



GENERAL COMMENTS

Teachers should note that this report is based on the *Studio Arts VCE Study Design* that is accredited for the period 2004–2009. This report is designed to provide valuable information on the 2005 examination to teachers as well as students. The information is given in the hope that it will help students and teachers in 2006 understand the importance of the key knowledge areas of the Study Design.

The 2005 examination was specifically designed to draw upon the knowledge and skills required for Outcome 3 of Unit 3 and Outcome 3 of Unit 4. As indicated in the Study Design, all questions on the examination were compulsory. The paper allowed for both short and extended responses to questions. Visual material was only used for Question 1 and included a range of art forms as outlined in the sample examination material published in Supplement 2 of the February 2004 VCAA Bulletin. A total of 50 marks were available, and students were given 90 minutes to complete the examination.

The structure and format of the written examination in Studio Arts has been relatively consistent in recent years. Some students had clearly heeded advice given in past Assessment Reports and responses were of a higher quality for some of the question types on the paper. There were other students, however, who did not seem to be aware of the advice provided in previous Assessment Reports and whose responses reflected this lack of awareness.

The 2005 Studio Arts written examination was structured specifically to test students' ability to **apply** the knowledge learnt from Outcome 3 in Units 3 and 4 in such a way that students could clearly demonstrate that knowledge. Pre-prepared answers do not adequately allow students to apply their knowledge, and students must be aware that such an approach is not acceptable and will result in low marks.

The quality of student responses to the 2005 Studio Arts examination was better than in previous years; however, although the general quality of students' responses was pleasing, a number of common problems were identified by examiners. Students must ensure that the knowledge they have acquired throughout the year is applied to the specifics of each question, without simply writing blocks of knowledge that they think might be adequate, but which do not meet the question's requirements. The key to success in this examination is the student's ability to apply their knowledge to the question type and not simply regurgitate stored knowledge. The *Studio Arts VCE Study Design* covers a wide area of key knowledge involving research and investigation. Students must be prepared to demonstrate their knowledge on any of the areas covered in the Study Design.

Areas of strength and weakness

Students who were awarded high marks consistently:

- applied their knowledge to the specifics of the question
- provided detailed, appropriate and applicable responses to the questions
- demonstrated a solid grasp of the appropriate terminology and language
- provided in-depth answers that revealed a thorough understanding of the course content
- demonstrated that they could communicate effectively the body of knowledge that they had acquired
- included relevant examples and provided appropriate discussion on a personal level of involvement, which often involved evidence of personal research and investigation
- provided responses that clearly demonstrated that they understood the nature of the question
- demonstrated confidence in applying their knowledge in an informative and thoughtful manner.

Students who were awarded low marks consistently:

- failed to understand the specifics of the question, indicating that they had not read the question carefully
- provided prepared answers that did not suit the question
- had difficulty using the language and terminology of the medium/media they were discussing
- had difficulty in demonstrating their understanding of the key knowledge of Outcome 3 in Units 3 and 4
- demonstrated a lack of acquired knowledge across the study.



SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Note: Student responses reproduced herein have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

The assessment criteria published by the VCAA were used as a basis for setting the examination and for developing the marking scheme. Current examination assessment criteria can be found on the VCAA website (www.vcaa.vic.edu.au).

Question 1

Work chosen	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
%	1	2	10	44	1	6	8	1	5	21	2

1a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	3	12	25	30	19	10	2.8

Students were required to discuss how the artist had developed the aesthetic qualities of an artwork. Students were therefore required to:

- demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the methods used to develop distinctive styles and approaches to subject matter
- discuss the use of identified techniques and the qualities of specific materials
- provide a comprehensive and relevant discussion of the chosen example
- discuss the methods used to communicate ideas and meanings in the artwork, based on the information provided
- offer an informed interpretation (rather than a more general description) of the artwork
- demonstrate a capacity to apply knowledge acquired in the interpretation of the chosen example.

In order to achieve full marks in this question, students had to demonstrate evidence of higher order thinking. As in past examinations, key words in the questions were highlighted in bold text, giving students an indication of the important areas within the question that need to be considered. In Question 1, these key words were 'aesthetic qualities'. When responding to the question, students often seemed to have difficulty in understanding what the term 'aesthetics' meant.

Students often answered in a way that merely described the artwork in terms of its formal elements or symbols; however, the question was searching for a much deeper understanding and application of knowledge. Students needed to provide a response than looked at the artwork more deeply and sought to give an insight into the ways the artist had achieved a degree of aesthetic clarity in their work. Students who understood how the artwork had achieved an aesthetical value tended to score higher marks.

With questions such as this, students are tested on their ability to demonstrate their knowledge of how an artist might achieve a distinctive style in their work by using various factors such as symbolism and/or the formal elements. The works were all previously unseen, so students must have practised how to respond to artworks in these terms. If a student has knowledge of a particular art form, they are encouraged to respond to the art form with which they have this familiarity. It was surprising that students often wrote about a particular art form in Question 1, but in Question 6 they sometimes wrote their extended response on an artist unrelated to their choice in the first question. While this was certainly allowable, often the knowledge of the medium (in this case, the aesthetic qualities and techniques used) was not evident in the student's response to Question 1.

The following are excerpts where students scored a high mark for Question 1a.

Artwork: Van Gogh's 'The Starry Night'

There are a number elements which contribute to the aesthetics of Image 3. Short disjointed lines are used to render the subject matter creates a strong sense of quivering energy as they lead the eye amongst the array of star emulating blocks of yellow in the sky. A palette of both warm advancing tones and cool receding tones is employed to highlight a contrast between the vibrancy and warmth from the stars and to the peacefulness and tranquility of the night sky, contributing greatly to the aesthetics. There is an element of balance at the stars ability to create a pathway for the eye as well as exhibiting a vibrant yellow which is reflected in the bottom of the image as the warm yellow represents lights and various shapes. There is a strong element of harmony as movement is evident throughout the whole work, creating a heightened aesthetic appeal to the work. Organic lines used to render subject matter also contribute to the flowing sense of movement.

Artwork: Anne Ferran's 'Scenes on the death of nature'

Scenes on the death of nature uses formal elements and semiotics to imbue the image with a somber, reflective atmosphere. The dull, muted tones allude to implied death of the centre subject, and her limp and lifeless pose is heightened by the grey almost deathly tones and soft texture. The garments worn by all the subjects are strangely reminiscent of those worn by the chorus in

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Greek tragedies, affording the image the reflective narrative quality of a choral ode. There is a strong line flowing around the image drawing attention to the face and hands of the fallen women; limp and lifeless. The clasped hands are a reference to the unity between the four women, perhaps representing nature and the elements in their naturalistic image.

1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	5	15	28	29	16	8	2.6

Part b. of Question 1 asked students to analyse the technique the artist used in making the artwork. This tested the students' ability to understand the way the artist has used techniques in the creation of an artwork. An analysis requires a deeper scrutiny than a discussion, and students needed to demonstrate an ability to understand the implications of the techniques which the artist has used. Good answers to this question also pointed out how the use of a particular technique may contribute to specific qualities within the artwork. For instance, if referring to artwork 4 from the 2005 examination, a response which examines the techniques of the artist could include the following information.

David Potter has emphasised the form and shape of this vessel by forcing the clay from the inside in two directions. To create such a large form he would have had to use considerable force in order to control the clay mass. The form would have had to have been left quite thick, because any forcing of the sides could have left the form soft and unsupported. The fairly narrow base also relied on the skills of the artist, who would have worked hard in order to achieve the shape, which is very reminiscent of the classical Greek vases that were created over 2000 years ago. One of the effects of creating the horizontal fluting is when the glaze has been applied, a slightly thicker collection has settled on certain sections resulting in a contrast in the earthy tones of the work, thereby adding to the aesthetic qualities of the work.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses to Question 1b.

Artwork: Van Gogh's 'The Starry Night'

Van Gogh has utilized expressive painting techniques in this artwork. He uses short sharp brushstrokes to create movement in the sky where the viewer can see the rolling of a cloud of the radiating light of the moon. He further creates a sense of movement in the shapes and directions of his line. The sky shows shorter lines and the cypress in the bottom left hand corner shows longer lines that are much more organic than his staccato like lines in the sky. Van Gogh does not employ tonal gradation to create form but instead creates small areas of color placed side by side to give the illusion of changing color. For many shapes he also uses an outline to almost contain the swirling shapes he paints inside them.

Artwork: Anne Ferran's 'Scenes on the death of nature'

The use of Silver Gelatin as the medium gives the work a beautiful contemplative stillness with the marked absence of color, also another reference to death. Lighting has been used in the studio setting to draw attention to the face, hands and feet of the deathly centre subject. Ferran has also employed cropping to exclude the face of the back subject, adding an enigmatic quality to the print and perhaps alluding to an ambiguous omni sent presence - the viewer is asked to ponder if it could be bad. Shooting the image in a studio heightens the romantic allegory of the work, another reference to Greek tragedy as the costume like clothes and black backdrop perhaps reference a stage.

Question 2

Point of view 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	17	34	25	16	2.2

Point of view 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	10	18	34	24	14	2.1

Question 2 required students to demonstrate:

- an understanding of and ability to provide sound research and knowledge of a contemporary art industry issue
- knowledge of the context that gave rise to the issues in the correct time frame
- strong use of terminology and vocabulary that is specific and correctly used
- clear reference to different points of view relating to the issue chosen
- an understanding of the issues from an arts-related perspective.

When responding to Question 2, students often provided a general discussion of, for instance, graffiti, without examining its validity as an art form as opposed to the political acceptance of the activity. Too often responses lacked the personal understanding and research that is expected of students when they undertake an investigation of an art industry issue. It is vital that a broad and comprehensive knowledge of the issue in question is demonstrated through the student's written response.



Some students were unable to identify an art industry issue from the current or previous year. This is clearly identified as a requirement in the *Studio Arts VCE Study Design*. In order to achieve a high mark for this type of question, students must identify what the issue is, how the issue came to light in the current or previous year, and demonstrate a thorough knowledge of at least two points of view in relation to the issue. Some of the issues discussed in Question 2 were not art industry issues, while other responses tried to argue points of view in relation to topics that were art related but were not issues perse. This question was quite clear, and students should know that the Study Design requires them to have a comprehensive understanding of a current art industry issue.

The following is from a high-scoring student response.

Point of View 1

Graffiti as Art: Graffiti is seen by its supporters as a new radical art movement. Artists often use complex lettering or stencils to create colorful street murals on public or private property. Although some claim graffiti is nothing more than vandalism, artists often make political statements through cleverly planned works. One graffer (graffiti artist) argues that advertising is forced upon us everyday, without choice, and graffiti too has this concept as a radical art movement. In some places (Center place, between Flinders lane and Collins Sts Melb) Graffiti is accepted as an artform that adds cultural interest. In Center place, many graffers have shown off their exceptional skills, creating amazing works on walls and bins. Many council workers and graffers argue there needs to be more designated or places where graffiti is accepted. It is argued that more places such as this would discourage vandalism of property, with its carefully thought out works done by more experienced graffers, this would encourage others to stop doing untasteful 'tags'(graffiti artists name, sign, symbol).

Point of View 2

Councils spend thousands of dollars removing graffiti from trains, walls, private and public property each year. Melbourne city council alone spends \$200,000 annually on the removal of graffiti. By many, graffiti is seen as nothing more than vandalism, which defaces property, and gives cities a 'trashy' look. Many in the community feel that more designated graffiti spaces would only further encourage vandalism of property, and more unsightly tags. Some suggested 'no tolerance' graffiti zones with harsh fines imposed on offenders, and any graffiti in these zones to be removed immediately. Many see graffiti as vandalism done by troubled youths rather than works done by artists.

Question 3

3i.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	8	50	42	1.4

3ii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	50	43	1.4

3iii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	11	55	33	1.2

Question 3 required students to:

- discuss the damage that could occur to an artwork in a specific art form if it were exposed to various factors
- show an understanding of the importance of the conservation of artworks and why each of the chosen factors plays a critical role in the conservation process
- understand relevant terminology and factual information applicable to the conservation of artworks in a specific art form.

Students often simply discussed how to conserve an artwork without referring to the specific damage that could occur to an artwork in a particular medium if it were exposed to the factors given. Once again, full and comprehensive answers were required to adequately answer the question.

This question required students to apply their knowledge, not merely repeat pre-learned factual information. Students should be prepared to answer the specifics of the questions asked.

The following response clearly identifies the damage that could occur to an artwork in a specific art form. This response focuses on answering the specifics of the question rather than simply launching into conservation factors.

Art form: Photographic works on paper

Extremes of temperature

Can result in expansion and contraction of works, which leads to increased fragility, cracking and brittleness. Temperature is optimally kept at constant at 18-22 C. Furthermore fluctuating temperatures can affect relative humidity (RH) as well, which if



above 67% can cause mould to grow, risking chemical reactions, discoloration and the paper becoming spongy. Air conditioning and gallery design such as the absence of windows are another consideration in regulating temperature.

Intense Light

Original photos are made from highly sensitive materials that can't be exposed to more than 50 Lux (international measurement for light). Intense light causes images and colors to fade and paper to become brittle. Light must never be placed directly on the photos because this can also leave patchy areas of discolor. Also works that are this sensitive require 'rest periods' which allows them to rest in a controlled dark space such as a Solander box. The ratio for this rest time is 1:3 (for every 1 month of exhibition, requires 3 months rest). Intense light can totally fade a work and damage is also irreversible.

Inappropriate storage

If inappropriate storage of photos takes place much damage could be caused. This includes photographs becoming the victim of pest or mould activity, which could destroy the piece. If the area where it is stored is not cleaned regularly, it could become increasingly dirty. If the area has too much exposure to light or relative humidity, the piece could fade and become disfigured. It could also become damaged if padding is not placed in its box during transport. If the storage box is not a solander or made from non acidic card then the image could be damaged also.

The following is another excellent response to part ii. of the question.

Art form: Textile works

Intense light, especially UV light, is extremely damaging to textile works, such as the Eureka Flag. The flag in previous years was exposed to sunlight which causes irreversible damage such as fading or thinning and general deterioration of the fabric. The Flag is now stored in a dim room lit at 50 Lux (suggested light level for textiles) by Fibre optic lighting which cuts out harmful UV rays not needed for viewing, and keeps the heat from the light source away from the flag to prevent further damage. Light damage can only be reduced, not eliminated.

Question 4.

4ai.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	8	92	0.9

4aai.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	16	84	0.9

4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	16	32	36	15	1.5

Question 4 required students to:

- identify one role of a public gallery (part ai.)
- identify one role of an art space (part aii.)
- demonstrate an understanding of the promotional and marketing considerations involved in the preparation of an exhibition in either a public gallery or an artist run space (part b.)
- use relevant language and terminology that was specific to the question.

Many students failed to read the question properly, especially part b., which required a discussion of promotional and marketing considerations in the preparation of an exhibition.

The following are examples of responses that clearly responded to the specifics of the question and thus scored high marks.

Part i.

A public gallery acts like a museum, it stores/conserves/cares for collections of artwork by established artists and educates the public through exhibitions.

Part i.

TO EDUCATE - A public gallery is funded by taxpayer's money and therefore the gallery has a responsibility to educate the general public about the art world. They do this by holding exhibitions of works, workshops and floor sales.

Part ii.

Artspace such as the tram shelters around the Melbourne CBD provide a more accessible option for the public to view art, and also provide more flexible exhibition spaces for emerging artists.

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Part b.

In a public gallery such as Monash Gallery of Art, the Curator along with a team including an Exhibition Director, have many considerations when facilitating an exhibition. Advertising, through invitations, interviews and brochures are important in publicizing the exhibition. A marketing officer will sometimes assume this role, and may have to organize funding for commercial advertisements, often out of the 50% of funding from the government. The space must also be prepared to promote the show, as seen in the NGV exhibition of Man Ray where the walls were painted with intersecting lines symbolizing Man Rays art practices.

Question 5

Consideration 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	15	35	32	19	1.6

Consideration 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	32	31	22	14	1.2

Question 5 required students to discuss two considerations involved in the use made of the work of other artists in the making of new artworks.

A number of students repeated information from consideration 1 when writing about consideration 2, effectively discussing only one consideration rather than two. Better responses to this question were often able to cite examples in their discussion of the considerations and even discuss the ramifications of the actions taken by an artist when making use of the work of other artists.

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

Consideration 1: Copyright

Appropriation is the act of borrowing existing imagery or a certain style from an artist to use in a new artistic context, however there are limitations to the extent to which this can occur. Copyright is the legal right of an artist which protects their work from being copied or plagiarized without consent. The copyright act (1968) protects an artists work from being copied for the duration of their lifetime plus an additional 70 years after their death. A breach of the copyright act could result in the artist taking legal action. The greatest right of the copyright act granted to an artist is to prevent their work from being copied in any material form such as filmed, photocopied or used in some manner without consent.

Consideration 2: Moral rights

Since December 2000, Australian artists have been given the right to moral rights. This enables the artist to still exercise some power over what happens to their artwork. If an artist decides to sell their artwork, regardless of whether the copyright has been passed down or not, artists can still prevent their work from being altered in a way which may damage the integrity of the artist. If a change has been negotiated between the owner and the buyer, then there has not been a breach of moral right. However, if the artwork is created in a derogatory manner without permission, then there has been a breach in the artist's moral right.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Average
%	5	3	5	7	8	9	9	9	9	8	6	7	6	4	3	2	7.1

Question 6 was worth a total of 15 marks. It required an extended response and students had to:

- understand the methods an artist may use to develop a distinctive style and approach to their subject matter
- analyse ways in which artists communicate ideas and meanings in their artworks
- show an understanding and knowledge of the mediums which they referred to when discussing the artist of their choice
- reveal, through discussion, a clear insight into the factors which allow an artist to develop a distinctive style
- refer to specific examples of the artist's work using correct factual information in order to demonstrate the student's knowledge
- use relevant vocabulary and terminology
- provide personal interpretations and opinions that reflected their knowledge of an artist's work.

Students must be prepared to adapt the knowledge that they have acquired throughout the year to suit the specific requirements of the question. Although this is applicable to all questions on the Studio Arts examination, it is particularly important for the extended response. Students will not receive high marks if they merely use a prepared answer and do not answer the actual question on the examination paper. A number of students continue to fall into this trap.

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As in previous years, the extended response question required a discussion or analysis of artworks. To score high marks, students needed to discuss artworks in depth, revealing a thorough knowledge of the techniques, use of materials, influences, ideas and meanings associated in the artworks. An insightful discussion of the artworks was essential to demonstrate a depth of knowledge. Many students mistakenly thought that a brief discussion of an artwork was enough to demonstrate their knowledge, however a more comprehensive and thorough discussion was required.

When responding to the extended response question, students need to ensure that they have sufficient time to complete their response. Some students may find it beneficial to answer this question first, leaving other questions that are worth fewer marks until the end.