

2001 HSC Notes from
the Examination Centre
Visual Arts

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2001 NOTES FROM THE EXAMINATION CENTRE

VISUAL ARTS

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in Visual Arts. It provides comments with regard to responses to the 2001 Higher School Certificate Examination, indicating the quality of candidate responses, and highlighting the relative strengths and weaknesses of responses in each section and each question.

It is essential for this document to be read in conjunction with the relevant syllabus, the 2001 Higher School Certificate Examination, the marking guidelines, and other support documents, which have been developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of Visual Arts.

Written Examination

General Comments

In 2001, 8520 candidates attempted the Visual Arts examination. While it was the first examination of this new syllabus, it was evident that the majority of candidates had a sound understanding of syllabus content and question requirements. This was demonstrated by the candidates' engagement with notions of Practice, the Conceptual Framework and the Frames in Section I and Section II.

In Section I, Question 1 was compulsory and required candidates to respond to the visual and text-based source material to demonstrate their understanding of the syllabus content of the Frames, the Conceptual Framework and Practices. In responding to Questions 1(a), 1(b), and 1(c), candidates were able to construct a point of view, make concise arguments and cite source material in a confident and informed manner.

In Section II, nine questions within the content areas of Practice, Conceptual Framework and the Frames required candidates to apply their understanding and knowledge of art history and art criticism to present extensive and well-structured responses. The most popular question was Question 7 with 1750 responses. Other questions that attracted a large number of responses were Question 8, Question 5, Question 2 and Question 10. Question 3 attracted the least number of responses.

The majority of candidates noted the general instructions provided relating to the timing of questions and the rubric. However, teachers would be advised to emphasise to candidates the importance of:

- adhering to suggested times, in particular in Question 1, to ensure all parts of the question are attempted
- reading and following all instructions including beginning each part of Question 1 on a new page
- using the rubric to 'unpack' the requirements of each question including the use of examples, source material and different aspects of content
- a knowledge of the demands of the question and difference between terms such as 'discuss', 'explain' and 'evaluate'.

Section I

Question 1

General Comments

Generally responses to Question 1 showed that candidates genuinely engaged with the required aspects of syllabus content. Candidates were able to access and answer each part of the question, and were able to direct their responses to the appropriate aspect of content – the Frames, Conceptual Framework or Practices. The best responses demonstrated an understanding of the ways in which these aspects of content may be employed together, as required by the syllabus for the HSC Course, in order to illuminate qualities of the Plates and other source material and answer the question with precision and accuracy. These responses develop a clearly articulated point of view in relation to artists' interpretations of their world, artists' intentions, the interactions and relationships between artworks and audiences, and artmaking practice.

Responses varied in length, although most responses to Question 1(a) were appropriately brief. Question 1(b) and 1(c) attracted some much longer responses. It is important to note that some of the most successful responses to these questions were concise, yet addressed all the necessary parts of the question. However, some candidates did not effectively manage their time, leaving one or more parts of Question 1 incomplete.

Candidates generally demonstrated an awareness of how the citations provided with the Plates might be used to develop inferences and explore connections between the source material and their own art knowledge. Some responses used external references and provided clear evidence of their understanding of art concepts. Within the demands of the specific question, the approach of these candidates was to contextualise the artwork and build relationships to other known works, artists or writers. Where this knowledge was clearly and explicitly applied to the demands of the question was one possible way of presenting the 'informed point of view' as required by the rubric. Other responses, however, used only the source material provided, without any overt references to other artists or works. In many cases these candidates managed to address all aspects of the question in a very concise manner, showing evidence of a highly developed understanding of syllabus content applied to the images and/or extracts of text.

Many responses chose to use the syllabus content in an implicit rather than explicit manner, particularly in relation to Question 1(a). Here the Subjective Frame was clearly indicated through the key words in the question, the selection of the plate and the invitation to write subjectively which is implied by the prompt 'imagine you have been asked to explain to a friend'. This of course did not preclude the employment of other frames additional to the subjective, or indeed referring to artmaking practice or artist/world relationships. In Question 1(b) some responses referred to other artworld 'agencies' and in Question 1(c) some of the more sophisticated responses alluded to the fact that the frames may be considered as an aspect of an artist's practice.

Some responses, in contrast, chose to deal with syllabus content in a highly explicit, organised and structured manner, for example by providing definitions of artworks and audiences in addressing Question 1(b). On occasion these responses, while clearly demonstrating a sound or comprehensive knowledge of content, had difficulty in applying this knowledge to a discussion of the source material.

In preparing for the possibilities inherent in Question 1 in which the frames, practices and conceptual framework may appear in any order, candidates should practise applying their knowledge of syllabus content to different situations and question types. Candidates should recognise that they do not need to confine their comments to outlines of one specific, single area of content. Source material must be succinctly analysed and interpreted and used as evidence to build a case or present a point of view, rather than merely as an aid to describing features seen in the image(s), or repeating the words which may be read in the text extract.

Specific Comments

Question 1

Part (a)

The majority of candidates recognised that this question required a subjective focus in the interpretation of Münter's work. Responses cited the subjective frame as well as other additional frames and the conceptual framework. Where the subjective frame was not recognised, responses generally cited the structural frame.

The difference between 'properties' and 'features' was an important discriminator in the marking guidelines. For marking purposes, 'features' indicated a general and descriptive use of language without art terminology. 'Properties' indicated the attributes or qualities in the work and were expressed in specific art language.

Better responses were characterised by their ability to interpret the conceptual and material properties of the work. These responses provided informed and well-substantiated references to the expressive and intuitive qualities in the work.

Responses clearly explained how features and properties in the work could be interpreted to reveal the artist's experience of s world. Many candidates positioned Münter's work in Fauvism and/or Expressionism and justified these references through colour, gesture and stylistic characteristics. Some responses also explored ideas such as Münter's psychological insight and her inspiration to create the work as well as her emotive spirituality. External references such as Expressionism were successfully linked to the source material and the question.

Mid-range responses reflected some understanding of Münter's intentions and attempted to explain the features and properties of the work. Responses described the treatment of formal qualities in the work through symbolic examples such as connections to the church and its colour, placement, distortion and paint application in order to explain the artist's personal experience. Interpretations were more generalised and not fully sustained and external references when used, were not always accurate in relation to the source material.

Weaker responses were often literal and descriptive interpretations and some responses did not address the underlying intent of the question. Generally these responses were simplistic descriptions of the features in the plate with limited reference to the sources. Responses did not address the subjective focus inherent in the question.

Part (b)

In this part of Question 1 the terms ‘artworks’ and ‘audiences’ allowed candidates to employ their understanding of the Conceptual Framework. The demand of the question ‘what can you infer’ allowed candidates to draw conclusions about possible relationships between artworks and audiences as evidenced by both plates and the accompanying citations. The majority of candidates were able to use the two images to their advantage and identified the large-scale works as installations in a non-gallery context. The plates clearly showed interaction between audiences and artworks and provided candidates with opportunities to develop their discussions beyond obvious description. The large scale and the site-specific nature of the two works, in particular, gave candidates possible ways of approaching these artworks.

Better responses examined aspects of contemporary practice in relation to the plates. Many candidates addressed the issue of photographic mediation as a means of examining the changing nature of audiences. This approach has allowed some candidates to introduce quite sophisticated ideas about the intentions of contemporary artists, notions of site and the context of artworks, the role of the artist in challenging ideas and audiences about the nature of art.

Mid-range responses demonstrated a sound understanding of contemporary art practice and the relationship between artworks and audiences but were not able to demonstrate the application of this understanding to the two plates.

Weaker responses relied on descriptions of the physical qualities of the audiences depicted to demonstrate some relationship between artworks and audiences and used tenuous and unsustained conclusions to support their observations.

Candidates who introduce references to other artworks and/or agencies in the art world need to ensure that this material is well integrated with and relevant to the source material, and is supportive of their point of view.

Part (c)

The majority of responses to this part of Question 1 did not explicitly address the notion of practice; rather it was embedded within, and developed from, their discussion of the source material. Many candidates used their underlying knowledge of Aboriginal Art to inform their response with varying levels of sophistication, and many responses dealt successfully with the nature of indigenous practice making comparisons with Western traditions as appropriate. Generally responses made greater reference to the text than the plates.

Better responses interpreted the question through an explicit engagement with the notion of ‘art making practice’ and the rubric to effectively ‘explain’ their case. A comprehensive and sophisticated understanding of the elements of practice and a confident use of art terminology was evident in these responses. The complexity of the artist’s intention and fusion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous art practices were clearly recognised and interpreted. These responses were able to clearly differentiate facets of practice exemplified through all the source material. Many responses at this level understood and recognised the significance of Plate 6, ‘Photograph of exhibition East to West: Land in Papunya

Tula Painting’, in commenting on curatorial conventions relating to practice. Some responses utilised prior knowledge which was applied to develop a convincing and well-reasoned case about the artist’s practice.

Mid-range responses demonstrated a sound understanding of art practice, though often the investigation of source material was descriptive. Many responses established an argument and contextualised their knowledge within the cultural frame. Interpretations were more generalised with some responses presenting a less structured argument. Some analysis and comparison of source material was evident. Reference to the art writer source was particularly popular in these responses.

Weaker responses generally did not develop or elaborate their understanding of an art practice. Responses in this range were highly descriptive of the sources, making very superficial interpretations of them and their application to practice. Some limited aspects of Aboriginal art practice were identified.

Section II: Questions 2–4 — Practice

General Comments

Questions in this section of the paper offered a range of opportunities for candidates to apply their knowledge of art criticism and art history in terms of the content of practice with reference to artists, art critics and art historians.

Candidates demonstrated their ability to adapt content from case studies to suit the particular focus of the questions and to develop a point of view about practice using one frame in depth or two or more frames more broadly to support their arguments. These responses indicated candidates’ firm grasp of the ways in which the frames can be used to intervene with and speculate about interpretations of practice.

For many candidates the conceptual and material aspects of practice in artmaking provided a way of structuring discussion in relation to examples of artists’ works. Whilst some candidates focused on how practice is exemplified in relation to particular aspects explored through appropriate examples, broader discussions of the concept of practice were typical approaches taken by candidates. Aspects of practice discussed included social exchanges, actions, decisions and networks of procedures.

In relation to syllabus content and the particular focus of questions, ‘relevant examples’ invited candidates to discuss the practices of artists, art critics, art historians as well as artworks, critical review and art historical explanations amongst other things. Examples in relation to practice included: how the artist works, the kinds of procedures and routines s/he engages in to make art or write about artists and their works, the decisions the practitioner makes in relation to representational interests and materials, or the tactics an art writer employs to select examples as supporting evidence for an art historical narrative or critical judgement.

Specific Comments

Question 2

This question focused on how technology transforms artists' practice. Candidates variously selected artists including Stelarc, Orlan, Parr, Philip George, Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Yasumasa Morimura, Julie Rrap, Chuck Close, Linda Sproule, Andy Warhol, Tracey Moffatt, David Hockney, Smithson, Dada, the Impressionists and some reference to Renaissance artists. References to technological advances included tubes of paint, computers, developments in transport, mechanisation, medical technology, the development of the camera and portable easels.

In better responses the practice of artists was often historically contextualised in relation to particular technologies and the transformative effect of these on artmaking practices. Some responses focused on the artmaking practices of two or three artists over a period of time, other approaches focused on the transformative effects of a range of technological innovations upon a range of artists' practice from the 19th and 20th centuries. Quotes by art critics and historians were used to contextualise the effects of technology on forms of practice.

Mid-range responses focused on broad explanations of practice in artmaking. Practice was often described by interpreting the works by artists with less attention to the particular features of practice. In discussions, the significance of technology to artists' practice remained a self-evident assumption rather than a relationship. Examples of artworks were interpreted with minimal links to technology. The implications of technology were broadly discussed in relation to the world, rather than to specific art examples.

Weaker responses often provided explanations of technological advancements such as computers and developed a list of features of technologies without applying them to how artworks have been made or thought about by artists. Many responses did not cite any artworks or artists as examples and responses tended to be conversational in tone.

Candidates could consider how the conceptual interest of artists have changed or shifted over time as they have discovered or been exposed to new tools and materials. Aspects of artists' practice can also be considered in terms of how technological advances had implications for ancient builders, modern architects, contemporary designers and craftspeople.

Question 3

Responses to this question reflected a range of understanding of the role of critics and historians as practitioners within the visual arts and included reference to how their interpretation affects the audience. The conceptual framework was often cited with elaborate discussions, as were the frames when locating the viewpoints of critics and historians.

Better responses revealed a thorough knowledge of the critical practices related to specific exhibitions, drawing content from exhibition catalogues and the critical discourse generated at the time. The conceptual framework was used to illustrate how critics and historians influenced audiences, artists and indeed subsequent artworks, and followed a longitudinal survey of the effects of critics on the development of 19th and 20th Century art movements. Curatorial interpretations were often cited with

reference to major exhibitions. Significant examples of critical writing were often incorporated when discussing a range of opposing interpretations.

Mid-range responses referred to a range of critical styles and discussed how critics and historians shape audience opinions. Examples were cited but explored in a more limited way. Responses tended to rely on a narrative listing of facts without making links and assumed that meaning was self-evident.

Weaker responses made general discussions that gave a historical overview of criticism throughout art history, and did not elaborate upon them. Unattributed quotes were used and meanings were inferred rather than directly stated and explored to support the response. There was an inconsistency in the argumentation, and interpretation was discussed broadly, reflecting only a basic understanding of the visual arts.

Candidates should ensure that they specifically address the key words of the question in a sustained way. Support material such as quotations should be clearly and explicitly limited to the question and argument.

Question 4

In responses to this question candidates at all levels focused on practice but showed familiarity with both the frames and the conceptual framework. Definitions of modernity were varied but appropriate, ranging from art historical theories of modernism to more generalised senses of the contemporary and the new. Most candidates concentrated on artmaking practice, though some excellent responses cited both art critical and historical practice. Practice was dealt with both as the practice of individual artists and a broader understanding of artistic practice.

Better responses explored complex understandings of modernity and modernism to provide a focus for the discussion and understanding of practice. These understandings were explored in aspects of material and conceptual practice, procedure, intention and strategy in the examples chosen. Responses established a strong and coherent connection of influence between aspects of modernity and aspects of practice. References to significant art historians and critics complemented the responses.

Mid-range responses cited examples with varying degrees of depth to provide instances of practice related to modernity or modernism. Understandings of practice encompassed both material and conceptual elements but the responses tended to identify a particular feature of practice and focus a discussion around this. Treatment of influence was appropriate but accepted as a simple relation of cause and effect.

Weaker responses began with tenuous concepts of modernity that could not support detailed discussion. These responses demonstrated some understanding of practice but tended to be descriptive of artworks, without relating them to the artist's intentions or operations.

Teachers and candidates are advised to become familiar with the use of the active voice in discussing artistic intention in relation to practice. This provides clarity to the discussion of the ways in which the artist, critic or historian acts, thinks or intends to create meaning rather than the ways in which meaning is implicit in or communicated through artworks or texts.

Conceptual Framework: Questions 5–7

General Comments

These questions provided candidates with the opportunity to apply their understanding of the conceptual framework in different ways. Each question focused on different relationships between the agencies of the artworld. Question 5 focused on the relationships between artists and their interpretations of the world and asked candidates to consider the impact of time and place on that relationship. Question 6 was more specific in its identification of interactive and virtual forms of artworks and candidates needed to consider the role these forms have played in raising wider questions about the nature of art. Question 7 enabled candidates to bring a broad range of material from their case studies to evaluate aspects of the relationship between artists and works.

The selection of examples was quite varied and ranged across time and place, often using related examples built around a specific focus to develop and illustrate their response to the broader conceptual focus of the question. Exhibitions, quotes from artists, critics and historians, as well as specific discussion of artworks and the practice of artists, were used as ‘relevant examples’ to provide evidence to support a point of view.

In many responses, candidates focused on the specific relationship or agency of the conceptual framework as well as develop the explanation through discussion of the other agencies and the interplay between all of the parts. Consideration of the frames and the ways that these perspectives offered different ways of explaining the relationships between the agencies of the conceptual framework was also evident in many responses as a means of extending and developing the argument presented. An understanding of practice also informed the explanations of the relationships between the agencies of the artworld.

Specific Comments

Question 5

Responses to this question reflected a good understanding of the conceptual framework and the frames, and candidates could apply their knowledge appropriately to this question. Responses were able to interpret ‘time and place’ and ‘world’ very confidently but had greater difficulty with the term ‘constrained’. Some responses addressed ‘constraints’ from a retrospective chronological viewpoint using the limitations of human development, technology, religion, economics and patronage.

Better responses built an argument through conceptual and thematic links among artists. Some responses adopted a viewpoint either for or against and then maintained a consistent argument. These responses cited all aspects of the conceptual framework to support their argument. Other responses supplied a variety of points of view from critics, texts or artists’ quotes.

Mid-range responses often revealed a great deal of art knowledge but did not fully relate their knowledge to the question. Often there were attempts to form an opinion or introduce an argument in the introduction but this was unable to be sustained in the main body of the response.

Weaker responses were sometimes lengthy discussions of artists that did not address any or all parts of the question. These responses were descriptive and lacked an understanding of relationships within the conceptual framework.

In responding to this type of question, candidates need to adopt a point of view and construct an argument to illustrate this viewpoint. Consideration should be given to not only a broad discussion of examples, but also an approach that recognises the value of an in-depth discussion of some selected examples.

Question 6

Responses to this question demonstrated an understanding of the conceptual framework as well as citing the frames to support arguments and notions of virtual and interactive works. There was a focus on contemporary examples and a range of artists including Viola, Hirst, Holzer, Paik, Beuys, Rapp, Kruger and Callas. Other responses introduced less contemporary examples such as Yves Klein, the built environment and the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright to address the question. Interactivity was defined in many forms including cyberculture, cinema, film and video, and the virtual gallery.

Better responses were able to differentiate between virtual and interactive artworks, often linking the discussion to the cultural frame. Responses explored the development of new ways of understanding art, citing the Dadaists and a range of artists in art movements from Pop to Postmodernism, and virtual and interactive artists such as Orlan, Parr and Stelarc. Relevant examples were confidently discussed and interpreted using appropriate language.

Mid-range responses cited concise, critical arguments and historical explanations. Most aspects of the question were addressed with more conventional interpretations. The use and scope of examples cited were used more generally and did not always fully support arguments and explanations.

Weaker responses were driven by opinions. Explanations were superficial and examples were explored in an isolated way. The relationships between artist, artwork and the audience were not understood.

Question 7

Responses to this question revealed candidates' understanding of the conceptual framework in evaluating the importance of artists' intentions in relation to the production and meaning of artworks. Most responses described the relationship between artists' intentions and the ways that they are manifest in artworks. Responses also examined relationships within a wider discussion about artists and works, and were able to deal with the terms 'production' and 'meaning' in more specific ways. Examples were quite varied and diverse and included contemporary Aboriginal artists Lin Onus and Gordon Bennett, groups of artists such as the Dada movement, the Cubists and the Impressionists, and individual artists Frida Kahlo and Jackson Pollock, as well as works from exhibitions including the Biennale, the Archibald Prize and Sensations.

Artists' intentions were explained as being connected to the world and audience and as taking physical form within artworks. Some candidates wrote about an artist's intentions as being an extension of the artist's identity. The connections between artists' intentions and the meaning of artworks were usually explained as being culturally or socially generated. In many responses, candidates used the frames as

tools to develop more complex explanations. An understanding of practice assisted candidates in their explanations, particularly in the discussion of the production of artworks.

Better responses were structured using a line of argument or a group of related examples to demonstrate the importance of the relationship between intentions, production and meaning. Some responses cited artists whose intentions were concerned with ideas about cultural identity or the questioning or redefining of the nature of art. Others used examples of artists who worked using different frames and examined the way these perspectives affected their intentions and the meaning and production of their artworks. Some responses were able to connect and interpretively comment on how and why artists' intentions were tied to the specific qualities of artworks, in terms of their production and their nuances of meaning.

Mid-range responses discussed the connections between the artists' intentions and artworks in more descriptive ways. The importance of the relationship was seen as self-evident when there were connections made between the artist's intentions and how this is seen in an aspect of the artwork. Production was seen more simply as something that the artist had done in the work rather than the more complex discussion about artmaking practice that characterised the better responses.

Weaker responses described and focused on a few qualities of artworks and the types of works produced by artists. In these responses, few candidates connected artists' intentions to the qualities found in artworks.

The Frames: Questions 8–10

General Comments

Questions 8, 9 and 10 provided opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the frames in a range of contexts and to use the frames to interpret the work of artists and art.

Question 9 focused on the postmodern frame, questioning why appropriation is a significant issue in the visual arts. Both Questions 8 and 10 required candidates to focus on a particular frame but also allowed an investigation of other frames within the prescribed context. Whilst addressing the notion of the structural frame, Question 8 demanded a consideration of other frames, with a standpoint that to employ only the structural frame is limiting. Question 10 required candidates to demonstrate an understanding of social identity and the ways it is addressed in artworks through the use of the cultural frame. However this did not preclude candidates from including in their responses how this issue can be addressed using other frames and a popular choice was the postmodern frame. Many candidates were able to apply their knowledge from their case studies. Well-prepared responses revealed the ability to apply the frames to particular question demands through a consideration of a range of appropriate examples from diverse cultures.

Candidates were generally knowledgeable about how the frames can be used to interpret the visual arts. Better responses demonstrated the ability to articulate the qualities of a particular frame to the demands of the question. On occasion they also offered a discussion of how qualities of other frames could assist in the interpretation of artworks.

In some responses the discussion of the frames was inherent within a well-supported argument.

Examples were chosen to illustrate understandings and were informed by a generally sound study of the use of frames to interpret artworks. Although examples could include art criticism, and text from art historians, candidates focused on the selection of appropriate artworks to address the demands of questions.

Specific Comments

Question 8

Responses to this question demonstrated an understanding of how to apply the structural frame to the visual arts. Most responses attempted to address all aspects of the question and there was a refreshing diversity of selected artworks and points of reference.

Better responses cited a selection of appropriate examples and built evaluative arguments based on perceptive interpretations of the signs and symbols inherent in artworks. This often gave rise to the significance of the frames and the relevance of historical and/or sociopolitical and cultural contexts. The question allowed for some persuasive arguments concerning limitations and the shift in the perception of artworks in relation to the world and the audience.

Mid-range responses revealed a sound knowledge of art practice, the frames and the use of symbols. Responses built arguments and identified concepts that were more conventional in terms of the limitations and the view of art.

Weaker responses made simple descriptive judgements and many were unable to address 'limitations'. Although there was some understanding of the structural frame, key elements of the question remained unanswered.

Teachers and candidates would be well advised to broaden and deepen their understanding of the frames and address this in their case studies.

Question 9

Responses to this question reflected a good understanding of the postmodern frame in citing aspects of appropriation such as recontextualisation, deconstruction, the use of satire, wit and irony, the changing nature of art practice in a historical sense, and the use of multimedia and technology.

The issue of the significance of appropriation in the visual arts was addressed with reference to a wide variety of contemporary practices such as feminism, sexuality, consumerism, art as quotation, art as political comment, loss of faith in technology, and art as a means of commenting on the historical role of artists and the use of traditional techniques.

Better responses demonstrated a clear understanding of a range of terminology associated with the postmodern frame and particularly with aspects of appropriation. Responses demonstrated highly informed points of view and addressed the aspect of significance with originality, drawing on ideas beyond the conventional. Responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the wider cultural context

of appropriation and included wide-ranging commentaries on a variety of artists and their works, with constant reference to the question.

Mid-range responses revealed knowledge of the characteristics of postmodernism with clear and logical responses analysing examples in less comprehensive ways. Interpretations and discussions of broader world issues were more conventionally treated. Responses did not sustain a point of view which supported the aspect of significance in simplistic ways based on personal opinion.

Weaker responses described artworks and relied on generalisations and personal opinion to address aspects of appropriation and significance. There was less evidence of an understanding of the frames, with the postmodern frame not cited or understood.

A wide and thorough knowledge of a number of artists and artworks linked back to the frames enabled many candidates to demonstrate an excellent understanding of art concepts.

Question 10

In addressing this question, candidates demonstrated a good understanding of content, particularly the cultural frame. In discussing social identity, issues of gender, race, spirituality and personal identity were explored and placed within a wider social context. A range of artists and artworks, in particular a number of modernist and contemporary examples, were cited. These included Barbara Kruger, Frida Kahlo, Gordon Bennett, Lin Onus, Pollock, Picasso, Tracey Moffatt, Morimura and Cindy Sherman.

Better responses demonstrated an understanding of the demands of the question and in particular the function of the words ‘explain’ and ‘address’. These responses were able to explain how and why artists engage with the issue of social identity within their art practice. Candidates defined notions of social identity as distinct from personal or cultural issues and presented sequenced arguments using an appropriate and diverse range of artists to support their view. Other frames and the conceptual framework were often cited in order to present a case. However responses remained primarily concerned with the cultural frame.

Mid-range responses demonstrated a good knowledge of artists and the artworld in addressing most aspects of the question. Responses presented conventional artists and arguments, and inferred rather than explained an understanding of aspects of social identity. Some candidates had difficulty in defining social versus cultural or personal issues and discussed the methods used by artists rather than explaining how selected artists address a specific social identity.

Weaker responses often offered unsupported personal opinion. These responses relied on description or simplified explanations and cited a limited range of artists. A number of responses discussed an artist’s life, with social identity only mentioned in an attempt to link a limited knowledge and understanding of the art world to the demands of the question. The cultural frame was referred to in a naïve and limited way.

Body of Work

Introduction

The 2001 Visual Arts examination saw the introduction of the new requirement for artmaking in the submission of a body of work. Across the 8800 Visual Arts candidates' submissions, there was a diverse range of approaches. Candidates had the opportunity to submit works in one of 15 expressive forms, including the new areas of Digital Media, Digital Animation, Interactives, Documented Forms, Designed Objects and Environments and Graphic Design. While these new areas only attracted a small percentage of the whole candidature, they included some exciting submissions that took advantage of the expressive possibilities offered by these new forms. The most popular expressive forms were Painting, Collections of Works and Drawing.

Markers spent some time reviewing the Bodies of Work submitted to consider the range of responses by candidates to this new requirement before establishing marking schemes. Marking schemes were developed to elaborate on the qualities of the levels of achievement in the marking guidelines for each expressive form. Bodies of Work were selected to represent the criteria of conceptual strength and meaning and material resolution in each of the five levels in the marking guidelines. Each body of work in the marking scheme was accompanied by written comments that explained the terms and qualities of the work and the reasons for placing the work in a particular mark range. The marking schemes for each expressive form were correlated with each other and were used in conjunction with the marking guidelines to make judgements about achievement in both the Corporate and Itinerant Marking Operations.

General Comments

Candidates responded positively in their submissions to the new requirement for the body of work. Markers were encouraged by the range of responses and took time to consider how the whole submission represented the candidates' understanding of their artmaking practice. Some candidates submitted bodies of work that were coherent and highly resolved series of work. Others presented a group of linked works, either conceptually and/or materially that included resolved works alongside more provisional works that gave insight into directions, decisions and interests that formed the networks in their artmaking practice. Some candidates presented single works that provided evidence of a sustained engagement of artmaking practice.

Some candidates included artists' statements, documentation in the form of diagrams or photographs, working drawings or experiments, explanatory text or mini catalogues. These were viewed as another of the choices that a candidate may make to represent their practice in a body of work. However, other candidates chose to present fully resolved works. Both were valued equally in terms of marking criteria that considered the material and conceptual strength of the whole body of work. However, candidates need to make considered judgements in selecting from the work produced in the artmaking during the year. Their selection of pieces in their body of work should represent the intentions and quality of their artmaking practice coherently.

Markers commented on the ways in which candidates had engaged with the new content in the syllabus. The frames provided a means of focusing candidate intentions and assisted with ways of

representing ideas both conceptually and materially. There was evidence that candidates had also used the conceptual framework to extend their ideas and to assist them with structuring their works, particularly when considering the audiences for the work. Some candidates used the body of work to explore artmaking practice in self-reflective ways or make witty ironic parodies of practices associated with art criticism or museology. Candidates made considered choices about appropriate the expressive forms used to represent their ideas

Complex submissions need to be accompanied by clear instructions for presentation. Candidates must adhere to the Board of Studies guidelines on size/weight limitations and note that the size guidelines apply to the work when exhibited. This is especially so in complex installations.

Specific Comments

Ceramics

Bodies of Work in Ceramics showed a strong sculptural emphasis, manipulating clay to create interesting and often unexpected form and surface. The body of work has also been used as an investigation into materials and techniques, revealing a growing understanding of the expressive potential of the form. Conceptual strength was evident in the exploration of cultural traditions, contemporary practices and traditional ceramic forms. Most candidates submitted a series of related works; some candidates used photographic or drawn documentation of their body of work to reflect the contemporary practice of installation and site-specific works enhancing their conceptual strength.

Works in the higher mark range revealed sophisticated material practice to present a coherent conceptual investigation. Concepts such as reinterpretations of themes in art history, abstraction and references to cultural signs and symbols were presented in ways that could be interpreted on a number of levels. Candidates exploited the materials to their limit achieving innovative results, and incorporating subtle surface treatment, thereby enhancing the form. They showed consideration of all aspects of the work, including interiors, rims and surfaces, and different viewing angles.

Works in the middle mark range demonstrated strength in material resolution but were not meaningfully linked to a concept. Meanings registered in limited or obvious ways, or were unclear. Works were conservative in both form and material practice and did not exploit the expressive potential of clay. Surface treatments were uneven and varied in resolution.

The lower mark range was characterised by work demonstrating insensitive surface treatments, often with commercially-bought bright glazes that did not complement the form. Surface texture was often unexplored. The works were superficial and weak in concept. Forms were often heavy and material investigation was limited.

Candidates should attempt to integrate material practice in the representation of a concept. If there are specific relationships between forms, a display plan may benefit the interpretation of the work. Titles can provide an insight into the conceptual basis of the work. Bodies of Work in Ceramics should be structurally sound and show an awareness of the appropriate ceramic practices. The submission of unfired work is not advised due to the risk of damage.

Collection of Works

Collection of Works was a popular form in which to present the body of work. There was a significant increase in the use of digital forms, photography, videos and sculptural elements. There was a noticeable decline in printmaking. There was also an increase in the use of documentary forms and a rise in how postmodern perspectives informed practice.

A significant number of candidates had carefully considered the representation of their material and conceptual practices with evidence that they had utilised the Conceptual Framework to extend their artmaking practice. While there were many submissions that used different forms in a conventional sense, other submissions represented a hybrid use of media and forms in ways that reflected contemporary practice. Many installation-type works were photographically recorded and presented, rather than risk being oversized when displayed.

In the higher mark range, submissions often used innovative and unconventional combinations of various forms. These works engaged the audience on a number of levels and were characterised by a coherent synthesis of concept and materials. These works demonstrated high degrees of interpretation, often using the frames as a focus, and were subtle in their referencing, self-aware, reflective, intelligent and sensitive. Many of the higher range works were playful, immediate and memorable works, not overworked or obsessively finished. Equally many works showed restraint, refinement and a high degree of mastery of material practice.

Works in the lower mark range lacked subtlety and did not show a sustained engagement with artmaking practice. These works lacked a sense of exploration in either the concept or media presented. The use of media was tentative and themes used were often clichéd. Many of these submissions had very few pieces or appeared to be a set of unconnected parts, submitted without considered selection.

Although the collection of works provides opportunities for diverse submissions, often with a number of pieces, the selection of pieces remains crucial. Pieces should be included if they enhance the representation of the candidate's artmaking practice. Inclusion of more provisional pieces in a body of work may be strategic to assist an understanding of the artist's practice when viewed with more resolved pieces.

Digital Animation

The majority of works was of a high standard, reflecting a sound understanding of animation programs and the qualities of this virtual form. Conceptually the works relied on strong narratives and often employed appropriate metaphors and symbols to enhance their meaning for audiences. Many displayed sophisticated modelling — lighting, textures and tonality and a fluid transition of images — that suggested the evolution of candidates' programming abilities.

Innovative works dealt directly with the transformative qualities of the form in a creative and individualistic fashion. Candidates created hyper-real environments through manipulating illusionistic effects. The works in the higher mark range succeeded in creating an individual style through specific stylisation. Candidates filled their animated body of work with psychological nuances and drama that

reflected a highly successful synthesis of technology, including hardware and software programs and aesthetic manipulation of ideas in space and time.

The works in the middle mark range were less successful in the synthesis of concepts with the material resolution of the work. There was either overcompensation of technical manipulation coupled with the construction of a limited narrative or a complex story, which did not compensate for the weaker application of technology. Often in this range there was a lack of consistency in the use of camera angles, lighting/rendering, pacing and editing.

Works in the lower mark range demonstrated only a rudimentary understanding of the animation program and a lack of planning in scripting and editing which culminated in the production of far less resolved works.

Candidates are advised that digital animation is a demanding activity in terms of time and detail required, which requires tenacity and a vision for the final product. Planning and allocating sufficient time are two major factors in digital animation, as are critical reflection about the development and resolution of the work.

Candidates should not be seduced by presets found on animation programs and should take time to learn how to use them efficiently. In the animation credits candidates should ensure that they list the programs used in the production.

Digital Media

The Bodies of Work in this form reflected a strong use of new software as well as more subtle and expressive conceptual concerns. The majority of candidates employed PhotoShop to generate images with limited use of programs such as Illustrator to render text over images. Other candidates successfully integrated 3D-rendered imagery using programs such as 3D Studio Max and Bryce with 2D enhancements to create energetic virtual worlds and subject matter. Bodies of Work in this form were generally presented as a related series of works.

Many candidates displayed great proficiency in the use of programs to develop visually complex ideas and push the virtual qualities to carry meaning beyond clichéd effects. Candidates showed an increased consideration of presentation techniques. Material manipulations such as scratching into perspex, overlay and the use of sequential narratives were also employed. Text was also frequently used to convey ideas.

Works in the higher mark range engaged the viewer with sensitive use of materials in a layered concept. Candidates understood the malleable qualities of this medium in terms of virtual image manipulation and were able to construct complex and unique images that exploited the properties of this form. The authority of the works resonated from the mastery of the material and the ability to communicate complex ideas and concepts.

In the middle mark range, works investigated aesthetic conventions but did not elaborate or refine these qualities in their body of work. Often the work would express straightforward concepts and lacked a

sophisticated amalgamation of ideas and the use of the material. Concepts sometimes appeared ambiguous and less resolved.

Lower mark range works reflected a limited investigation of concepts and poor understanding of the programs that allowed for images to be manipulated. Candidates reflected a shallow approach to the construction of images and did not go beyond simplistic program applications.

In Digital Media, candidates need to be thoroughly familiar with programs so that they can use them effectively to represent their ideas. Candidates should be encouraged to review current trends in digital art practice and search for appropriate websites and references. Contemporary practitioners include Patricia Piccinini, Melinda Rackham, Linda Dement, Jon McCormick, Troy Innocent and Moriko Mori.

Designed Objects and Environments

Bodies of Work in this expressive form reflected a range of understandings about designed objects and the conventions of contemporary design practices. The majority of submissions were wearables. Other works included furniture design, architectural models, jewellery and T-shirt designs. Many wearables submissions included photographic documentation depicting the work in a specific context. This often strengthened the concept and allowed the audience to understand the intention of the body of work. Design briefs, when included, often identified and defined the audience and reflected a consideration of different aspects of design.

The impact of the frames was noted in the referencing and recontextualising of concepts as well as many culturally based submissions. The inclusion of a video with some wearable submissions enabled the audience to view the wearable in a performance context. This reflected an awareness of audience engagement and redefined the possibilities of submissions in this expressive form. Other innovations included embedding objects in plastics, the use of perspex, silver, wax, latex, chain mail, rubber gloves, felting, water-soluble fabric and the integration of a range of found objects.

Works in the higher mark range were highly resolved in both conceptual and material practice. Many wearables successfully explored a variety of approaches to the use of the body as a site for art and sculpture. Surfaces were manipulated not only to decorate but also to convey meaning. In other designed works, the use of computer graphics, printing techniques and construction methods were highly developed. All works were carefully considered in terms of their relationship to others in the Bodies of Work.

Works in the middle mark range cited predictable, familiar icons, and many works conveyed little meaning beyond the literal or narrative. There were some successful combinations of fabrics and objects but wearable forms did not always complement the body or fully explore the selected media. A sense of fun and humour was often evident.

Works in the lower mark range were literal and simplistic interpretations. There was a reliance on painted surfaces, crude appliqué techniques and unsuccessfully integrated found objects. Works conveyed little resolution of material or conceptual practices.

Wearables should be submitted in this expressive form, not in Textiles and Fibre. Design briefs can be submitted with functional designed objects and environments. Photographs illustrating how a wearable is to be worn are helpful to enable the intentions of the candidate to be communicated to the audience.

Documented Forms

Bodies of Work submitted in this expressive form represented a variety of material and conceptual practices. Approaches such as installations, performance pieces and site-specific works were documented by photographs, videos, slides and on CD-ROM. Many candidates submitted sculptural pieces used in the installations and site-specific works and the majority of the submissions featured the integration of text into the Bodies of Work or an accompanying statement of intent. While the number of entries in this new media area was small, there were some exciting and innovative approaches in the submissions. It was particularly obvious in the more successful works that candidates had used the Conceptual Framework as a constructive device, and as a result there was a coherence to the submitted piece that resulted in sustained audience engagement.

Most candidates in the higher mark range demonstrated a sound understanding of the possibilities offered by this expressive form and were able to successfully exploit these to their advantage. Works were conceptually strong and there was a clear indication that the submitted work was the result of sustained engagement with, and investigation into, the chosen practice. There was an obvious connection between the concept explored and the chosen approach that resulted in works that registered on many levels. The most exciting works in this range resulted when candidates used the documentation process to re-present their installation or performance in a new form so that it was reconfigured as a sculptural piece or documented in a manner evocative of their intent.

Works in the lower mark range relied heavily on simple narrative. Candidates seemed less certain as to what a Documented Form was or could be, and did not demonstrate any exploration of the expressive possibilities of their chosen practice in any depth. There was a reliance on clichéd approaches such as heavily paint-coated performers and ritual ‘burnings’; some submissions seemed unprepared and rushed.

Simple directions, plans or layout photographs were particularly helpful in assembling the Documented Forms. Submissions that did not include these guides were frequently difficult to assemble. Candidates need to ensure that they adhere to the Board of Studies subject rules on size when displayed, weight and running time limitations as oversize works that ignored these conditions were quite common and not advantaged.

Film and Video

Bodies of work in this form used a wide variety of genres: action, horror, comedy, drama and documentary filmmaking. Many candidates explored the use of film in a sculptural sense as installation work or video art. Other candidates experimented with the filmic conventions and styles found in contemporary popular cinema. Films such as ‘Run Lola Run’, ‘Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels’ and even ‘Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon’ have greatly influenced candidates’ bodies of work. Greater access to digital technology in postproduction has enhanced editing and the effective use of soundtracks. Candidates displayed the ability to select and edit in a subtle way the qualities particular

to film making such as luminosity, resolution, colour filtration and transition. Bodies of Work in this form were generally single pieces but sometimes included stills or storyboards.

Works in the higher mark range reflected a comprehensive understanding of film technique and exhibited qualities of depth and passion. Candidates were able to develop an independent personal style that referred to other films as well as incorporating contemporary innovations. They used subtle image transitions and an informed selection of sound, indicating knowledge of contemporary editing and postproduction practices. The impact of non-linear editing has also been reflected in the sequential structure of the works where this has been expressively manipulated in varying forms: fast, slow, tangential, reflexive and multiple viewpoints. Concepts were often witty and highly developed and informed by contemporary art and filmmaking.

Works in the middle mark range lacked some clarity of meaning and a personal point of view. Concepts tended to be obvious and there is a tendency to incorporate weaker components in plot, which detracted from the resolution of the work. Often the transition and arrangement of scenes were ambiguous and the energy of the film was not consistently sustained throughout the work.

The works in the lower mark range lacked coherence and displayed a naïve understanding of the potential of video. Concepts were often superficially communicated and lacked resolution. There was a limited knowledge of film conventions and very little use of camera angles or editing to construct a meaningful work. Single camera angles, simply dubbed editing and poor sound quality were all key characteristics of works situated in this range.

Candidates need to give a great deal of thought as to how their ideas and concepts can best be translated in this selected medium. An understanding of the principles of design and a visual grammar is essential in filmmaking. Observing other practitioners in both popular and high art contexts, as well as an understanding of the complexities of the equipment in production are essential. It is important for candidates to learn how to extend the expressive possibilities of the medium through the use of editing techniques and postproduction effects.

Graphic Design

The new category of Graphic Design attracted candidates who had a strong understanding of design and could contextualise their submission in terms of the product location and audience response. Bodies of Work submitted in this form ranged from computer-generated prints and drawings for a specific purpose such as illustrations or posters, printed garments related to witty social comments to the image identity branding (and associated products) for a major institution or identified company.

Bodies of work in the higher mark range had a strong design brief or conceptual basis and communicated clear intentions or ideas. These works were informed by an extensive understanding of contemporary practice and the conventions in Graphic Design and used these appropriately and in innovative ways to represent their design concepts. The works also thoroughly investigated and exploited the expressive and material properties of their selected form — drawing, computer graphics — to communicate their ideas in the design. The powerful function of text to communicate to the audience was well understood and text styles were carefully selected and integrated. Many of the Graphic Design bodies of work in this range utilised digital images to present their finished design

although others used more conventional forms such as illustration with some digital images to support the intentions of the submission.

Bodies of work in the middle mark range tended to lack a clearly defined brief or presented an unclear or obvious concept. Whilst candidates explored an extensive range of media, works were limited by a lack of technical competency.

In the lower range, works were conceptually obscure and an understanding of material practice was unresolved: collage techniques were poorly considered, and text employed as an add-on. These works also reflected a limited understanding of the audience, a design brief; or else works were developed within the narrow realm of personal expression for self-interest.

Graphic Design allows candidates to present their designs in a variety of formats. However, it is important that the candidates clearly identify their concepts. A 'design brief' is a useful component in the development of a body of work in Graphic Design. Recognition of the conventions of particular design products such as a book, poster, magazine or billboard is another consideration in the representation of the design concept.

Interactives

This new expressive form had few submissions. These ranged widely in design, theme and intent. A key aspect of this form was the ways that the audience interacted with the works. The relationship of the graphics in a temporal field and the ways that the audience was invited to navigate through the site were also key features which were exploited by candidates. Candidates employed a variety of programs to create their interactives, eg Flash, Dreamweaver and Powerpoint, and explored certain codes and conventions in developing their concepts.

Works in the upper mark range demonstrated a highly competent handling of the selected program(s) and a sophisticated design construction. Candidates made stylistic references to designers such as Joshua Davis, Francis Chan and David Carson as a basis for their own designs. They demonstrated a keen understanding of the form's particular properties and employed successful strategies to engage and sustain the viewer/user's interest.

In the middle mark range, candidates displayed varying degrees of proficiency in regard to the program(s) used, while their intentions were not resolutely projected in the works. Often the candidates did not fully harness the technical opportunities to convey their ideas successfully. In addition to this, candidates were occupied by technical qualities, making the conceptual meaning unclear.

The works in the lower mark range offered little more than a digital slide show and displayed a poor understanding of the interrelationship between the user and the work. Often the works were very pedestrian in structure without purpose or clear design intentions.

Active engagement is a key element in this form. Candidates are advised to consider the navigation and exploration of their site as key creative concerns in developing their bodies of work and considering how an audience will respond to it. The interactive work must be autonomous, ie self-running without the need of specialised programs to be installed on the computer to view the work.

Viewing web sites from graphic groups such as ‘Why not Associates’, ‘Mother’, ‘Animal Logic’, ‘Attik’, ‘Glassworks’ and ‘Id8’ and journals such as ‘IdN’ and ‘Computer Arts’ should assist in considering design and programming options.

Painting

Candidates presented a great diversity of interpretations of the body of work revealing a commitment to practice and a sophisticated exploration of the possibilities of painting. Some highly sophisticated works examined the traditions and conventions of painting itself, showing an impressive knowledge and understanding of historical and contemporary art. Many works demonstrated an awareness of the frames and the conceptual framework, in particular through their awareness of the relationship between their work and the audience, as well as a sensitive and skilled awareness of the possibilities of materials.

While there was an emphasis on figuration, works offered a great variety of approaches to painting, ranging from refined techniques of representation, and painterly surfaces such as glazing and impasto, through to rich surfaces involving wax encaustic and the addition of a variety of collaged images and objects. Some candidates were able to demonstrate convincingly their understanding of painting through a single work, often in the form of a diptych or triptych. Many others, however, chose to submit multiple works linked by subject matter, ideas, techniques, or the spatial relationship between different pieces. Many works explored issues of identity, both cultural and personal. Interestingly, some works revealed unorthodox interpretations of ‘painting’, utilising photography, printed matter, or parts of an installation. Some candidates chose to create painterly surface effects without using any paint: eg painting with fire, exploring burnt and charred effects on metal and timber, the oxidising of metals and many varied collage elements.

The most successful works revealed a sustained engagement with painting — sophisticated, technically accomplished and seamlessly integrating concept and material practice — in refined and resolved works which were adventurous, often innovative and communicated their concept on many levels. A depth of knowledge of artists and works was revealed, as well as sensitivity to the properties and possibilities of materials.

Works in the middle mark range tended to be uneven in their quality. Some areas were technically proficient and effectively communicated a concept, while other passages were awkward, unconvincing or less well resolved. Many relied on surface effects such as wax or shellac, which were often applied in an insensitive manner. Art references were overt rather than subtle, and the meaning was quickly revealed to the viewer.

Less successful works revealed a much more limited understanding of the technical possibilities of the medium. In many cases candidates presented a repetitive series such as one subject painted in different colours. Works revealed a more limited exploration of ideas, as well as some very superficial or poorly understood art references.

Exploration and experimentation with a range of materials and techniques should be encouraged. Works should engage with the notion of a body of work in an open-ended and interesting manner. This means more than just a series of paintings which treat a theme in different ways. The process of

selection is a crucial aspect of art practice, and candidates should consider this carefully when seeking to represent their point of view to the audience.

Photography

Photography submissions included a diversity of styles and genres with many works exploring the creative potential offered by the requirement of a body of work to show a more extensive representation of their photographic practice. There was a clear understanding of the traditions of photography as a point of reference for digital manipulation, cross-processing, toning and layering, as well as the full range of traditional darkroom practices. In addition, the prevalence of the genre of studio photography has provided a starting point for the visual exploration of a number of concepts that traverse the frames of the syllabus. An increase of colour submissions was in evidence, as well as black and white and digital series that covered the full range of the mark scale. Some works successfully embraced a number of expressive forms from drawing through to sculpture and the documentation of installations. At the same time, the integrity of the photographic medium was retained.

The more challenging works invited the viewer to interpret the body of work by utilising conceptual and aesthetic frames of reference, at the same time presenting series that displayed a high level of technical proficiency. In such cases the candidates' sensitivity to the subject matter enhanced the visual impact. It remained immaterial whether the candidate submitted colour, digital combinations, slides or black and white works. What remained important was the considered and astute editing of images. A smaller number of works were innovative and risk-taking in terms of conceptual meaning and/or aesthetic composition.

A full range of themes and photographic styles were in evidence, from night and time-lapse photography to traditional studio portraiture and 'personal' journeys and insightful documentary work, simply presented, in black and white. Some works purposefully retained a truth to visual aesthetics and explored more abstract concepts. Other submissions displayed an expressive passion that complemented the selective and symbolic use of colour. Cross-processing, when used with discriminatory editing, framing and strong compositions and conceptual linkage propelled such series into the higher mark range.

Some of the more average responses displayed proficiency in terms of darkroom practice in wet or dry areas of photography and there was a refreshing degree of experimentation that indicated an awareness of postmodern concepts and knowledge of relevant photographers. The use of text in the higher mark range was handled more pertinently than in the more average responses, where the level of engagement with the medium was not as well sustained and the text was less appropriate. There were also inconsistencies in the resolution or editing of series to achieve a cohesive visual statement.

The works in the lower mark range dealt with simple concepts and an elementary understanding of the principles of photography, including basic techniques such as black and white as well as toning work and some experimentation. However, the resulting series were often muddy or repetitive and the concepts remained anchored in the process rather than being an evolution of the candidates' concepts or creative resolution in the medium. There was little evidence of an understanding of photographic traditions and a small number of these works breached subject guidelines by including sharp edges or being dangerous to handle.

There are many resources available that aid in the understanding of contemporary photographic practice and candidates and teachers need to be aware of current trends and exhibitions that reflect the cutting edge of this medium where the more established ‘comfort zones’ have been challenged. Despite advances in technology, the impact of bodies of work in photography still largely depends on a candidate’s understanding of and facility with camera, lighting and darkroom/manipulation techniques appropriate to their conceptual concerns.

Printmaking

Candidates have interpreted the body of work as an opportunity to extend the accepted conventions of traditional printmaking. There was a noticeable trend this year of candidates exploring a number of printmaking techniques within their series. Many candidates included photographs, text, paintings, drawings, sculptural elements and computer-generated imagery in their submissions. Some of these revealed initial investigations and starting points.

Developed concepts were varied. Popular choices included investigations of self, family and friends, and candidates often linked themselves to a sense of place. Many candidates explored their identity by comparing their existence in Australia with another culture. There was a marked increase in the number of candidates challenged by postmodern issues, quoting the work of other artists as well as engaging in ironic, satirical and questioning responses to consumerism and advertising. Some results were more impressive than others.

Although many candidates favoured a narrative or illustrative mode it was refreshing to see an increasing number of candidates working within the conventions of abstraction exploring gestural mark making as well as surfaces and textures. Innovations this year included the use of opaque and transparent overlays. Materials chosen were varied — fabrics, papers, ceramics, thin metals and plastics. Candidates used these layers for their own intrinsic qualities, tearing, piercing, embossing, weaving and scratching them. They were subsequently used to enhance the surface of the submission and also as a carrier for text and additional imagery.

Works in the higher mark range showed well considered, clearly articulated concepts and demonstrated broad and thorough explorations of printmaking processes. Confidence and knowledge of their chosen process enabled candidates to push the boundaries of printmaking traditions in keeping with contemporary art practice.

Works in the middle mark ranges were competent overall and showed evidence of some prior exploration with printmaking. However, these bodies of work were not always consistent in their refinement and control of the medium. Candidates often explored complex and ambitious concepts but were less selective. Therefore the point of view was less coherent and ambiguous.

Candidates in the lower mark range explored simple and rudimentary concepts where meanings were either obvious or elusive. Material practices were undeveloped with a strong reliance on photocopying to fill unresolved areas. Additions of text were not integrated, often being placed to cover inadequacies in draftsmanship or as a labelling device. Submissions were repetitive with one idea presented numerous times with minor variations.

Candidates and teachers are advised to include viewing instructions or an order of sequence for multiple works, particularly if a narrative is integral to the concept.

Sculpture

Bodies of work in sculpture revealed a wide range of approaches in this expressive form. Candidates explored a range of issues, themes and subject matter in a wide variety of materials and sculptural forms. The majority of submissions were figurative with only a few candidates attempting abstract forms. A few candidates submitted exploratory drawings or maquettes and those who did were able to show a sustained investigation as part of their chosen sculptural practice.

Numbers of components within the bodies of work varied from a single piece through to complex arrangements of multiple submissions usually linked by subject matter or concept. Some candidates explored traditional sculptural themes such as the figure while other used found objects and references to other contexts and forms for associative potential to make comments or make witty allusions to other artworks.

Many candidates incorporated text into their work either as part of the surface treatment or as accompanying statements. Colour was used in a variety of ways. Some works incorporated colour as an illusionistic device or to strengthen forms. In other works candidates treated the sculptural surface as a canvas for expressive manipulation. While many works were freestanding, candidates also explored the box and shelf format as organising elements. Relief sculptures constructed against a rigid or flexible background were also popular and many candidates utilised a documentation approach to contextualise their submission.

Works in the higher mark range demonstrated a successful melding of conceptual strength and material resolution. It was particularly interesting to see that many submissions were sensitive to audience engagement and many works encouraged audience interaction or intervention. Candidates were able to demonstrate their understanding of the ways that media could be manipulated and utilised to communicate ideas and concepts. Many works indicated a high degree of material exploration resulting in some extremely innovative uses of media and found materials. These works registered at a number of levels and it was rewarding to see that the stronger works, while often making reference to established artists and artforms, were able to move beyond simplistic appropriation. Works in this range also employed colour or surface treatments for expressive rather than purely decorative purposes.

Works in the middle range demonstrated a less coherent resolution of material and conceptual practice. While many works in this mark range were conceptually sound they frequently showed less material resolution with some poor choices being made that appeared to be the result of limited exploration or engagement with the chosen form or media over time. Similarly, many works were materially sound but conceptually they did not invite or sustain an audience engagement.

Works in the lower mark range reflected a lack of sustained engagement with material practice and less consideration of concepts. Simple subjects were interpreted in simplistic, obvious ways with little consideration of communication with an audience in any sustained way. Works were frequently poorly constructed and demonstrated very little exploration of material and sculptural qualities.

Candidates are encouraged to submit photographic or simple, concise instructions as to how their submissions are to be assembled or viewed. Difficult or elaborate installations cannot be accommodated at marking venues. Documented Forms should be considered as an alternative expressive form for these installations. Many candidates were disadvantaged by not following the size, weight and volume specifications.

Textiles and Fibre

The small number of submissions of the body of work in Textiles and Fibre demonstrated a range of interpretations and investigations of textiles practices. Some works reflected a synthesised use of media, multilayered concepts and a developing understanding and exploration of the possibilities of this expressive form. There was a conscious awareness of audience involvement in many works. These relied on inventive combinations of media and imagery to create surfaces that invited investigation.

Submissions included cross-stitching, embroidery, appliqué, paper weaving, origami; machine stitched works as well as 3D felted forms. Non-traditional and innovative materials such as papers, plastics, flyscreen, photographs and found objects were also used.

Works in the higher mark range were highly resolved and synthesised in their material and conceptual practice. They demonstrated an innovative use of media and evocative imagery, and were sustained, subtle, refined and sensuous. Many works exploited the possibilities of fabric, thread and stitching techniques and challenged textiles conventions by integrating found objects from the made and natural world. The works reflected an understanding of how the layering of meaning, text and a variety of fabrics and images can communicate ideas and concepts.

Works in the middle mark range reflected some imaginative and innovative qualities such as the expressive use of torn fabric, paint, text and the integration of collage and photographs. However, some concepts and meanings were not always fully explored and works evidenced a less resolved and inconsistent use of materials.

Works in the lower mark range demonstrated a minimal exploration and engagement with material and conceptual practice. There was an overuse and reliance on sequins, beads, inappropriate fabrics and clichéd images. Computer generated transfers were a popular technique but these images were randomly placed and not integrated onto the surface or manipulated in any way to embellish the images.

Candidates are advised to explore and experiment with a range of materials and techniques to learn about the possibilities of textiles and fibre.

Visual Arts

2001 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
Written Examination: Art criticism and art history			
1(a)	5	Frames	H7, H8, H9, H10
1(b)	8	Conceptual Framework	H7, H8, H9, H10
1(c)	12	Practice	H7, H8, H9, H10
2	25	Practice	H7, H8, H9, H10
3	25	Practice	H7, H8, H9, H10
4	25	Practice	H7, H8, H9, H10
5	25	Conceptual Framework	H7, H8, H9, H10
6	25	Conceptual Framework	H7, H8, H9, H10
7	25	Conceptual Framework	H7, H8, H9, H10
8	25	Frames	H7, H8, H9, H10
9	25	Frames	H7, H8, H9, H10
10	25	Frames	H7, H8, H9, H10
Artmaking: Body of Work			
	50	Criterion 1: Conceptual Strength & Meaning; and Criterion 2: Resolution	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6



2001 HSC Visual Arts Marking Guidelines

Artmaking – Body of Work

HSC examination overview

The HSC examination in Visual Arts consists of a written examination, worth 50 marks, in Art Criticism and Art History, and the submission of a Body of Work, worth 50 marks, for Artmaking.

Task: Artmaking – Body of Work (50 marks)

Students will submit a Body of Work as a compulsory part of the examination. In this Body of Work they should demonstrate their understanding of artmaking as a practice and represent their ideas and interests through their interpretation of subject matter and use of expressive forms. They should consider their own resolve in selecting works for examination with a view to representing a coherent point of view and in relation to the conceptual strength and meaning of works produced. The Body of Work must be conceived of, and executed, by the student under the supervision of the Visual Arts teacher.

The Body of Work must comply with the overall prescribed dimensions for HSC submitted artworks in Visual Arts Stage 6 in terms of overall limitations on size, weight, volume and duration as set out below.

Assessment Criteria

- Conceptual strength and meaning
- Resolution

Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an articulation of ideas and concepts that are elaborated, reiterated, subtle and sustained coherently in the form(s) of the work. Meanings make significant references and register on a number of levels • Displays technical sensitivity, refinement, discrimination, moderation, and is respectful of the conditions set by the selection of materials and limitations including course prescriptions 	41 – 50
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an articulation of ideas and concepts showing some elaboration and reiteration that is more coherent and subtle in some aspects of the work than in others. Meanings and references register on a number of levels but are not as significant • Displays technical sensitivity and moderation, although some aspects are more refined while others are elaborated and/or overworked. Generally respectful of conditions set by the selection of materials and limitations including course prescriptions 	31 – 40
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an articulation of idea/concept showing some connection that is more apt and coherent in some aspects of the work than in others. Meanings and references register on some levels but in limited ways • Displays technical proficiency yet not very sensitive or refined. Some display for display's sake, thus little moderation. Some respect for conditions set by the selection of materials and limitations including course prescriptions 	21 – 30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an articulation of idea/concept confined to some aspect(s) of the work. Meanings and references register in restricted and obvious ways • Displays little refinement or subtlety. Some repetition or inconsistent application. Little discrimination or moderation, limited respect for conditions set by the selection of materials and limitations including course prescriptions 	11 – 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a simplistic, immediate articulation of idea/concept. Meanings register in banal ways. References are limited, driven by the image • Displays neither technical accomplishment nor moderation. Unsubtle, unrefined, incongruous, superficial. At variance with conditions set by selection of materials and limitations including course prescriptions 	1 – 10

Written Paper — Visual Arts

Question 1 (a) (5 marks)

Outcomes assessed: H7, H8, H9, H10

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a clear understanding of the way in which an artwork can be an expression of an artist's experience of the world Identifies and interprets properties of the work and establishes connections with the artist's intentions 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies some properties of the work and links these to some understanding of the artist's intentions 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lists some features about the artwork and/or artist and/or world 	1–2

Question 1 (b) (8 marks)

Outcomes assessed: H7, H8, H9, H10

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a highly developed understanding of relationships between the artworks and their audiences Applies this understanding to a well reasoned interpretation of both photographs 	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a sound understanding of relationships between the artworks and their audiences Applies this understanding to a more descriptive interpretation of both photographs OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applies this understanding in an uneven way with one image being interpreted in some detail and the other in a more descriptive way 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates some understanding of relationships between the artworks and their audiences Identifies some relevant features 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lists features of the work(s) and/or audience(s) 	1–2

Question 1 (c) (12 marks)*Outcomes assessed: H7, H8, H9, H10***MARKING GUIDELINES**

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of practice which is applied to the interpretation of this source material• Builds a convincing and well reasoned case about the artist's practice assembling evidence from the source material	10–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates a sound understanding of practice which is applied to a more generalised interpretation of the source material• Develops a case which is less structured/more descriptive about the artist's practice referring to the source material	7–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies some relevant aspects of practice• Describes how the artist approaches his work and uses the source material in a limited way	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies obvious features about the source material	1–3

Section II

Questions 2–10 (25 marks)

Outcomes assessed: H7, H8, H9, H10

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coherent, sustained and well-reasoned point of view is represented which may acknowledge that other points of view are possible • All relevant aspects of content are comprehensively explained and interpreted in relation to the question • The significance of examples are explained and used to strongly support the arguments • Critical arguments and historical explanations are complex and logical and reveal an extensive understanding of the visual arts 	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coherent and reasoned point of view is represented and sustained • All relevant aspects of content are thoroughly explained and more conventionally interpreted in relation to the question • Examples are explained and used to support a successful argument that addresses most aspects of the question • Critical arguments and historical explanations are accomplished, logical and located within a thorough understanding of the visual arts 	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coherent and reasoned point of view is presented and reasonably well sustained • Most relevant aspects of content are broadly explained and more conventionally interpreted in relation to the question • Examples are generally explained, and used to support an argument that addresses some aspects of the question • Arguments are reasonably clear, logical and reflect a good understanding of the visual arts 	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A point of view is presented but is unevenly sustained • Aspects of content are represented but explanations are superficial and may not be related to the question • Examples are described in an obvious way and are connected to the question • Arguments tend to be inconsistent or not well developed and reflect a foundational understanding of the visual arts 	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments are offered that may relate to some aspects of the question • Ideas are identified and may be explored to some extent in an isolated way • Arguments are driven by opinions and reflect a very basic understanding of the visual arts 	1–5