



GENERAL COMMENTS

Teachers who are currently teaching VCE Art should ensure that they are using the reaccredited *Art VCE Study Design* (2004–2007) and the current Assessment Advice that is provided on the VCAA website. The Art reviewing team expressed concerns about encountering terms such as 'Design Briefs, Constraints, Restrictions, Back-up work and Mock-ups', none of which are part of the Art study. The VCAA website (www.vcaa.vic.edu.au) provides email addresses that teachers can write to if they require assistance with any aspects of this study (or any VCE study).

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. This is done by developing and refining diversity in art practice through a sustained investigation of selected art form(s) and/or media, not through following specific teacher-directed tasks that result in all students producing exactly the same work each lesson.

Personal art responses are the focus of a broad and innovative investigation in Outcome 1 of Unit 3. The body of work may have several starting points that form the basis of the student's exploration in Unit 3 and these ideas are progressively refined and resolved in Unit 4 (although starting points and the resolution of ideas can occur at any stage throughout the body of work).

It is worth noting that separate visual diaries/bodies of work are not required for Units 3 and 4. The Study Design specifies in Unit 3 (Outcome 1) that on completion of this unit 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 is to be a progressive development and refinement of art ideas supported by appropriate written and visual material which assists in the explanation of the student's thinking and working practices as they explore their chosen art form(s) and/or media.

In Unit 4 (Outcome 1) the student refines a number of the ideas explored in Unit 3. On completion of Unit 4 the student's folio should demonstrate progressive realisation and resolution of 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. Several Art reviewers noted that some schools appeared to simply focus on 'finished artworks' rather than encouraging students to explore and progressively refine each idea.

Finished artworks are not a mandatory outcome of the School-assessed Task in VCE Art. However, where they are identified and included in the body of work they must have developed from exploratory and investigative beginnings. 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 is difficult to assess under glass.

The VCAA Assessment Advice provides specific descriptors for each of the six Art criteria that are used to assess the body of work. The descriptors contain terms such as 'highly competent', 'competent' and 'limited' to enable each folio to be assessed correctly. Simply using the Art Assessment Criteria sheet alone is not sufficient to mark the folios.

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 the considered and appropriate use of formal elements.

While students explored a wide variety of approaches and directions, there was no specific 'formula' that resulted in a successful folio. Some students worked with a limited range of concepts and ideas but in a sustained and imaginative manner, undertaking 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 to progressively develop and refine ideas that lead to the aesthetic and technical resolutions presented in artistic and diverse manners. Students who simply used a 'borrowed' image and made no attempt to develop and refine this image cannot score highly on each of the assessment criteria.



Many of the folios were presented in a format other than a standard visual diary, which allowed individual students to work on a larger scale. However, it was necessary for larger folios (often large, loose pieces of paper) to be organised in groups of ideas so that they reflected the **exploration and refinement** of the student's personal art responses. High-scoring folios needed to have written and visual annotation of the refinement of techniques and processes 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 larger canvases, which demonstrated the consolidation and progression of their thinking and working practices. These canvases were often accompanied by written documentation that contained reflection and critical evaluation of the work. Other students 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.

More students are choosing to explore digital and multimedia presentations and it was pleasing to see layered printing to support the digital exploration, because without these layers and considered and insightful written material, these folios were not able to score highly. Video and multimedia explorations must be accompanied by informative written and visual material to support the refinement of idea and directions as students explore and investigate their directions and concepts.

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

High-scoring work

To achieve a high mark for their folio students needed to clearly address the requirements of the assessment criteria detailed in the Art Assessment Guide VCE 2005, and fully satisfy the descriptors for the 'very high' and 'high' folios in the six criteria listed in the Assessment Handbook. Successful folios 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.

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.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

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

Once again many students began by collecting visual material in the form of magazines or photographs as the basis for their personal explorations. Some 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, which were focused, imaginative and supported by concise annotation, reflecting the variety of directions that these concepts and directions could lead to as possible visual resolutions.

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

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

Less successful students often relied on borrowed material and glossy magazine images, had difficulty generating their own personal responses and showed inadequate investigation of media and skill development.

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

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 imagination. This process must be documented and communicated through sustained written and visual material.



Successful students demonstrated their competency through the 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 materials and techniques before moving on to a finished resolution. Students may consolidate thinking and working practices at any time during 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. This experimentation must be sustained and documented throughout the folio, from the initial exploratory work through to the resolutions.

There were many successful folios that demonstrated an innovative exploration of the selected art form(s) and/or media. These students showed competence and control as they progressed towards a final resolution of skills and ideas. More successful students were 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 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.

In some high-scoring folios students provided annotations that identified qualities such as colour variations, or design concepts that were evident in their experiments and the strengths and weaknesses evident in each exploratory piece. Many students were able to demonstrate their understanding of formal elements in the development of their ideas, but did not 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 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.

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 discouraged.

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

A body of work requires a **sustained exploration** of personal art responses that is progressively developed and refined and culminates in a broad and innovative investigation. The resolution of these concepts, ideas, directions, technical skills and formal qualities should occur throughout the body of work, and students must document these ideas and resolutions with critical evaluations or reflections.

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 documented with informative written and visual material.

The 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 of themes or sequences that culminate in major artworks.



The higher scoring students annotated the whole process of the folio throughout the year, providing comprehensive visual and critical written material to indicate how the investigation had been resolved. These students explained changes and the development of the resolved artworks, 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.

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 and refinement accompanied by reflection and/or evaluation of these processes.

Presentation of this body of work may be in a visual diary or simply on loose sheets that are organised into themes that show the initial starting points of exploratory work through to the resolution of concepts and skills in the final artworks. These themes need to be clearly identified with some numbering/identification on the back of each resolution. The folios still need to show effective and progressive documentation that communicates the student's intentions and achievements.

Photographs and printouts of layers in computer programs were often used to support the development of three dimensional work or digital imagery to show the evolution of ideas and skills, and visual diaries were 'bookmarked' to direct the viewer to related explorations.

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 realization 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.

All starting points in a folio need effective documentation and personal appraisal to communicate the student's thinking and working practices.