- discussed examples of work when appropriate to the question and demonstrated depth of knowledge
- provided in-depth and comprehensive responses that revealed a thorough understanding of the course content.

Students who were awarded low marks consistently:

- were not able to apply appropriate language and terminology in their responses
- struggled to demonstrate the depth of knowledge required to respond to the question type
- had difficulty in understanding the key words of the question
- provided a shallow description of examples, demonstrating little knowledge of the examples and the medium
- had difficulty in demonstrating their understanding of the key knowledge of Outcome 3 in Units 3 and 4.

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

**Note: Student responses reproduced herein have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.**

### Question 1

Artwork chosen	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
%	1	8	4	16	3	31	9	12	12	1	4

### Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	3	12	27	32	20	7	2.8

Students were required to analyse how an artist had achieved aesthetic qualities and a distinctive style. Students therefore needed to:

- use language and terminology that was relevant to the artwork and art form
- demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the methods used to develop a distinctive style and approach to subject matter
- demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the art form
- analyse the ways in which artists achieve aesthetic qualities in artworks
- explain how an artist uses specific techniques and materials relevant to the art form.

The task word in this question, 'analyse', signalled that a considered and detailed response to the selected artwork was required. The range of art forms represented in the visual material allowed students to base their response on a work that was in a form with which they were familiar and thus demonstrate the depth of knowledge they had acquired throughout the year. There was an expectation that students should be able to reveal some understanding of how aesthetic qualities and a distinctive style had been developed in the artwork by the artist.

In order to achieve a high mark, students needed to clearly identify ways in which an artist has been able to achieve a distinctive style in their artwork or an understanding of how an artist creates aesthetic qualities in an artwork. Language and terminology were important and should have demonstrated that the student had a competent knowledge of the art form.

Following is an excerpt from a high-scoring student response to Question 1a.

*Artwork: Howard Arkley, 'Nick Cave'*

*Howard Arkley manages to achieve a distinctive style in this work by the techniques he uses to create the artwork. The use of the airbrush and his manipulation of the formal elements combine to create a strong aesthetic appeal within the work. His application of colour is crisp and clearly defines specific areas of the face which jump out at the viewer. Arkley's free flowing use*

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*of line throughout the face allows the viewer to cast their eye over the whole work, almost partaking in a visual journey. The use of dark shadowy areas around the eye sockets allow the internal balls of the eye to be prominent features of the work, adding to its aesthetic appeal. Particularly effective is the way Arkley creates strong contrasts within the image, utilising colour in ways that assist in heightening the moods apparent within the work.*

## Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	4	17	32	27	15	5	2.5

Question 1b. required students to explain, using appropriate art terminology, how the artist has used materials, techniques and processes when making the artwork. In order to achieve a high mark in this question, students needed to have a sound understanding of the art form being discussed. Because an explanation was required, a considerable depth of knowledge was expected in the response. An explanation provides an opportunity for the student to demonstrate that they have the ability to use their knowledge and apply information to suit the question. Students are expected to have acquired some knowledge of the art form on which they had focused during Units 3 and 4, which would then allow them to respond to this type of question. Teachers should note that the sample examination material (which can be found on the VCAA website) lists art forms that will be included in the examination paper.

The Howard Arkley image was a popular choice for students to analyse, with many demonstrating a good understanding of how the artist had developed aesthetic qualities and a distinctive style. However, students often struggled to demonstrate a depth of knowledge of the ways in which materials and techniques had been used to achieve the finished artwork. Language and vocabulary are important factors in students' ability to construct a high-scoring response, and a deep understanding of a medium can only be achieved through solid investigation and research.

Following is an example of a high-scoring response to Question 1b. In this response there is a clear indication that the student has a solid knowledge of the techniques and processes involved in working with textiles. The student also demonstrates a capacity to use language and terminology appropriately.

*Artwork: Julie Shafler Dale, 'Byzantine Coat'*

*The choice of polished cotton has enabled the coat to have substance so that it hangs well. This choice guarantees that there is no limpness or flimsiness in the garment. This material will be unlikely to crease, especially when quilted. It emphasises the clean cut of the outline of the coat. Hand dyeing has enabled the artist to achieve pleasing intensity of hue, especially of the red and green. This has allowed much more control over the colour than ready dyed materials. Hand chain stitching and quilting adds to the fine detail and finish of the garment, and further adds to its 'body' so that it does not crumple or sag. By hand stitching, the artist has been able to control the quality, authenticity and regularity of the final garment at a level of master craftsmanship. The hand painted, varnished and carved pine shapes have been beautifully fashioned and applied adding to the sense of authenticity and craftsmanship in the coat.*

## Question 2

### Question 2i.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	39	31	30	0.9

### Question 2ii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	32	35	33	1.0

### Question 2iii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	48	38	1.3

### Question 2iv.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	43	33	25	0.8

Question 2 required students to:

- provide an explanation as to why the consideration was important when other artists' work is used in the making of new artwork
- demonstrate an understanding of the differences between the considerations
- demonstrate an in depth and acquired knowledge of the consideration.



Question 2 asked for an explanation of a range of considerations when other artists' work is used in the making of new artwork. Many students had a reasonable understanding of one or two of the factors listed, but many had difficulty differentiating between all of the listed factors.

Below is an example of a high quality response that provides evidence of an understanding of this key knowledge area. The response makes an attempt to move beyond pure definition to an explanation of the consideration.

**2i. Moral rights of artists**

*The moral rights of artists refer to the right not to have their work physically damaged, mutilated or altered in such a way that it will denigrate the work or the artist. It is also the right of the artists not to have their 'good name' denigrated by misuse or false advertising or representation of their work.*

**2ii. Appropriation**

*This refers to the borrowing of elements from another artists work, and the incorporation of such elements into a new artwork by the appropriator. Appropriation may be carried out for various reasons, including to pay homage, to learn style or technique, to challenge ideas about art or topics.*

**2iii. Copyright Law**

*When an artist creates an original artwork the work is automatically covered by copyright law that extends for the life of the artist plus an extra 70 years after their death. This law enables them to prohibit anyone from copying or reproducing their work without exclusive permission to do so. If an artist chooses to use someone elses work it is important that they do not breach copyright or plagiarism may occur and legal action maybe taken against them.*

**2iv. Licensing Agreements**

*Licensing agreements occur if an artist has exclusive permission to use the work of another. If an agreement exists they cannot be charged with breaching copyright. An artist should consider obtaining one before using the work of another to avoid the legal implications that may arise if the law is breached. Usually they come in the form of a 'remedy' which may be a monetary sum.*

**Question 3**

**Question 3a.**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	23	42	21	7	2.0

**Question 3b.**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	17	43	26	8	2.2

Question 3 required students to demonstrate:

- the ability to provide evidence of sound research and knowledge of a contemporary art industry issue
- knowledge of the context that gave rise to the issue
- strong, specific and correct use of terminology and vocabulary
- clear reference to a media point of view and a personal point of view
- an understanding of the issue from an arts-related perspective.

The question required an appreciation of the issue that can only come from a thorough investigation into the background of the issue and the ensuing implications. Students needed to demonstrate a depth of knowledge of the issue under discussion from a media point of view and from the student's own point of view. It was pleasing to note that nearly all students focused on an issue from within the relevant time period.

A large percentage of students continue to respond to questions of this nature by discussing graffiti as the art industry issue. While this is a valid issue to discuss, it is important that students remember to treat the issue from an **arts** perspective with reference to recent evidence from the previous two years.

Following are excerpts from two high-scoring student responses. The first example clearly demonstrates a media point of view in regards to the issue. The second example, in relation to public art, shows a clear understanding of the issue. There is clear evidence that research into the issue has been undertaken and there a clear understanding of an art context.



## Example 1

*Issue – Graffiti: Is it Art or Vandalism?*

*Example – February 2007, Person spray painting a train was sent to court, Is it Art or Vandalism?*

### 3a.

*The media is often two sided about the issue of graffiti, some believing that it is a legitimate form of art. Juliette Hughes said in The Age (May 14th) ‘Communicating is the stuff of all art, and above all graffiti is communication’. When it stops communicating (i.e. tagging), graffiti becomes a form of vandalism. Tagging usually occurs in the form of a graphic image which is usually scrawled in public places and trains and urban walls, often without any political or artistic meaning. The City of Melbourne Graffiti plan states that ‘Graffiti is unwanted, unwelcome and will not be tolerated’. They share the same views to most of the media. Graffiti is illegal. It is a crime, like stealing. The media highlighted this by speaking negatively of ‘the graffiti games 06’, a website made in protest to the major clean up Melbourne experienced last year in preparation for the Commonwealth Games 2006 and they highlighted it by continually reporting how those that graffiti trains (issue arose in February 2007) are vandals.*

### 3b.

*My point of view about the graffiti is that it is art. Like what Juliette Hughes says, ‘Communicating is the stuff of all art, and above all graffiti is communication’. I believe that unlike tagging, graffiti sends out messages to society regarding environment, politics and religion mostly. Artists just want to express themselves. Early in 2007 the National Gallery of Australia purchased their own collection of street art (graffiti’s new name). 300 stencil designs by more than 30 artists were taken from the streets during Melbourne’s major clean up last year (2006) and were purchased by the gallery. Jean Michel Basquiat also shows that graffiti is an art form as he first was a street artist, then his graffiti styled work was recognised and his now showcased in major galleries like the Museum of Modern Art in New York.*

## Example 2

*Issue – The tendency for some people in mainstream culture to consider that public money is wasted on the purchase of artwork and the money should be more wisely spent.*

*Example – The sculpture ‘The Ornithologist’ by Tim Jones which is placed at Niddrie in an old disused quarry close to the new housing estate.*

### 3a.

*Journalist Goya Bennett writing in ‘The Moonee Valley Community News’ takes the stance of those who merely consider the financial cost of artworks and do not appreciate the intrinsic and essential artistic value of the work. In her article she shows disdain towards the artist Tim Jones and does not mention the artistic merit of the work. She attempts several times to discover the cost of the sculpture and the amount Tim Jones received as payment for his work. Tim Jones also created ‘Phantom’ at Southgate and a large sculpture at Deakin University. Despite the skill of the artist, Bennett is condescending to the artist on the issue.*

### 3b.

*My point of view on this issue is as follows. Firstly an artist who has completed a piece of artwork for the community should be treated with due respect, as other members of the community such as Engineers and doctors would. Secondly when assessing an artwork such as this sculpture, the intrinsic artistic value should be considered and the benefit the community will drive from its presence. Whilst installation costs, the costs of creating it are for consideration, a major consideration should always be with aesthetic joy it will bring to the community and the challenge it will bring to those who view it.*

## Question 4

### Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	7	31	41	21	1.8

### Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	6	25	38	32	2.0

### Question 4c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	14	35	33	18	1.6

Question 4 required students to:

- show an understanding of the importance of the conservation of artworks and why factors such as storage play a critical role in the conservation process
- demonstrate knowledge of the role that a curator has when preparing an artwork for an exhibition
- explain the ways an artwork could be promoted and marketed in a commercial gallery
- understand relevant terminology and factual information applicable to the conservation of artworks in a specific art form.



Responses to Question 4 were generally pleasing, with a good number of students able to demonstrate their knowledge of the areas under question. Students who scored less than full marks tended to respond to the questions in a more general manner, rather than demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge. The importance of discussing the chosen artwork in response to the specific requirements of the question was important in demonstrating the key knowledge. Full, comprehensive responses expanded beyond basic knowledge and linked ideas in response to the questions. Responses that failed to link the discussion to a chosen artwork scored less than full marks.

The following response gives a full and comprehensive answer to each part of Question 4.

*Frank Stella-Guifa, 'e la beretta rossa', 1988*

**4a.**

*When first receiving this work for an exhibition, the curator would be responsible to take a condition report outlining its original state. They would then properly prepare the artwork by carefully cleaning it, always using cotton gloves, and preparing the space for which it will be displayed. This requires the curator to analyse the most effective way for it to be displayed that is functional and aesthetically pleasing. This 'Stella' piece would best be displayed on a white background with clear lighting. The curator would most likely consult with the exhibition designer when establishing the layout of the exhibition and it would then be their responsibility to ensure that the environment has appropriate lighting, a constant temperature (20 degrees) and proper humidity (ideally 50–55%).*

**4b.**

*The disintegration and deterioration of paper involves discolour and brown spots, known as foxing. As this artwork is created with the variety of mediums, including computer generated imagery, relief aquatint, engraving and etching, and is on the fragile white TGL handmade paper it would be very difficult to handle and conserve. Whilst in storage, the artwork would have to be hung in a dark place, in a protective wrapping and a constant temperature of 20 degrees (two degrees either side give or take) and a relative humidity level of ideally 50–55%. It would also require extensive maintenance of PH levels as acidity is generally regarded as the most damaging factor to paper. This controlled environment may also be required to have all insects eradicated as they cause abrasion and can eat into paper artworks (eg moths). Whilst on display, similar considerations must take place with the lighting no higher than 50 LUX. As the effects of light are cumulative and irreversible, it is important that the artwork is displayed on a rotational basis (ideally 3 months max on average). The temperature, humidity and PH levels must be kept the same as in storage to prevent shrinking/expansion, mould forming, cracking or flaking. It also requires appropriate security and pest control.*

**4c.**

*As a commercial gallery is primarily concerned with running a successful business, they do not have a large budget for promotion. However considering this business nature, promotion is essential to attract more viewers and in turn spawn sales. Rather than employing extreme measures of public galleries, commercial gallery owners (who act as publicity officers) prefer commercial methods. Frank Stella's artwork could be advertised on their website with exhibition dates and information and information and an artist profile of him. This would be a convenient and cost effective way of promoting the artwork. They could also research art publications like 'Art Almanac' advertising opportunities to promote the artwork. The size and content of this would depend entirely on the budget of the gallery. The most effective way of promoting the artwork and in turn raising the profile of the commercial gallery like Wall Gallery located in Union rd Ascot Vale is to have critics such as Frank Whitford from 'The Morning Herald' publish reviews on the artist and their exhibition. However, unlike public galleries, a commercial gallery owner would be required to invite the art critic to their gallery to observe and critic the artwork.*

### Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Average
%	8	3	6	6	8	9	10	10	10	9	7	5	4	3	1	1	6.4

Question 5 was worth 15 marks. It required students to demonstrate:

- an understanding of the ways in which artworks by two artists reflect artistic influences to communicate ideas and meanings
- an ability to analyse the ways in which artworks reflect historical and cultural contexts to communicate ideas and meanings
- a clear capacity to use language and terminology applicable to the style of work under discussion
- an ability to refer to specific examples of the artists' work, using correct and factual information
- concepts and personal understandings of the ways in which artists create artworks to communicate ideas and meanings.

It was pleasing to note that quite a few students gave considered and appropriate responses to this question. Students who responded well had a clear understanding of what the question was asking. The key was to respond to the specifics of the question rather than producing as much irrelevant information as possible in the hope that some of it would be applicable to the specific question. Potted biographies and information that did not pertain to the question continued to be a concern, and students should avoid this wherever possible. It was pleasing to note that many students were able to



cite at least two artworks by each artist to support their discussion, which is an important ability in the extended response section.

The following is a good example of an introduction that focuses specifically on the question. The response indicates to the reader quite explicitly that the student has an understanding of the question and has arranged their knowledge in a way that is considerate of the question type.

*Both Claude Monet and Arthur Stretton were renowned Impressionists of their time and an analysis of their work highlights the artistic, historical and cultural influences that made a contrasting impact on their careers. Whilst Monet belonged to the original French Impressionist movement in the 19th Century, Stretton followed as a Heidelberg School painter in Australia and worked during the late 1880's and early 1890's. A look at their past childhood influences and differing contexts highlights the contrasts and similarities of their communication of ideas and meanings through their artworks.*

When a student nears the end of writing their response to this question, it is important that they attempt to draw their main points together. Below is an excerpt from a response that manages to do this successfully.

*It is clear that the early influences of artists and the cultural and historical contexts of these artists had a huge impact on their ability to communicate ideas and meanings. While Monet worked with the likes of Boudin and Renoir during his career, he was influenced by his environment and the industrial revolution. Meanwhile Stretton was initially inspired by the French Impressionists and teachers like Campbell and McCubbin at the NGV, but his depiction of everyday matter contrasted to the French as he was influenced by the strong Australian sun and raw outback, aiming to capture the mood present in his own country.*

Students are expected to have completed a considerable amount of research and investigation into the ways that artworks by two artists reflect artistic influences and historical and cultural contexts. Responding to a question such as this in a general informative manner will yield a satisfactory response. Students should have an adequate volume of knowledge that they can apply across the range of questions on the exam; it is not sufficient to base an answer to a question such as this on images from the insert provided for Question 1. Poorer responses tended to have difficulty in stating the titles of artworks, did not provide dates for artworks and included incorrectly spelt names of artists under discussion. All of these factors are critical when attempting to score in the upper band for this question.

Students generally responded well to this question, with an improved ability to understand the working practices of artists and the ways that they communicate ideas and meanings in their artworks.