

**2008 HSC Notes from  
the Marking Centre  
Visual Arts**

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# 2008 HSC NOTES FROM THE MARKING CENTRE

## VISUAL ARTS

### Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in Visual Arts. It contains comments on candidate responses to the 2008 Higher School Certificate examination, indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses.

This document should be read along with the relevant syllabus, the 2008 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 2008 approximately 9600 candidates attempted the Visual Arts written examination. The majority of candidates were able to demonstrate a sound understanding of syllabus content and question requirements in their engagement with Practice, the Conceptual Framework and the Frames in Section I and Section II.

In Section II, Question 8 was the most popular question followed by Question 7, Question 3 and Question 10.

Teachers are advised to emphasise to candidates the importance of adhering to suggested times, in particular in Question 1, to ensure that all parts of the question are attempted, and of using the rubric to ‘unpack’ the requirements of each question including the use of source material and different aspects of content. Candidates are advised that significant arguments in a response must be supported by reference to the source material in the question parts.

Candidates need to be familiar with the Board’s Glossary of Key Words [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_hsc/glossary\\_keywords.html](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/glossary_keywords.html) which contains some terms commonly used in examination questions. However, candidates should also be aware that not all questions will start with or contain one of the key words from the glossary. Questions such as ‘how?’ or ‘why?’ or ‘to what extent?’ may be asked or they may use verbs not included in the glossary, such as ‘design’, ‘translate’ and ‘list’.

## Section I

### General comments

#### Question 1

- (a) Responses to this question compared aspects of the source material and represented an understanding of relationships between the artist and the world. Responses focused on: observations about Mueck's approach to scale and body language; his interest in figurative representation and realism; and his ideas about youth versus age, vulnerability and fear in the world.

The better responses interpreted the figure of the crouching boy dominating the gallery space as simultaneously representing the dominance of youth poised on the threshold to take their place in the world while at the same time appearing apprehensive, vulnerable and unsure. The smaller scale and physical proximity of the two older women in Plate 2 was often interpreted as representing the private world of intimate conversation where the two figures were engaged in sharing their observations about the world. Some responses offered interpretations of the views Mueck expresses about the world, focusing on a subjective account of the elderly women as socially undervalued.

- (b) Responses to this question revealed a diverse range of interpretations that implicitly and explicitly addressed the significance of Shilpa Gupta's choices in her artmaking practice, both conceptually and materially. The meaning of significance was interpreted to be the importance, value and implications of Gupta's choices as part of her practice. The significance of Gupta's choices was also considered in terms of the agencies of the artworld, with a particular focus on artist and audience relationships.

The cyclical relationship of technology as a way to control, with the artist manipulating the audience, the audience manipulating the artwork and technology manipulating both artist and audience, was frequently addressed. Investigations included war, power and control in relation to technology and its impact on human and global relationships. Forms investigated as aspects of Gupta's practice included: the role of the audience; the implied reference to traditional works as static and non-interactive; the merging of cultures; the recognition of postmodern practice; the erosion of the east and west divide through technology; and the emergence of 4-dimensional interactive performance and installation.

Better responses demonstrated an understanding of significance and practice by providing a sound explanation, sustained justification and interpretation of Gupta's choices. Gupta's use of technology was meshed seamlessly with her conceptual intent and positions were substantiated by referencing the source material in meaningful and relevant ways. The responses recognised the scope of practice and applied this convincingly to represent an understanding of artmaking practice.

- (c) Responses to this question used the subjective frame to compare artworks by Turner and Twombly. The source material including the question introduction, images and citation information suggested similarities of subject matter, media and differences of style, time and context.

The comparative focus of the question was well understood and addressed. The understanding of subjectivity and the subjective frame as an interpretive device was widely and appropriately interpreted. Subjective interpretations identified qualities of atmosphere in both artworks, and intimations of reverence, heroism, end of era and nostalgia in Turner's work. Twombly's work was valued as melancholic, emotionally restrained and childlike in its immediacy. The visual and aesthetic qualities of the artworks were used to support the subjective readings of meaning and effect. The narrative qualities of both artworks were interpreted to suggest the artists' responses to history, conflict, tragedy, sailing and the sea. Many responses related the context and time differences between the artworks to differences in subjective effect, or differences between romantic and modernist visions. Responses made legitimate reference to other frames of interpretation.

Better responses demonstrated a clear understanding of subjectivity as a mode of responding to artworks and of communicating responses to artworks. Evocative first-person responses built a persuasive record of the individual's thoughts, feelings and ideas about the artworks. Responses to the emotional or imaginative effects of the work on the audience, or of the works as expressions of the artists' responses to their world, were supported by rich description of the visual effects. Analyses of the nature of subjectivity as a response to art were soundly related to the works by Turner and Twombly. Where other interpretive frames were employed, better responses coherently related these interpretations back to subjectivity.

## **Section II**

### **Practice**

#### **Question 2**

Responses to this question referenced the quote by critic John McDonald in an integrated and analytical manner. The significance of the studio and its impact on artistic practice was reflected in the diversity of popular artists used as examples such as Goldsworthy, Pollock, Gittoes, Warhol, Gascoigne, Kahlo and Christo. These artists were discussed with reference to their traditional and non-traditional use of the 'studio'. The concept of artistic practice in the responses acknowledged the at times ephemeral and temporal nature of the studio in different contexts. An explicit understanding of practice was demonstrated by comparing traditional and postmodern artistic practice and was further acknowledged by an understanding of the material world and how artists work with physical materials, technologies and techniques.

Better responses acknowledged that the production of art is in a state of flux and validated through the interpretation of appropriately chosen examples. Postmodern and conceptual notions were referenced through a sophisticated and integrated discussion of a range of practices. The responses offered a multi-layered understanding of material and conceptual practice and addressed artmaking practice as a function of the studio. Responses acknowledged that artworks were often created outside conventional modes of production.

#### **Question 3**

Responses to this question revealed a strong and comprehensive understanding of artistic practice, identified inspiration as an important component in artistic practice and included integrated references to the quotation. The notion of inspiration as the only creative factor was argued, supported and linked to examples of artists and artworks. Judgements about whether an artwork can

be copied or imitated were also made. A wide range of artists was referenced including Jackson Pollock, Pablo Picasso, Frida Kahlo, Claude Monet, Andy Warhol, Mike Parr, Julie Rrap, Marcel Duchamp, Bauhaus designers, Frank Lloyd Wright, and a range of contemporary practitioners.

Better responses identified artists' inspiration and perceptively incorporated the Greenberg quotation into their response. They developed complex accounts of practice in insightful and knowledgeable discussions of inspiration to support an argument for or against the quotation. These responses extended and articulated the complexity of artistic practice and were well supported by the selection of artists and artworks. An understanding of the interlocking relationship between, and the differing roles of, inspiration, influence, intention and choice within art practice was revealed in these responses.

#### **Question 4**

Responses acknowledged and related a perception of how the practice of critics and historians generates knowledge about artists. Accounts of critics and historians varied in their specificity and the depth of understanding of their actions. Most responses outlined how a perspective about artists was shaped through a critique of artworks and their historical placement and classification. The ways in which historians and critics construct meaning and significance about artists and their artworks were explored using a variety of examples.

The better responses demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the selected critics and historians, and constructed sophisticated arguments. Specific practitioners were succinctly evaluated in terms of their practice of critiques and the construction of a perspective in history. Accounts of critics such as Danto, Bryson and McDonald, coupled with central ideas generated by historians such as Hughes and Collings, demonstrated an understanding of the complex interpretations that inform the audience about the artist discussed in the response. These responses often provided detailed accounts and quotes from artists, critics and historians to reinforce arguments and showed evidence of an understanding of values and concepts. These better responses offered a range of points of view about the artist and a deep knowledge of the context of the critic and/or historian.

#### **Conceptual framework**

#### **Question 5**

Responses to this question interpreted the ready-made and the found object in a variety of ways. Duchamp was often cited in responses. The ready-made and found objects were defined as objects in their own right with political or personal meaning (Duchamp, Emin) and as found or collected materials used to make other art objects (Hall, Goldsworthy, Gascoigne). The found object was also interpreted as found images recontextualised within artworks (Rauschenberg), consumer objects reproduced as an art object (Warhol) and the body – both animal and human – as a found object (Orlan, Hirst). The use of found objects in Cubist collages, works by Duchamp, and the collections of Cornell and Schwitters were also prominent in a number of responses.

Better responses convincingly evaluated the significance of the ready-made and found objects to meaning in artworks. Some responses demonstrated a comprehensive historical overview of the emergence and development of the found object and ready-made, while others concentrated on specific examples that were evaluated in a variety of complex ways. These responses presented arguments that not only discussed the artwork's significance at the time of its making, but also its importance to future artists and audiences in terms of innovation in artmaking practice and as a challenge to ideas within the artworld.

## Question 6

Responses to this question demonstrated a knowledge of content that defined notions of artists as ‘cultural warriors’ and concepts of ‘territory’. These definitions were broad-ranging and served to support Croft’s views from a variety of positions. Cultural warriors were characterised by artists taking up political, personal and stylistic causes often as flag-bearer or protester. Responses used ‘territory’ literally and metaphorically, claiming gender, race, spirituality and place as reference points. Examples were cited from both historical and contemporary contexts and from a range of artmaking practices. Bennett, Moffatt, Sherman, Kruger, Picasso, Banksy and Kahlo were popular choices used in responses.

Better responses presented layered and synthesised arguments that focused on the interaction of agencies of the artworld and investigated the social actions of artists, their audiences and works of art. These responses demonstrated a depth of knowledge of the world of selected artists and how they respond to specific cultural issues through their practices and works. Responses sustained an interplay of well-described examples as evidence of the position of artists as cultural warriors. Relevant quotations from historians, critics, philosophers and artists themselves supported the viewpoints taken and arguments constructed.

## Question 7

Responses to this question discussed aspects of the conceptual framework to investigate the notion of change to the artworld’s material and conceptual practices. Emphasis was given to artworks produced during periods of social, political and/or technological change. A wide range of artworks were referenced including the following modernist and postmodernist iconic works: Monet’s *Impression, Sunrise*, Picasso’s *Les Femmes d’Alger (O.J.)* and *Guernica*, Duchamp’s *Fountain* and *LHOOQ*, Morimura’s *Futago*, Bill Viola’s *The Passing* and Judy Chicago’s *The Dinner Party*. Historic works made by Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Goya were also chosen. Some responses explored exhibitions, including the British exhibition ‘Sensation’ and the recent Bill Henson show, with responses addressing controversy and its impact on altering audience beliefs and values.

Better responses explored the complex relationships and interactions between the agencies of the artworld. The cause and effect of change was addressed with clarity through knowledgeable interpretations of appropriately selected examples. Artworks were contextualised in relation to the accepted artmaking paradigms and conventions of their time. The artworks’ function as catalysts for change to contemporary and/or future artmaking practices was validated through complex, layered and sustained explorations. Belief was examined by referencing altered perspectives and understandings of art from the point of view of artists, critics and broader audiences.

## Frames

## Question 8

Responses to this question presented explanations of how practitioners construct meaning through symbolism, text and composition. A broad range of artists and their works were discussed including Kahlo, Kruger, Holzer, Dali, Picasso and Bennett. Some responses also considered the work of performance and conceptual artists and architects. Most responses investigated interpretations of symbolism and many explored the ways in which written text determined the meaning of works.



Analysis of compositional techniques was less well developed. Many responses used case study themes such as war or feminism as a way of creating a cohesive argument.

Better responses provided well-synthesised and complex discussions of key components of the structural frame, evaluating the success of particular strategies as a way to create meanings for audiences. These responses demonstrated a thorough understanding of the complexities and subtleties of symbolism, text and composition beyond the literal and the descriptive. Responses suggested that a number of interpretations of symbols were possible and these were often linked to the cultural conventions of a particular time and place. A range of interpretations of text, including visual texts, were often included. Well-chosen examples that were thoroughly explained and evaluated supported a well-developed argument.

### **Question 9**

Responses to this question demonstrated knowledge of artists and works from both historical and contemporary domains. They demonstrated an understanding of culture through the identification of specific issues, as well as artists whose artworks were pivotal in shaping audience awareness. Responses identified the notion of a masterpiece in broad terms as either a representation of an artist's cultural background and their response to it, or as a well-known historical artwork. Examples were well discussed and supported through logical arguments relating to how society's cultural values and beliefs are interpreted.

Better responses were characterised by their ability to discuss well-chosen examples in a coherent and persuasive argument which connected artwork, artist and notions of the masterpiece. Examples included Titian, Da Vinci, Botticelli, Picasso, Kentridge and Sherman. Responses applied appropriate and relevant understandings of 'culture' to the discussion. Appropriate examples relating to issues of religion, feminism, politics, power, war, race and ethnicity, identity and the conventions of art, explored in the context of what constitutes a 'masterpiece', were used to develop and sustain a well-rounded and strongly supported argument. These better responses were complex and robust in their validation of the position taken, seamlessly synthesising content and concepts through the perceptive examination of examples. Some responses demonstrated an acute cultural knowledge of how art practices of particular times and places contributed to notions of what is defined as a 'masterpiece'.

### **Question 10**

Responses to this question revealed a diverse range of knowledge with many responses clearly addressing all aspects of the question within the negotiation of the postmodern frame and the practice of artists whose work has challenged authority. Responses demonstrated a confident understanding of: the postmodern frame by explaining notions such as appropriation, intertextuality, parody, humour; and the use of new technologies in a discussion of appropriate and considered artists, examples and quotations, including the use of found objects, contemporary architecture, sculptural installations and photographic practices.

The better responses explored a variety of ways in which the 'questioning of authority' could be accessed and investigated. They offered a comprehensive explanation and interpretation of the multiple viewpoints and meanings which challenge authority, referencing relevant artists and examples including Piccinini, Banksy, Kruger, Serrano, Gehry, Hall, Duchamp, Kruger, Hirst and Morimura.

## **Body of work submissions**

### **Introduction**

Within the approximately 9600 Visual Arts submissions a diverse range of approaches was evident in each of the 15 expressive forms. The most popular expressive form is still painting, however this year saw a significant increase again in photography and digital media, with a continuing interest in digital forms. Very few submissions were received this year in black-and-white photography. There continues to be an increase in the number of submissions in every expressive form that includes documentation to support the intentions of the work, including photographs and digital images, DVDs or CD-ROMs. There was an increase in film and video submissions.

### **Responses to the body of work**

Some candidates submitted bodies of work as highly resolved series in which individual pieces were connected either conceptually or materially. Some candidates presented single works as evidence of a sustained engagement with practice in a particular expressive form such as Painting or Sculpture. It is important for teachers and students to note that this is an acceptable way for students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of practice. Some works included an artist's statement, documentation in the form of diagrams, photographs, working drawings or film/video pieces, usually presented as a DVD and making use of a range of available and accessible film and sound-editing software applications. These diverse representations of artmaking practice and interpretations of the body of work requirement were valued equally in terms of marking criteria that considered the material and conceptual strength of the whole body of work.

There was evidence that candidates had used the frames and the conceptual framework in ways which extended their ideas and assisted them with structuring their works. An awareness of the audience, and the ways in which artworks communicate meanings in a range of contexts, is also reflected in this year's submissions. A strong study of relevant artists and their practice, along with contemporary issues and ideas in the artworld, was evident in many of the submissions. A number of submissions demonstrated understandings of contemporary exhibition practice, seeing the opportunity for bodies of work to be presented to audiences in intentional and considered ways.

Many candidates presented works which thoughtfully reflected on their own immediate adolescent world of personal and cultural identity, friends, families and relationships, and all the various joys, conflicts and pressures that these involve. Fewer works in 2008 than in previous years responded to global issues of conflict, such as war or terrorism. There was a corresponding increase in interest in the local: city and suburban landscapes, domestic interiors, the world of the family and the school. There were a number of submissions again this year dealing with environmental concerns and issues, including the effects of drought and climate change. Many candidates worked within historical genres and conventions of art practice such as landscape, still life and the portrait, while others demonstrated a confident familiarity with more contemporary conventions such as installation, performance and documentation. Many works revealed a well-synthesised understanding of the work of particular historical or contemporary artists.

## Advice for teachers and candidates

Candidates should carefully consider their audiences. In some cases, the public contexts for the production of the works in schools and the marking of the examination may make some forms of representation inappropriate. Teachers should carefully consider issues such as Child Protection legislation in relation to how they appropriately supervise the production of some works, for example those that involve nudity, sexuality, abuse, self-harm, drugs or other controversial material. These are subjects that can be investigated by candidates, but teachers need to guide students in meeting community standards without undue restraint on their creativity. Advice to schools regarding content in HSC-submitted works is provided on the Board of Studies website at <[www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/manuals/pdf\\_doc/advice\\_hsc\\_performance\\_05.pdf](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/manuals/pdf_doc/advice_hsc_performance_05.pdf)>.

## Selection of works for body of work submission

The syllabus (page 30) outlines the importance of the selection of works for submission. Students should carefully consider how their intentions and their knowledge and understanding of artmaking practice are represented in the works they select. Above average works showed evidence of thoughtful and considered selection in relation to how the submission as a whole demonstrated the candidate's knowledge and understanding of practice. Some candidates could have made stronger critical curatorial judgements about the inclusion of some pieces, and teachers are encouraged to assist candidates in refining their choices. Some candidates continue to submit more pieces than are necessary to convincingly represent their understanding of practice. In particular, candidates should carefully consider the submission of film/video pieces when included as one element of a body of work to ensure that they do not merely reiterate the imagery and meanings of other pieces. Visual Arts process diaries should not be submitted. The inclusion of an artist's statement should be carefully considered and in most cases is unnecessary.

## Assigning submissions to a particular expressive form

Candidates are advised to place their work in one of the expressive forms nominated in the syllabus. Candidates should select the expressive form that has been their primary interest or focus. Submissions in sculpture, for example, may include documentation in the form of photographs or drawings and sketches that support the candidate's investigation of sculptural practice. Works which include drawings connected conceptually or materially to their paintings may be appropriately submitted in painting. The multidisciplinary nature of contemporary art will mean that edges between forms are blurred. Candidates need to make choices that reflect their primary intentions.

## Subject rules

Teachers and candidates should be aware of the recent amendments made to *Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus* (BOS 45/08 Vol 17 No 4). These amendments commence with the 2009 HSC course and involve the expressive forms, course prescriptions for size, weight, dangerous and prohibited materials and duration, display requirements for the marking of the body of work and the role of the Visual Arts process diary. A summary of the syllabus changes, the Visual Arts body of work comparison of dimensions and the amended syllabus can be found on the Board of Studies website.

The examination specifications for the submission of a body of work are outlined on pages 45 to 49 in the *Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus*. These rules cover restrictions for size **when displayed for**

**marking**, weight and duration, as well as the rules for dangerous and prohibited materials and electrical certification. Teachers and candidates should note these carefully at the beginning of the development of the body of work and review them throughout the development and selection of the submission. It should also be noted that these rules apply equally to all candidates whether their works are sent to the marking centre or marked at school itinerantly.

There continues to be a number of works submitted that do not comply with the subject rules, particularly in terms of the size restrictions relating to cubic measurement. Some candidates submitted works which contained dangerous materials such as broken glass, mirrors or sharp protruding pieces of metal. Syringes (with or without sharps), body fluids and liquids should not be included in any form. Organic materials which may decay must not be used in bodies of work.

Works that are not electrically certified will not have the electrical components turned on when they are marked. Teachers and candidates are advised that works must be respectful of all the conditions of the HSC examination to access the full range of marks in the marking guidelines. The submission must comply with all of the subject rules irrespective of whether it is marked corporately or itinerantly. For example, bodies of work may include sculptural works and two-dimensional works. In these cases, the volumetric restriction of one cubic metre applies, as well as the limitations for a flat work where no single work – such as a painting – is larger than two square metres and the whole submission is no larger than six square metres. These submissions should be measured in terms of volume first; then other requirements should be checked.

### **Instructions for display for marking**

Teachers and candidates should ensure that the display requirements for marking the body of work are not complicated or time consuming to set up. Instructions, if submitted, should be clear and easy to follow (page 45 *Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus*).

If candidates include instructions for displaying their work they need to be mindful of the limitations of the marking process and ensure that their requests can be accommodated in a reasonable amount of time and without complex set-up requirements. Candidates also need to carefully consider whether their set-up plan will comply with the required size limitations. A picture or diagram indicating how the work could be viewed is helpful. Some candidates chose to include photographs of their works in exhibition. Candidates should indicate, however, if the image is intended to instruct markers as to how the work should be displayed, or is an image of the work in another context, such as an exhibition, where the work may have been legitimately displayed in an area larger than the one cubic metre or six square metres allowed. If the school's submissions are to be marked by an itinerant team of markers, it is helpful and appropriate for the works to be unpacked and ready for marking. Where there is a specific set-up required it would be helpful for the school staff to have the work ready for marking. If works are to be displayed in a certain manner, teachers should ensure that it is possible for the markers to comply with these intentions in the space and with the materials (such as easels or boards, Velcro or clips) provided for them.

### **Labelling of works**

During the marking process this year, considerable time was spent by clerical staff and markers checking the labelling and paperwork presented by schools. On a number of occasions, the labels for candidates' works were not completed correctly. It is important that school staff take the time to check this carefully.

Titles used for works should suggest the conceptual basis of the body of work and offer markers an insight into possible interpretations of the work. It is recommended that if a title or description of a work is written in a foreign language, a translation is provided to enhance the marker's understanding of the work.

### **Digital formats**

There have been changes made to the guidelines in 2009, including duration, for time-based works as part of submissions in all expressive forms. Teachers and candidates should refer to the updated guidelines in the amended *Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus* for submission of digital media and film and video works to ensure that the software and the format for presenting works on DVD and CD-ROM are compliant with the available resources. Candidates are advised to clearly label VHS, DVD and CD-ROM submissions with the format and program used. Candidates are reminded that they are not permitted to submit works which can only be viewed online; all interactive works must be burned to a CD-ROM.

### **Damage to works**

Some artworks inadvertently receive minor damage in the classroom, when stored at school, or during transport to the marking centre. Teachers and candidates should note that this minor damage does not impact on the marking process. In most cases recourse through an Illness/Misadventure Appeal should not be necessary. Notification about damage should be directed to the Chief Clerical Officer at the Visual Arts Marking Centre.

### **Expressive forms**

#### **Ceramics**

Submissions in ceramics ranged from installations to grouped sculptural forms that referenced ceramic traditions and contemporary practice. Conceptual concerns included the human condition, world environmental issues, cultural investigations and the structures of natural life forms. Submissions were generally in multiples with related pieces designed to reinforce concepts and provide layered meanings. Works used a range of techniques including slab and coil built forms, and slip cast forms that were manipulated by carving and piercing, and deconstruction and assemblage. There were less nonceramic found objects incorporated into works, however photographic close ups of parts of works were popular. Acrylic paint was used to extend the variety of tones and accentuate textured surfaces.

The better works revealed a sound knowledge of processes, techniques and the possibilities of practice. An exploration of the versatility of clay as an expressive medium and a sophisticated interpretation of contemporary practice was evident. Submissions presented evocative forms and surfaces that were focused on communicating their concept. They engaged the audience with their detailed surfaces and the placement of decorative devices that enveloped the form, inviting a sustained investigation. Surface treatments included layered slips applied through paper stencils, painterly underglazes, suede glazes and oxide washes. Gloss glazes were used sparingly and provided a contrast to matt surfaces. The development of layered decoration evidenced multiple firings.

## **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Candidates and teachers are advised to critically assess the refinement of forms, paying attention to rims, bases and joins. The application of glazes and slips should be controlled and be relevant to the form and concept.

## **Collection of works**

The majority of submissions in this expressive form were conceptually linked and employed a range of media to communicate key ideas. Video and photo media components were prominent in a number of works, whilst painting, drawing, printmaking and sculpture continued to be popular forms.

Concepts including social identity, sense of place, life's journey and cultural links were explored from a number of view points.

The better works revealed complex concepts and a confident, sustained and coherent development of meanings and innovative artmaking practices. The multi-layered nature of these works invited audience engagement in the interpretation of the range of possible meanings and demonstrated sophisticated intentions, and an awareness and understanding of both traditional and contemporary art practice.

## **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Clear instructions and/or a photograph or diagram indicating how works are to be displayed for marking should be included. The size of a body of work is determined when the work is displayed for marking. For 3D works and/or works with 2D and 3D components this means that negative spaces or spaces between works are calculated in the measurement. This includes space between a flat work and any 3D piece in a body of work.

## **Digital media**

Works in this expressive form incorporated camera-based images, scanned found images and constructed illustrations to represent global concerns, the local environment and the candidates' world. Bryce and Poser software programs were popular, with vector-based graphic images less evident this year.

The better works incorporated sophisticated manipulations and multiple layering, transparencies, colour saturation and filters. They used subtle visual approaches and an informed and diverse selection of paper stock to evoke audience investigation and reinforce concepts. The scale of works varied from larger format pieces that were rolled, to works mounted on foam core, and smaller works presented in a book form.

## **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Image resolution is an important consideration in this expressive form, particularly when deciding on the format of submitted works. Image resolution should be no less than 300 dpi.

## **Drawing**

Submissions in this expressive form were dominated by portraiture, extended by investigations of cultural identity and psychological reflections of self. Explorations of environmental issues, imagined scenarios and the representation of fantasy worlds were also popular concepts. Material practices featured the traditional use of graphite, and pen and ink, often incorporating an effective use of colour in painterly works. Innovations in material practice included an increased use of scanning and digital manipulation as ways to challenge traditions and extend the possibilities of drawing as contemporary practice. The incorporation of collage was a noticeable trend, with subtle well-integrated surfaces and textures, as well as the considered use of photocopies.

The better works demonstrated an understanding of the way selective combinations and manipulations of materials support intentions and generate meanings for audiences. These works revealed visually subtle, well-understood material and conceptual practices which sustained audience interest and allowed for various interpretations. Many submissions reflected an understanding of restraint in the approach to selectively under-working some surfaces and areas of the composition.

## **Documented forms**

Submissions in this expressive form continued to explore a diverse range of conceptual and material practices. Photographic stills were the most popular method used to document site-specific works, performances and events. There was an increase in black and white photography, computer enhanced manipulations, drawing, painting and a variety of media collated in artists' books to represent intentions. There was a significant increase in the number of sound based, DVD or multimedia works incorporating data and overhead projections. Interpretations of the documented form included highly accomplished sculptural forms installed in various locations to inform conceptual relationships with a natural and/or urban site. Performance-based works explored the body as a means to document physical movement through actual and virtual spaces, and the body used as a site, painted and manipulated with the aid of technology. Concepts focused on concerns about the environment, technology, consumerism and the influence of the media, political investigations, relationships with family, journeys and works which focused on the forces of nature.

The better works reflected an understanding of contemporary art practice and demonstrated a confident synergy between material and conceptual resolution. The manipulation of materials in these works was supported by sophisticated conceptual interpretations.

## **Advice for teachers and candidates**

The inclusion of DVD and multimedia components should extend and enhance meanings and provide further levels of engagement for the audience rather than restate or repeat other images and concepts.

## **Designed objects and environments**

Submissions in this expressive form were diverse and took the form of costume designs, toys, wearable art, architectural and set designs, and model making. The majority of submissions were wearables and accessories. A range of conceptual issues dealing with consumerism, popular culture, identity, cultural heritage, the natural world and environment were represented. Materials used included natural and recycled objects, hessian, fabric, felt, plastics, gauze. These were hand-sewn,

machine-stitched, knitted, glued, appliqued, silk-screened and photo-released to represent and reinforce concepts. There were strong references to the artworld and artists in many works. Many wearable submissions included photographs that supported the conceptual intent.

The better works demonstrated extensive exploration of materials and a strong integration of conceptual strength and material practice. They included single works as well as multiple panels that engaged the audience. Many of the photographs included with submissions were well considered and extended ideas represented in the work.

### **Advice for teachers and candidates**

The conceptual intent of a wearable submission can be supported and extended by the inclusion of photographs of the work worn in a particular context.

### **Digital animation**

Submissions in this expressive form investigated the possibilities of software programs including Flash, Studio 3D Max, iStop motion, Blender, Poser and Maya to represent their ideas and interests. Works used 2D and 3D animation styles and character rigs to create effective virtual characters and animation sequences.

The better works used the language of cinematography and exploited the potential of selected animation programs. Pacing and editing was fluid and works demonstrated a knowledge and consideration of timing to make the animations appear more natural. The influence of and references to key contemporary animators and their practice was evident.

### **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Candidates and teachers should ensure that the computer/hardware used has the capacity to process and render image files using selected software. Sound engineering is an important feature and the quality of the synchronicity and clarity of the audio track needs to be considered.

### **Film and video**

Submissions in this expressive form demonstrated an investigation of the possibilities of a range of technologies and nonlinear editing software. Works were often personal accounts of experience, narratives of a journey, relationships, and explorations of different conventions and genres including suspense, film noire, bio-pics and personal reportage.

The better works demonstrated an understanding of cinematic conventions including the use of composition, camera angles and editing to ensure a dynamic flow and a coherent representation of ideas to an audience. Production techniques such as transitions and sound engineering supported the communication and representation of ideas, and there was evidence of well-planned scripts, storyboards and filming.

### **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Candidates are advised to take note of the importance of a tight and well-planned script, and technical restraints including sound production and recording techniques, and how these may affect the quality of their work.



## **Graphic design**

Submissions in this expressive form continued to reflect a strong understanding of design conventions, product location and audience response. Storybooks, illustrated narratives, magazine covers, posters, comic books, board games, promotional posters and products were made in a wide range of media such as digital media, collage, paint and drawing materials. There was a confident and sophisticated use of digital technology including graphic tablets, vector graphics, as well as drawing, painting and collage forms reflecting an awareness of contemporary art practice and graphic design conventions.

The better works revealed innovative and experimental approaches to the exploration of the conventions and traditions of text and print, exploring word play, the digital world of communicating text as image, and contemporary youth culture. A curatorial intent was also apparent as was an awareness of revealing layers of meaning and the interaction between an audience, text and imagery.

### **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Design concepts or briefs, if submitted, should concisely state the intention of the piece.

## **Interactives**

Submissions in this expressive form evidenced an awareness and understanding of the human interface and the importance of ease of navigation. The majority of works were scripted in Dreamweaver and Flash. Nonlinear narratives were popular and many submissions were influenced by popular culture and mass media.

The better works incorporated strong design motifs and bold stylised images and demonstrated a sophisticated use of design and motion graphics. Audience interest was sustained through variations to layout, strong imagery, well-considered compositions and interfaces.

### **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Candidates should ensure that the final submission is correctly scripted (eg HTML or XHTML) so it is self running and/or can be used on a browser. Candidates are advised that work produced in the form of an original website must be transferred and submitted as an interactive CD-ROM. Please see page 35–36 of the updated (October 2008) *Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus* on the Board of Studies website.

## **Painting**

Submissions in this expressive form engaged with realistic and expressive traditions of representing figures, objects and spaces. Submissions were predominately figurative, exploring conventions of representation. A significant number of works demonstrated an investigation of built up surfaces, using conventional painting mediums, applied objects and found surfaces. Many works reflected a strong interest in stencilling, text and graffiti-inspired imagery. Works evidenced a concern with colour, employing rich palettes, translucent layering, controlled tonalities and a subtle awareness of

the power of tertiary hues. A number of submissions continued to explore the limits and boundaries of painting through the inclusion of digital and video elements.

Subject matter was often based on explorations of self, and included investigations of appearance, states of mind, spirituality, the self in relation to others, the natural and man-made world, social and cultural conditions and political concerns. Many works made reference to the history of art through the integration of specific styles, subject matter and concepts. References to the media and popular culture continued to be significant as avenues to explore contemporary practice. An increasing number of works explored the nonsymmetrical arrangement of panels.

The better works were characterised by a developed knowledge and sensitivity in the material handling of paint and other media, and a strongly defined sense and investigation of the practice of painting.

### **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Precise display instructions, diagrams or photographs and careful numbering and labelling of works assist in the set up and marking of works.

### **Photography**

Submissions in this expressive form explored digital photographic practices and traditional wet photography. Digital camera-based works generally used Photoshop to layer images and subtly enhance or overtly develop elements within the imagery. Submissions in wet photography were often more experimental with pinhole cameras, photograms and chemical manipulation used to develop the conceptual qualities of the work.

Some submissions explored the use of plastics, cotton rag, watercolour and metallic papers to enhance well-resolved images. DVDs, books and display folders were used as methods of presentation.

The conventions of portraiture and landscape, including rural scenes and atmospheric effects, were strongly represented, and increasingly studio work, photo essays, time-lapse photography and the digital and technological world were represented. Concepts of teenage self-exploration including body image, self realisation and social networking were explored. Text when used was scratched into the paper, digitally placed or embedded in key parts of the photograph.

The better works demonstrated a clear understanding of how to represent and extend concepts using combinations of scale, multiples and presentation techniques. They demonstrated well-resolved and considered compositions through framing, cropping and varying viewpoints, as well as a confident understanding of contemporary photographic practice.

### **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Candidates need to consider the inclusion of DVDs and multiple images of subjects to ensure that the concepts represented are extended rather than repeated.

## **Printmaking**

Submissions in this expressive form explored a range of relief and intaglio printmaking processes with lino relief printing and dry-point etching the most popular choices. There was a growth in the number of submissions exploring solar etching and screen-printing processes, including hand-cut stencils. Submissions evidenced a consideration of extending the printmaking process through free wipe, hand-colouring, collage and various other forms of embellishment. A number of works investigated the use of sculptural models or screens as ways of presenting the printed image. Subject matter included the natural and built environment, the family, relationships and broad themes concerning love and beauty. Figurative imagery remained the dominant mode of expression. When abstraction was explored submissions demonstrated confident mark-making and control of the printmaking medium for expressive purposes.

The better works included single works and submissions containing multiples. They moved beyond literal or derivative representations of subject matter and were able to sustain significant and meaningful investigations of conceptual practice. The works engaged the audience on many levels and were technically proficient.

## **Sculpture**

Submissions in this expressive form represented a diverse range of sculptural practices. Subject matter included investigations of nature, psychological states, power and nurturing, memory, popular culture, music and politics. Emerging conceptual concerns included environmental issues and social commentary, in particular global concerns and the institution of marriage. Figurative investigations were less popular this year and a significant number of works were driven by a formalist aesthetic. Investigations of contemporary practice were evident in the number of interactive pieces and in the increased number of hybrid works which used technologies such as sound, moving images, kinetic elements, photographs and DVD and CD-ROM components.

Photographs accompanied some submissions placing works into additional contexts and extending their conceptual strength and meaning.

Many works reflected an awareness of audience relationships and engaged the audience using unusual, innovative approaches. Assemblages were popular and the deconstruction and reconstruction of the found object was well explored and referenced. Many works used inexpensive and accessible materials and were embellished with colour, photographic collage, stencilling and text. Fewer works explored traditional conventions such as carving and casting.

The better works sustained audience interest on many levels, offering a range of ways to interpret the ideas represented. Sustained conceptual investigations and informed material decisions were evident, as well as a well-developed understanding of spatial relationships, sculptural conventions and techniques. Surface treatments were integrated seamlessly with 3D forms in restrained, expressive and visually seductive ways. Bases were well considered and formed an integral part of the work.

## **Advice for teachers and candidates**

Diagrams and photographs of how works are to be displayed for marking and a title for the work assist the markers in understanding the intentions of the work. Candidates are advised that batteries should not be connected to works at the time of submission and spare batteries should be provided.

## **Textiles and fibre**

Submissions in this expressive form explored a range of conceptual issues such as the family history and culture, identity, femininity, gender, landscape as site, the environment, consumerism and popular culture. A diverse range of materials were used including printed and purchased fabrics, commercially made and handmade papers, silk, handmade felt, found and natural objects, threads, hand and machine stitching, photographs, hand dyed fabric, scanned images and digital manipulations. These materials were cut, pinned, sewn or glued together. Scanned images and photographs were manipulated with stitching used as a drawing tool. Appliqué and quilting were explored in traditional and nontraditional ways. Submissions included single and multiple pieces and demonstrated a confident understanding of both historical and contemporary textile practice.

The better works demonstrated an exploration of the media in a way that sustained interest and engagement. These submissions demonstrated an informed understanding of the codification of fabrics and other materials and their symbolic use to represent ideas and communicate meaning.

# Visual Arts

## 2008 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
<b>Section I</b>			
1 (a)	5	Conceptual Framework	H7, H8, H9, H10
1 (b)	8	Practice	H7, H8, H9, H10
1 (c)	12	Frames	H7, H8, H9, H10
<b>Section II Practice</b>			
2	25	Practice	H7, H8, H9, H10
3	25	Practice	H7, H8, H9, H10
4	25	Practice	H7, H8, H9, H10
<b>Section II Conceptual Framework</b>			
5	25	Conceptual Framework	H7, H8, H9, H10
6	25	Conceptual Framework	H7, H8, H9, H10
7	25	Conceptual Framework	H7, H8, H9, H10
<b>Section II Frames</b>			
8	25	Frames	H7, H8, H9, H10
9	25	Frames	H7, H8, H9, H10
10	25	Frames	H7, H8, H9, H10
<b>Artmaking: Body of Work</b>			
	50	Criterion 1: Conceptual Strength and Meaning; and Criterion 2: Resolution	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6



## **2008 HSC Visual Arts Marking Guidelines**

The following marking guidelines were developed by the examination committee for the 2008 HSC examination in Visual Arts, and were used at the marking centre in marking student responses. For each question the marking guidelines are contained in a table showing the criteria associated with each mark or mark range. For some questions, 'Sample Answers' or 'Answers may include' sections are included. These are developed by the examination committee for two purposes. The committee does this:

- (1) as part of the development of the examination paper to ensure the questions will effectively assess students' knowledge and skills, and
- (2) in order to provide some advice to the Supervisor of Marking about the nature and scope of the responses expected of students.

The examination committee develops the marking guidelines concurrently with the examination paper. The 'Sample Answers' or similar advice are not intended to be exemplary or even complete answers or responses. As they are part of the examination committee's 'working document', they may contain typographical errors, omissions, or only some of the possible correct answers.

The information in the marking guidelines is further supplemented as required by the Supervisor of Marking and the senior markers at the marking centre.

A range of different organisations produce booklets of sample answers for HSC examinations, and other notes for students and teachers. The Board of Studies does not attest to the correctness or suitability of the answers, sample responses or explanations provided. Nevertheless, many students and teachers have found such publications to be useful in their preparation for the HSC examinations.

A copy of the Mapping Grid, which maps each question in the examination to course outcomes and content as detailed in the syllabus, is also included.

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## Section I

### Question 1 (a)

*Outcomes assessed: H7, H8, H9, H10*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accounts for features of the world represented that are evident in the source material</li><li>• Inferences collectively demonstrate understanding of the conceptual framework in relation to the source material</li></ul>	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifies features of the world represented that are evident in the source material</li><li>• Inferences demonstrate some understanding of the conceptual framework in relation to the source material</li></ul>	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lists some features of the source material</li></ul>	1–2

#### *Possible Answers:*

- Represents people and comments on age, stereotypical assumptions about younger and older people, their psychology and place in society
- Realism and technical accomplishment
- Transforms ordinary subjects to become extraordinary through the use of hyperrealism and scale
- Engages intimately with the works to attend to detail
- Confronts audiences with the size of work and their content and placement

**Question 1 (b)**

*Outcomes assessed: H7, H8, H9, H10*

**MARKING GUIDELINES**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates a sound understanding of the significance of choices to the artist's practice</li><li>• Applies this understanding in a coherent and well-supported interpretation of the source material</li></ul>	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates some understanding of the significance of choices to the artist's practice</li><li>• Applies this understanding in a reasonably coherent interpretation of the source material</li></ul>	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates limited understanding of the significance of choices to the artist's practice</li><li>• Applies this understanding in a description of the source material</li></ul>	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reiterates information from the citations</li><li>• May list some features of the source material, inferences are not explained</li></ul>	1–2

***Possible Answers:***

The significance of new technologies to Gupta's practice include:

- Represents herself in her work
- Politically subversive through her message presented in a playful way, as a game
- Chooses to use computer technology to engage audience – video projection, sound tracks and text and integrates it into the interactive
- Gallery installation with use of the wall and floor
- Virtual artwork
- Choices of concepts including subversion, manipulation, power and control, questioning stereotypes



**Question 1 (c)**

*Outcomes assessed: H7, H8, H9, H10*

**MARKING GUIDELINES**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the subjective frame in a comparison and interpretation of the source material</li><li>• Represents a persuasive, concise, insightful and well-reasoned interpretation of the source material</li></ul>	10–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates a sound understanding of the subjective frame in a comparison and interpretation of the source material</li><li>• Represents a well-reasoned, more descriptive interpretation of the source material</li></ul>	7–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifies some relevant points related to the frame and some subjective comparison of the source material</li><li>• Represents more obvious and unevenly supported interpretation of the source material</li></ul>	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifies some obvious features of the source material and/or reiterates information included in the citations and/or extracts</li></ul>	1–3

***Possible answers:***

Subjective interpretation of Twombly's response to Turner's work include:

- Adulation of a masterpiece through expressive mark making
- Application of oil paint and choices of colour to provoke feelings of nostalgia and sentiment
- Representation of light, contrast and drama
- Narrative as a series versus single work
- Economy of mark making versus detailed more conventional style
- Melancholic interpretation versus dramatic, heroic, romantic
- Different evocative techniques and qualities including mood, atmosphere, brushwork and surface
- Atmospheric drama evoking fragility, death, the end of an era, nostalgia

## Section II

### Questions 2–10

*Outcomes assessed: H7, H8, H9, H10*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A coherent, sustained and well-reasoned argument is represented which may acknowledge that other points of view are possible</li><li>• All relevant aspects of content are comprehensively explained and interpreted in relation to the question</li><li>• The significance of examples is explained and used to strongly support the arguments</li><li>• Points of view are complex and logical and reveal a highly developed understanding of the Visual Arts</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A coherent and reasoned argument is represented and sustained</li><li>• All relevant aspects of content are thoroughly explained and more conventionally interpreted in relation to the question</li><li>• Examples are explained and used to support a successful argument that addresses most aspects of the question</li><li>• Points of view are accomplished and logical and reveal a well-developed understanding of the Visual Arts</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A reasoned argument is represented and generally sustained</li><li>• Most relevant aspects of content are broadly explained and more conventionally interpreted in relation to the question</li><li>• Examples are generally explained, and used to support an argument that addresses some aspects of the question</li><li>• Points of view are reasonably clear and logical and reflect a good understanding of the Visual Arts</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An argument is represented but is unevenly sustained</li><li>• Aspects of content are represented but explanations are superficial and may not be related to the question</li><li>• Examples are described in an obvious way and are connected to some aspects of the question</li><li>• Points of view tend to be inconsistent or not well developed and reflect a foundational understanding of the Visual Arts</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comments are offered that may relate to some aspects of the question</li><li>• Ideas are identified and may be explored to some extent in an isolated way</li><li>• Examples may be offered but are not always relevant nor addressed</li><li>• Points of view are not supported and reflect a limited understanding of the Visual Arts</li></ul>	1–5