

2015 VCE Visual Communication Design examination report

General comments

The 2015 VCE Visual Communication Design examination assessed a range of key knowledge and key skills across Units 3 and 4.

The 2015 examination included a requirement to render leather as well as questions on trademark, creative thinking techniques and techniques for attracting attention. Students and teachers should continue to refer to the Technical Drawing Specifications Resource document, available on the VCAA website, when preparing for the examination.

A significant issue was that students often did not read the questions carefully enough and provided irrelevant answers or neglected to provide all the required information. This was often the case with Questions 2dii., 5a., 5c., 7a. and 7d.

Students with high-scoring responses:

- used correct, relevant terminology from the study design
- attempted all questions and allocated their time appropriately
- read the questions carefully and were able to interpret what each question was asking and respond appropriately to all parts of the question
- supported written responses with reference to the visual communication being analysed or evaluated.

The following should be noted:

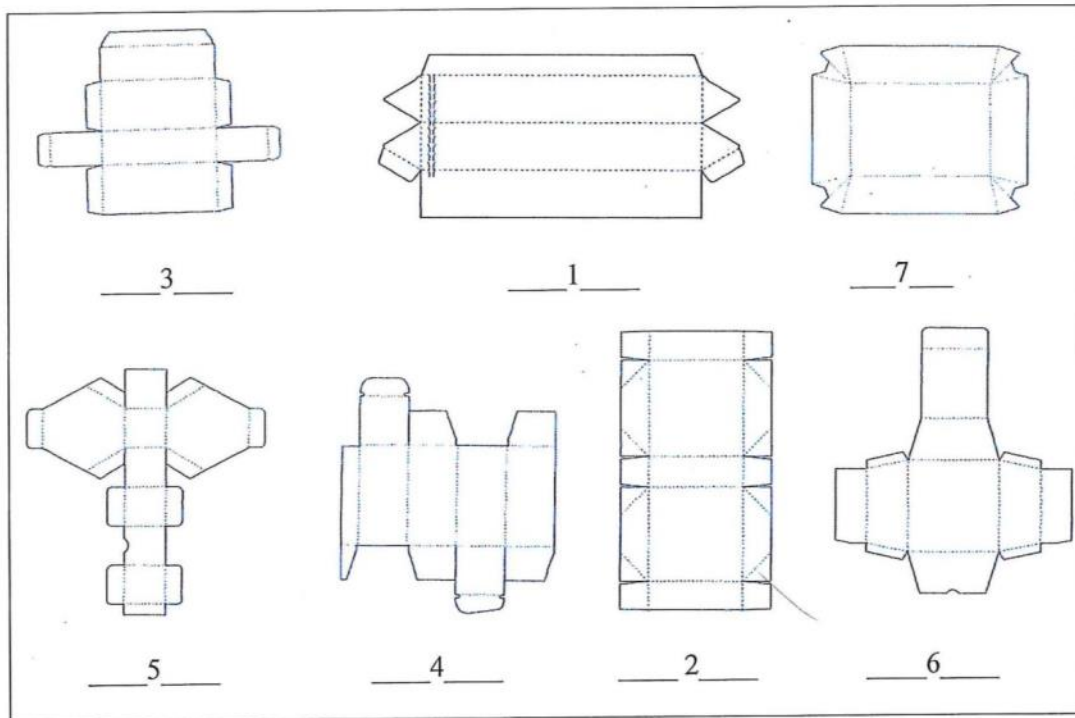
- Students need to be able to discuss legal obligations, and understand the difference between trademark, copyright and intellectual property.
- Students are encouraged to practise rendering objects using tone and texture to enhance form, applying their knowledge of two-dimensional and three-dimensional drawing systems and developing design concepts for design-based questions or briefs under time constraints. It often appeared that students spent too long on these questions to the detriment of others.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual 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.

Question 1



This question assessed students' understanding of packaging nets and the majority of students answered correctly.

Question 2a.

Most students were able to correctly identify the appropriate element and principle for this question, although some students confused these at times. Some students used terminology from the previous study design, such as letterform rather than type. Students did not always choose the best options to combine, with some selecting to discuss how colour was used with cropping. It is important that students consider how the element and principle were used together to create the communication design. Many students did not read the question carefully and discussed how their selected element and principle were used independently of each other. The answers generally lacked depth and few students discussed the characteristics of the element and principle.

The following is an example of a medium- to high-scoring response. Please note that this student has not used correct terminology by referring to negative space. They rectified this by noting in brackets that they should have used 'ground'. To avoid confusion, the student should have crossed out 'negative space' and replaced it with 'ground'.

Design element – Type

Design principle – Figure-ground

Explanation – Type and figure ground have been used effectively to create a visually interesting and effective design. The type has been created by negative space, and appears like a cutout in the block of colour. Due to the particular typeface used, the type looks like a stencil cutout. This plays on the viewers eye, as the dominant figure in the design – the type – has actually been created by negative space (the ground). This design has been applied to several presentation formats and works effectively in multiple contexts.

Question 2b.

Students were required to identify two characteristics of the target audience and explain which features of the advertisement led them to these decisions. Most students were able to do this fairly well. Some students did not appear to have a sound understanding of audience characteristics and wrote about characteristics that were not relevant. Many students identified the target audience as 'young people' because young people were depicted, or 'motorcyclists' because there was a motorcycle helmet in the image, despite the helmet being a minor feature of the design. Some students used the source information rather than the image as the basis of their answer.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

Characteristic 1 - Aged between 18 – 25. This characteristic of the target audience is evident due to the figures in the advertisement all being young adults and dressed in youthful clothing. The muted colour scheme with pops of contrasting red would be appealing to young adults.

Characteristic 2 - Lower to middle class income – The target audience is not wealthy but middle class – This is shown due to the scene depicted – the figures are in a slightly grungy looking area, on the street and holding a motorbike helmet. One figure is leaning out the window next to a fire escape, and the figures do not look wealthy.

Question 2c.

Many students scored high marks on this question and answers were generally good. However, some students confused a need with constraints and expectations, and others did not address all three aspects, which included identifying the need, explaining the designer's response and giving evidence of this from the image.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Client need 1 - Simple/versatile logo design. - Designer ensured minimal detail in creation, apparent through solid colours and contrast (stencil style) to avoid dense and complex design. Can also be observed to maintain aesthetic integrity in black/white print, hence versatility.

Client need 2 - Visual connotations of motifs and the know identity of the Ararat Rural City council. - Designer established motifs suggestive of the city's dominant produce and environment through the inclusion of grapes, agriculture land, ocean and a range of mountains as a background ie. reflective of the rural town.

Question 2di.

Most students identified copyright while only a few correctly identified trademark as the reason Landcare was able to control the use of the logo. The key part of the question was 'which has to be used in accordance with its style guide and terms of use' and this directly relates to trademark.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Landcare Australia has a Registered trademark on their logo design. A registered trademark covers the design and does not allow anyone to use it if it is unapproved.

Question 2dii.

The majority of students focused only on the similarities and differences. It was important that students clearly identified Landcare's ideals and explained the link between the ideals and imagery.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

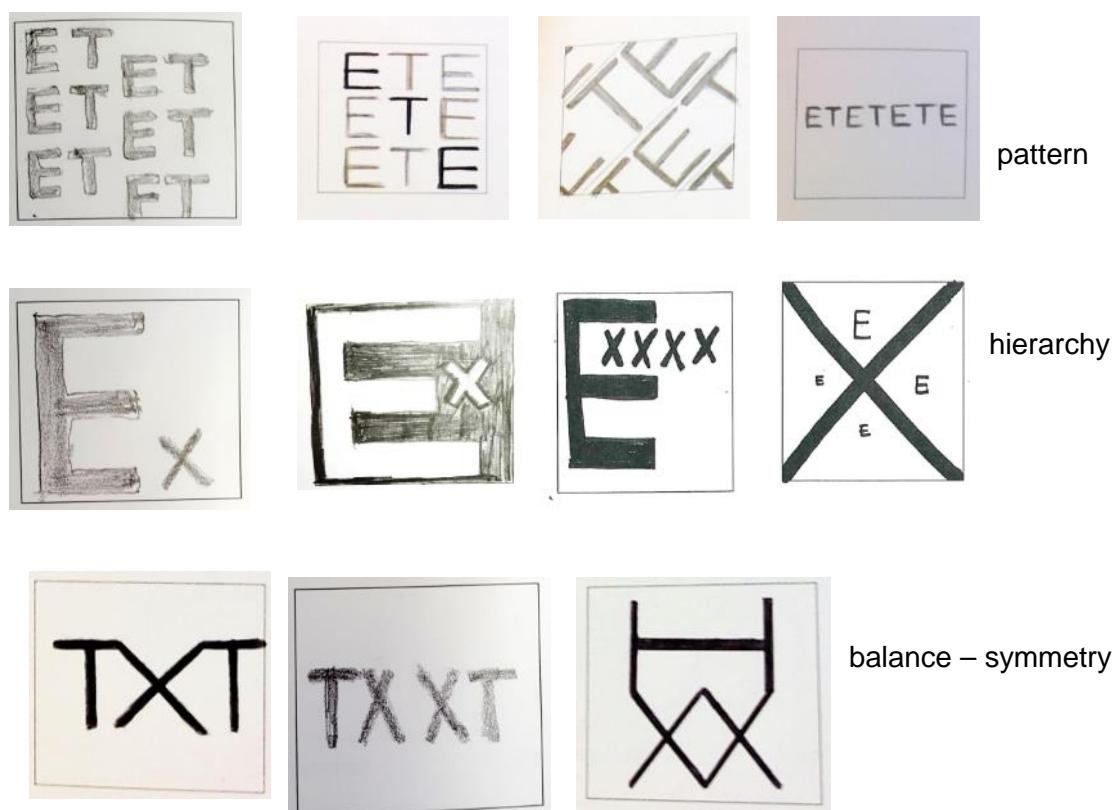
The hands coming together to form and hold Australia are common in every variation as it represents the core of what they do – care for Australia's lands. The green of 'Landcare

Australia' represents this safe caring aspect at the core. The use of orange is 'Junior Landcare' embodies the youth and their vibrance and vitality. The blue in 'Coastcare' identifies their involvement with the coast also shown in the wave pattern of the left hand.

Question 3

Most students scored highly on this question. However, despite the question requirement to use only the type as shown (solid, upper case, sans serif), many students used line or outline and some included other shapes or changes to the type. Some even used colour despite the question directing students to use greyscale. If the question states that students should use only the type provided, then they should not use anything else. Some students included pattern on the type rather than creating pattern with the use of type. Symmetry was the principle that was most often incorrect.

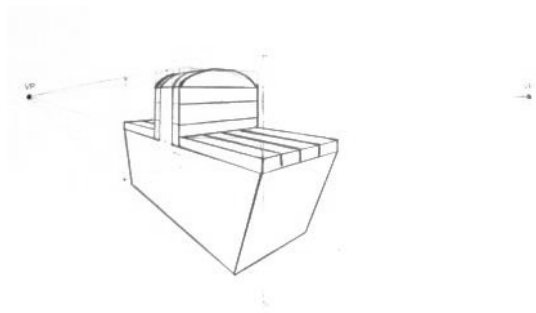
The following are examples of high-scoring responses.



Question 4

This technical drawing question was challenging for some students, who struggled with the viewpoint. Most did not have the horizon line in the correct place. Many students were able to produce a two-point perspective drawing even if the details were incorrect. The error made by most students was not maintaining the correct proportions. This included some students keeping the measurements the same as those in the orthogonal drawing. Vanishing points are used to achieve a technically accurate representation of the observed perspective. Students appeared to find drawing curves in perspective a challenge.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.



Question 5a.

The majority of students were able to identify appropriate research. Most students focused on the research of imagery relating to cats and dogs on the internet or through the photography of cats and dogs. However, it appeared that many students did not read the question properly as they neglected to explain how the research was developed into the imagery shown. Students either ignored this part of the question or answered in general terms, such as stating that the designer simplified the photographs of cats and dogs into the logo. Very few students discussed the process that the designer may have followed.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Designer may have undertaken observational drawing of dogs and cats in order to get an understanding of the animals' shape and appearance. They may have drawn animals from observation and then simplified their drawings into geometric shapes in order to create silhouettes, and then used the silhouettes to create their final design.

Question 5b.

The majority of students were able to correctly identify line or shape as the dominant elements and go on to describe its use in the image. Only a few were able to provide an effective explanation, going beyond describing what they were seeing. Many students neglected to explain how the element was used effectively to produce the design.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Design element – Line

Explanation – Line has been used to divide the shapes to show the figures of the cat and dog. It also provides a sense of movement in the dog's tail, which is their display of happiness, reflecting this vet is a positive place for animals.

Question 5c.

Many students wrote about how the same image was used and neglected to say how the original was adapted to the new context. Some students discussed the way in which the image was adapted but neglected to explain how it was adapted 'for the new context'.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The designer altered the shape of the dog and cat imagery separating the two figures and making their bodies appear more rounded. Designer has maintained the two dimensional, simple feel of the imagery in figure 9 by creating the sculptures from a single sheet of metal, cutting them out, and maintaining stylized look. They have also added colour to the designs.

Question 5d.

Students struggled with this question and many referred to methods that may have been used by the designer to produce this visual communication. Those who answered this question correctly referred to the use of humour, colour and other devices. The phrases, techniques for gaining attention and maintaining engagement of target audiences using visual language/devices are referred to in various parts of the study design.

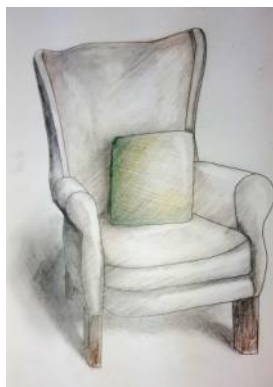
The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The designer has used a stereotypical scenario where the bright orange dog appears to be barking at the cat, which is sitting on a high point. This gains attention as it gives the figures character and tells a story.

Question 6

This rendering question was handled fairly well. Many students understood the three-dimensional arrow and understood that the light source came from the top right-hand side and in front of the chair. The angle of the light, however, was not quite accurate in many renderings, which caused the shadow cast on the floor to be positioned too far back, beneath the chair, or too far forward, in front of the chair. Most students attempted the shadow on the floor and indicated shadows cast onto the chair. The quality and consistency of the tonal rendering was not, however, of a high standard. The texture of wood and fabric was generally well represented but most students found the leather challenging and many did not attempt to render it at all.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.



Question 7

This question covered a range of subject knowledge. It provided students with the opportunity to achieve across a range of marks.

Question 7a.

This question assessed students' ability to generate different concepts for a given brief. Most students attempted the first part of the question and the quality of visualisation drawings was good. There was generally a clear understanding of the requirements of the brief and students provided at least two drawings, although many did not provide a range of ideas. Marks were awarded for the quality and diversity of the ideas and not the quality of the drawings.

Question 7a.

Most students annotated their drawings but did not address design thinking technique, demonstrating creative or evaluative thinking. Design thinking is mentioned throughout the study design as design thinking techniques/skills/routines. Students who answered this question correctly

used a range of techniques or routines including PMI, SCAMPER, BAR, POOCH, De Bono's thinking hats, brainstorm or used the elements and principles to inspire creative ideas. Students could have used annotations to indicate their design thinking. Marks were awarded for the effective application of these techniques.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

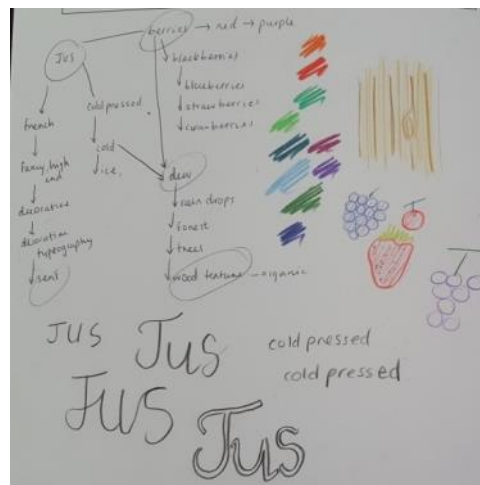
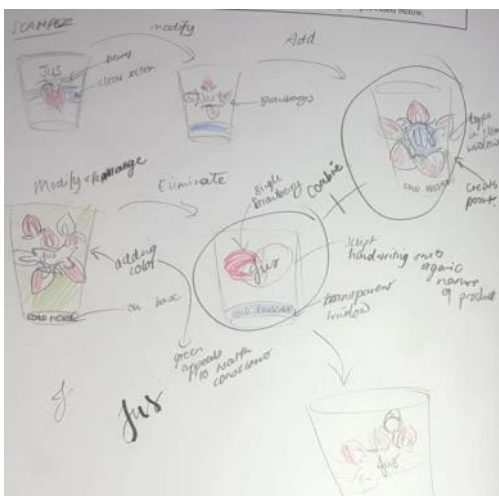
PMI

Elements and principles



SCAMPER

Brainstorm



Question 7b.

Some students answered this question without having completed the second part of Question 7a. Students are reminded to read questions carefully. Those who used a thinking technique were able to describe what it was and some clearly explained how they used it.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Design thinking technique - PMI (plus, minus, interesting)

Explanation – plus – strong parts that meet the brief ie. colour + imagery, organic shapes. Minus – what doesn't work and interesting – areas of the design that are unique.

Question 7c.

Most students produced fairly effective designs and there were a few excellent responses. Many students gave good answers, indicating that they had managed their time well. However, some students did not address each dot point from the question in their design, including the emphasis of colours that reflect the ingredients, a transparent area and the correct hierarchy. Many students neglected to include the client's name, Jus, and some students thought 'cold-pressed' was the brand. The introduction of a continuous design presented some problems and some students found it difficult to understand how designs that reach the edges would continue. Many students, however, addressed this well.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.



Question 7d.

This question required students to think carefully and not just repeat the information in the brief as some students did. A few students wrote as if they were addressing the client and answered the question well. Many students only justified their design in terms of the brief and did not consider the target audience in their pitch, or they mentioned a general target without reference to the specific target audiences provided in the brief. Those who effectively explained how their design would attract each of the specific target audiences scored well. A few students addressed all three characteristics of the audience in their response and were able to reference their design, beyond stating the needs of the brief.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

Example 1

The typeface depicting the word *Jus* is a script one, which exudes a sense of luxury thus manipulating the target audience to believe the juice is worth the extra cost, and the use of the green and white panels of colour which attracts attention to the strawberry imagery are colours which are synonymous with health and thus would appeal to a health conscious audience.

Example 2

The design includes images of leaves and the colour green to appeal to health conscious people because they are often associated with health. A serif type is used for the company name 'Jus' because it is more likely to appeal to the target age 25 – 40 rather than a sans-serif font.

The following are the same student's high-scoring responses for all parts of Question 7.

Question 7a.

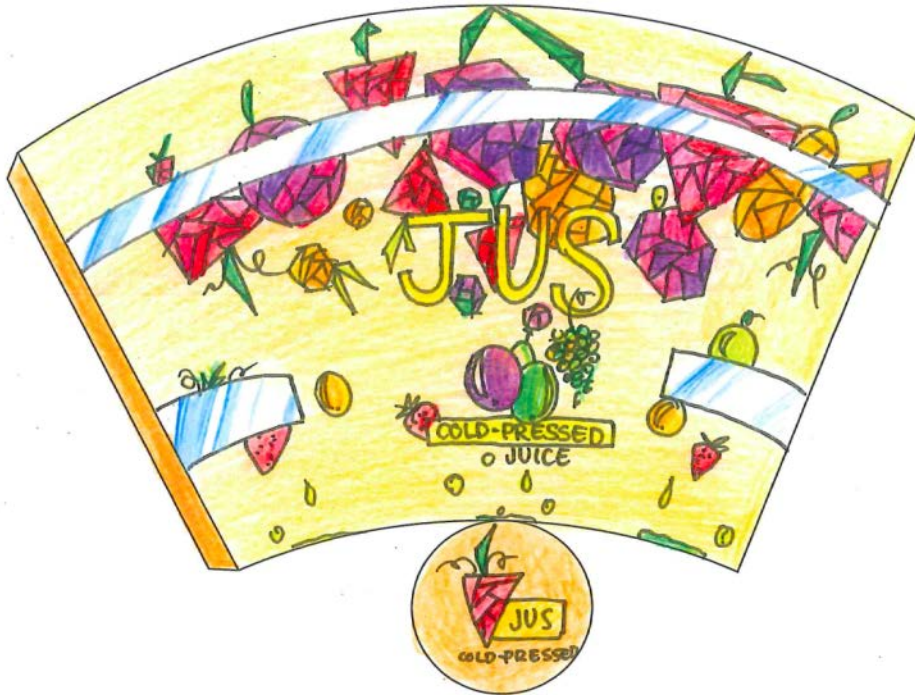


Question 7b.

Design thinking technique PMI chart – positive, minus, interesting.

Explanation through the use of a PMI chart, I'm able to identify what can be improved, for example, I need to make the company name – JUS – more eye catching to become the second focal point in Hierarchy. The positives + interesting tells me what I think will be interesting for the target audience.

Question 7c.



Question 7d.

As the company produces cold-pressed juices, the geometric berry shapes at the top looks as if it is crushed by the word 'Jus' and the shapes turn into organic shapes such as its normal shape, seemingly 'pressed' as their eyes travel down the cup. The berries are dominant as the focal point and the colours, especially red and purple cater towards a more mature audience aged between 25 – 40.