



GENERAL COMMENTS

The School-assessed Task in VCE Art produced many exciting and innovative folios in 2006. Several folios were presented in a format different to a standard visual diary, which allowed these students to work on a larger scale. However, it was necessary for these larger folios (which were often large, loose pieces of paper) to be grouped into ideas so that they reflected the **exploration and refinement** of the student's personal art responses. Higher-scoring folios had evidence of **both** written and visual annotation to explain the refinement of techniques and processes and to reflect the evolution of ideas, concepts and skills.

Some students developed and refined their ideas in a very practical manner, working from exploratory works on paper through to sculpture, multimedia or works on canvas, and demonstrating 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 students presented highly effective, smaller-scale collections that were still broad and imaginative and had clearly defined visual solutions that were innovative and fully resolved throughout the body of work.

More students are choosing to explore digital and multimedia presentations, and it is important to note that these artworks must be supported by printed screen dumps/layers (or story boards for film) to support the digital exploration. 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.

It was evident that painting, drawing and photography are still the predominate art forms explored by VCE Art students; however, a much wider variety of three dimensional work, multimedia pieces (including installations), textiles and printmaking were explored to achieve highly effective resolutions.

Overall, the Art study is designed to enable students to develop the **technical skills and aesthetic awareness** necessary to produce quality works by developing and refining diversity in art practice through a sustained investigation of selected art form(s) and/or media. Students should not simply follow specific teacher-directed tasks, as this will result in all students producing exactly the same work each lesson.

Teachers should note that personal art responses are the focus of a broad and innovative investigation in Outcome 1 of Unit 3. All folios need to have effective documentation and personal appraisal to communicate the student's thinking and working practices. Even though the body of work may have several starting points that form the basis of the student's exploration in Unit 3, the resolution of ideas can occur at any stage throughout the body of work.

In Unit 4, Outcome 1, students should refine a number of the ideas explored in Unit 3 so that, on the completion of Unit 4, the student can 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. It is unfortunate that some schools still appear to simply focus on 'finished artworks' rather than encouraging students to explore and progressively refine each idea.

It is also worth noting that separate visual diaries/bodies of work are not required for Units 3 and 4. In fact, some successful students simply worked on large sheets of loose paper that were carefully organised by date or annotation to explain the exploration and investigation. The study design specifies that, on completion of Unit 3, the student should be able to undertake a broad and innovative investigation, trialling materials and techniques within a chosen art form and/or a number of art forms to communicate ideas, directions and personal concepts in a considered and insightful way appropriate to the investigation. This investigation should be a progressive development and refinement of art ideas supported by appropriate written and visual material which assists in explaining the student's thinking and working practices as they explore their chosen art form(s) and/or media.

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. It is also worth noting artworks should **not** be framed for final presentation because the quality of technical skills and control of media are difficult to assess under glass.



There are specific performance descriptors for each of the six criteria used to assess the body of work. The descriptors contain terms such as 'highly competent', 'competent' and 'limited' to enable folios to be assessed correctly. However, simply using the Art Assessment Criteria sheet alone is not sufficient when marking the folios and teachers are advised to cross-mark with a colleague if possible. 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 starting to mark. School-assessed Task assessment sheets and criteria are available in the VCE Assessment Handbook and Supplement 2 to the February 2007 *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET*.

All work from Units 3 and 4 is assessed as one body of work in the School-assessed Task, and the key focus of the study is the progressive resolution of concepts, ideas, direction, technical skills and aesthetic qualities. In their written and visual documentation, students must critically reflect and evaluate in order to explain and strengthen their investigation of their thinking and working practices. It is advised that students make specific reference to a considered and appropriate use of the formal elements.

Students may use a wide variety of approaches and directions in their work; there is no specific 'formula' that results in a successful folio. Some students 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 their thinking and working processes. This led to aesthetic and technically competent resolutions that were presented in artistic and diverse manners. Students who simply used a 'borrowed' image and made no attempt to develop and refine this image could not score highly on the assessment criteria.

To achieve a high mark, students must clearly address the requirements of the assessment criteria and fully satisfy the descriptors for 'very high' and 'high' folios. Successful folios throughout 2006 presented a broad and innovative investigation that demonstrated 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.

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.

The *Art VCE Study Design* has been recredited until 2009, but teachers and students must check the current documents that are provided on the VCAA website to ensure that they are familiar with all details of the Art study. The VCAA website, <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au>, is a helpful source of information for students and teachers.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

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

Mind/concept maps, photographs and visual material in the form of art magazines or exhibitions were used as the basis for the exploration of personal responses in many folios. Some students added highly informative written and visual material to communicate their thinking and working practices. However, this was simply a starting point for the higher-scoring folios, which were focused, imaginative and supported by concise annotation that reflected the variety of directions that these concepts and directions could lead to.

Often students used a theme or an issue to generate ideas or concepts, which were then developed through the experimentation of techniques and processes into a broad and innovative investigation. Others explored the work of specific artists or personal images from their own life that developed into broad, innovative investigations through the **reworking** of images and ideas.

Successful folios were highly informative explorations of personal art responses that demonstrated an imaginative investigation of a selected art form(s) and/or media, and provided insight into concepts, skills and possible directions explored by the student that could be later refined as the body of work progressed.

Less successful students relied on borrowed material and glossy magazine images and did not fully explore or develop these to make them personal or unique. They had difficulty generating their own personal responses, which then resulted in inadequate investigation of media and skill development.



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

In refining their ideas, techniques and directions, students should attempt to acknowledge their 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.

Successful students demonstrated their competence 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 and/or investigation of materials and techniques before moving on to a finished resolution. Students may consolidate thinking and working practices at any time through the year as they explore innovative and imaginative directions, so that any final artworks that are identified in the body of work are obviously the result of exploratory beginnings.

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

Students are required to 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. 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 the student's competence and control as they progressed towards a final resolution of skills and ideas. More 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 showed 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.

All trialling and exploration throughout the folio must be demonstrated consistently and show evidence of 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 body of work must demonstrate **understanding and refinement** of formal elements from the initial exploratory work to the resolved artworks. Students must show their awareness of formal elements and aesthetic qualities through the use of appropriate written **and** visual material throughout the folio.

Some high-scoring folios provided annotations that identified qualities such as colour variations, or provided images of design concepts that were evident in their experiments and commented on the strengths and weaknesses evident in each exploratory piece. Many students demonstrated 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.

Less successful students found it difficult to explain and explore the use of formal elements in their work and displayed 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.

Students should also note that simply writing definitions of art elements and principles that are generally unrelated to the exploration and refinement of their work is to be discouraged.

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

The *Art VCE Study Design* explains that a body of work requires a sustained exploration of personal art responses that are 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.



A progressive resolution may be demonstrated as an innovative body of work that explores ideas, concepts and skills through a sustained investigation of art form(s) and/or media, leading to a range of innovative solutions that are clearly identified and documented with informative written and visual material.

The body of work may be an experimental collection of ideas and concepts that demonstrates well-developed technical skills and insightful documentation of how the formal elements are used throughout the folio as well as in the final artworks.

Higher-scoring students annotated concisely the whole process of the folio throughout the year, providing comprehensive and critical visual and written material to indicate how the investigation had been resolved. These students explained changes and development of the final resolved artwork(s) and commented on the strengths and weaknesses of techniques, processes and formal qualities that led to these 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 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 needs to be presented in a manner that demonstrates the student's thinking and working practices. Students must be aware that there is no separate support material and that the folio includes **all** exploration, development, refinement, reflection and/or evaluation of this process.

The body of work may be presented in a visual diary or simply on loose sheets that are organised in themes. This themed approach should show the initial starting points of exploratory work through to the resolution of concepts and skills in the final artworks, and each resolution must be clearly identified on the back by numbering or using some other form of identification. These folios still need to show effective and progressive documentation that communicates the student's intentions and achievements.

Teachers and students should note that photographs and printouts/screen dumps of layers in computer programs are needed to support the development of three-dimensional work, installations or digital imagery and must show evidence of 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.

Higher-scoring folios were innovative and imaginative. They were effective visual presentations that consistently and imaginatively communicated the student's 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 the students had not demonstrated thinking and working practices with any personal appraisal or reflection.

All starting points in a folio need to be effectively documented 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.

Teachers and students should also note that although life drawings may be useful in the interview process to gain access to tertiary institutions, where they have no relevance to the ideas explored in the folio, they do not enhance the mark allocation for each criterion unless the human form is the basis of the exploration.