

# 2012 HSC Notes from the Marking Centre – Visual Arts

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Written examination</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Section I.....	2
Section II.....	3
<b>Body of work submissions</b> .....	<b>6</b>
General comments.....	6
Responses to the body of work requirement.....	6
Selection of works for body of work submissions.....	7
Assigning submissions to a particular expressive form.....	7
Breaches of requirements.....	8
Instructions for display for marking.....	8
<b>Expressive forms</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Ceramics.....	9
Collection of works.....	9
Designed objects.....	10
Documented forms.....	10
Drawing.....	11
Graphic design.....	11
Painting.....	12
Photomedia.....	12
Printmaking.....	13
Sculpture.....	13
Textiles and fibre.....	14
Time-based forms.....	14

## 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 2012 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 2012 Higher School Certificate examination, the marking guidelines and other support documents developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of Visual Arts.

### General comments

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the syllabus outcomes in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating the knowledge, understanding and skills they developed through studying the course.

Candidates need to be aware that the marks allocated to the question and the answer space (where this is provided on the examination paper) are guides to the length of the required response. A longer response will not in itself lead to higher marks. Writing far beyond the indicated space may reduce the time available for answering other questions.

Candidates need to be familiar with the Board's [Glossary of Key Words](#), 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?', 'why?' or 'to what extent?' may be asked or verbs that are not included in the glossary may be used, such as 'design', 'translate' or 'list'.

## **Written examination**

### **Section I**

#### **Question 1**

In response to this question, candidates provided clearly stated observations of the integration between the form and surface decoration of the vessel by Esther Ngala Kennedy. Form was interpreted as the vase or the birds and also referred to as a functional object. In many responses, candidates described the structural qualities with reference to the frames, elaborating on the surface decoration and subject matter, while connections were also made to the 2D and 3D qualities. These aspects of the form give the whole artwork life and depth with the roundness of the banksia and birds reflected in the roundness of the pot. The composition of the 2D underglazed surface allows the audiences to view the form in the round and provides another insight into how integration is achieved. Terracotta clay was used as an entry point in developing interpretations linking to the earth in both its colour and material properties. These included references to the Australian landscape, the outback and Indigenous art and culture.

In better responses, candidates inferred meaning from the integration and connections found between the form and surface decoration. The interpretation of these links revealed an informed understanding of the artist's intention. These included the representation of a gumnut or a nest referencing the Australian bush and nature and how it transcends the mundane and functional to a more spiritual level through the application of 2D and 3D decoration. In a number of responses, candidates cited the audiences' visual experience of the work as a way the artist has integrated the surface decoration and form.

#### **Question 2**

In many responses, candidates analysed the source material to demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the relationships between the agencies of the conceptual framework. The contemporary sculptures of Daniel Lynch and Armand Fernandez (Arman) elicited a broad range of interpretations and comments about the way each artist has responded to the consumerist world. The artists' choices of materials and locations were interpreted in terms of environmental issues of consumption, pollution, recycling, urban decay and overcrowding. Overwhelmingly, candidates referred to the use of found objects and non-traditional art materials as contemporary artmaking practice. Descriptions of the artworks ranged from an owl or 'street' character in the case of Lynch, to an archaeological site, car park or tower block for Arman. References were made to the challenge of the conventional display of artworks in outdoor environments and how this informed meaning of the works. Comments about how these artworks informed an audience of the detrimental effects to the environment of overconsumption were presented in a concise way.

In better responses, candidates thoroughly analysed the artworks to clearly demonstrate informed interpretations using sophisticated art language. An extensive knowledge of the conceptual framework was applied in identifying layered interrelations between the artwork, artist, world and audience. In these responses, candidates showed an understanding that

historical art influences such as Dadaism, Modernism and Postmodernism challenged societies' perceptions of what constitutes an artwork. Elaboration on the meaning of the artworks was supported by intelligent comments about regional and global environmental issues.

Candidates should develop depth and breadth in their knowledge and understanding of the interrelationships of the agencies of the art world, and apply this knowledge and understanding in a well-reasoned and interpretive way. Candidates should refer to the source material and selectively link it to the demands of the question, rather than presenting a descriptive account with unsupported interpretations.

### **Question 3**

This question required a detailed examination of the source material to derive inferences and judgements about 'how' artists have engaged in the material and conceptual practice of drawing.

Candidates interpreted the images in a variety of ways, for example as evidence of the artists' conceptual intentions in exploring such things as China's invention of gun powder, the nature of chance, and notions of ephemeral and static works. Technological developments examined in their cultural contexts were a favoured reference, representing a distinction between traditional and contemporary drawing practice. Some responses were driven by material practice alone.

Material practice was examined with varying amounts of success. In better responses, candidates identified choices of materials and provided an informed and perceptive discussion on the use of media in relation to drawing conventions and innovative and explorative approaches to drawing.

In better responses, candidates demonstrated a convincing understanding of the demands of the question and articulated the distinction and interdependence of conceptual and material practice. Strong critical arguments were presented in terms of explaining 'how' the artists engaged in the material and conceptual practice of drawing, rather than simply stating 'what' they used and 'what' they investigated. These candidates went beyond a discussion of subject matter to provide layered interpretations, with relevant source material justifying the position taken. Conclusions were convincing culminations of judgements.

The response should address all the demands of the question in conjunction with the rubric. Candidates are encouraged to apply their understanding of practice to the demands of the question, rather than list aspects of the source material.

## **Section II**

### **Question 4**

Approaches to this question elicited complex and multi-layered responses demonstrating a strong understanding of artistic practice, inspired by world events, the material, physical and technological world, conceptual ideas, beliefs and influences. While some candidates integrated the quote explicitly in their response, others used it as a stimulus.

The significance of practice was reflected in the diversity of the artists discussed. Popular examples were drawn from the Renaissance (atelier workshops, Michelangelo), modern art (Warhol, the Factory and forms of mass production), land artists (Goldsworthy and Christo) and postmodern artists (Piccinini, Hirst, Orlan, Viola and Ah Wei Wei who outsource and draw on outside influences and whose works are often interactive, making the audience as another agent).

In better responses, candidates acknowledged the distinction between conceptual and material practice and the ways they supported and enriched each other. Reference was made to the considerable changes in contemporary art practice due to new technology, the impact of specialists advising artists and the outsourcing of technical aspects of a skilled nature. There was acknowledgement that the delegation of work to assistants is not the domain of contemporary practitioners alone yet contemporary artists face questions about the level of authorship they can claim if the work is constructed by others and the extent to which that outside assistance alters artistic practice.

In better responses, candidates used the quote as a point of reference in constructing an explanation, providing evidence to show the relationships between artists and those who give assistance. The structure of these responses was based on the demand of the question in conjunction with the rubric.

### **Question 5**

The question invited a discussion about how a global, local or personal cultural experience can inform or influence practice. Candidates interpreted 'cultural practice' broadly, including the influence of significant events such as politics, wars or revolutions, cultural identity and Indigenous heritage particularly from the Asia-Pacific region. Cross-cultural references were made including hybrid references to modern, contemporary or postmodern experiences of the world. Cultural experience also included references to the environment, social factors, subcultures, feminism, gender, religious or spiritual experiences and technological innovation as a cultural entity.

A diverse range of artists was referred to, including Renaissance artists, Australian Indigenous artists such as Kngwarreye and Gordon Bennett, contemporary Asian artists Lee Wen, Wenda Gu, Ah Wei Wei, Xu Bing and Ah Xian, as well as Goya, Picasso, Pollock, Kahlo, Banksy and the Guerrilla Girls.

In better responses, candidates provided a comprehensive synthesis of art practices, particularly with regard to how both material and conceptual intentions and manipulations and contexts of artists are informed by cultural experiences. More knowledgeable discussions clearly articulated complex understandings of how cultural experiences act as an impetus to inform, create discourse and challenge conventions of the past and present.

Candidates should be discerning and selective about how they apply or adapt case study information.

### **Question 6**

In response to this question, candidates addressed the varied and influential nature of the audience on artists, with most explaining the causal relationship that the audience has with the artist, in terms of their aims and intentions. The provided quote acted as a stimulus with the majority of responses referring to contemporary artists, while others used historical accounts to provide a discourse on artists as social and political commentators to engage the audience. Candidates identified the communicative action of art, outlining the societal, environmental, religious and personal concerns of the audience and how these would shape artistic actions.

In better responses, candidates considered the significance of the audience as an influential agency of change on the artists who were discussed. They recognised that complex connections are forged in the relationship between the roles of the artist and audience and they articulated the contextual expectations of the audience. They sustained explicit explanations and used the quote to prompt greater elaboration of the question. They focused primarily on contemporary artists. In these responses, candidates identified the varying scope of influence

the audience has on the artist. Artists such as William Kentridge, Manet, Jenny Holzer, Banksy, Bill Henson, Andy Goldsworthy and Yayoi Kusama were popular choices.

Candidates should address all parts of the question and use informed knowledge to support their discussion. Explicitly referring to the question and building this into the response is essential.

### **Question 7**

In response to this question, candidates referenced a variety of artists, using the quote to stimulate a discussion on the purpose of art. Artmaking was often seen to provide a visual representation on aspects of the world that changed perceptions and communicated the artist's view of the world to the audience. Many saw the 'purpose' of art as being linked to the function of art, citing the challenging of established patterns of authority, the expression of the human condition, propaganda, religious, societal and environmental issues. Discussing artists whose work does not exist as a tangible object and therefore cannot be owned or displayed statically in a gallery – such as performance, installation, ephemeral and earth art – and the way artists use photographic and video to document such works was a common way to respond to the concept of the audience's 'need' for art. Artists discussed included DaVinci, Manet, Goya, Picasso, Duchamp, Pollock, Warhol, Smithson, Christo, Koons, Hall, Goldsworthy, Kentridge, Banksy and Hirst.

In better responses, candidates addressed the question thematically, citing relevant historical and contemporary artists, and analysing their works, their intentions and their communication of concepts about the world to the audience. This was seamlessly integrated to construct a discussion that contextualised the artist and discussed the perceived 'need' for their work at that point in time. These responses were sustained through an exploration of artistic practice and the artists' beliefs, with insightful interpretations of how they created meaning and shaped the audiences' experience of their work. In these responses, candidates examined contemporary examples relating to the changing ownership of art, referring to new ways of accessing artworks and bypassing the gallery as a place in which to experience it.

Candidates should comprehensively address the demands of the question using informed knowledge to support their discussion, and ensure that they cite artists and artworks relevant to their response.

### **Question 8**

In response to this question, candidates demonstrated broad knowledge and interpretations of postmodern practice and devices. Recontextualisation was variously understood as a concept through which artists challenge and break existing rules, as a revisited and recurring theme in art such as the reclining nude or as a deliberate structural tool used by artists to create new meaning. Popular contemporary artists referred to were Ai Wei Wei, Bennett, Chicago, Kruger, Morimura, Sherman and Zahalka. In some responses, candidates used the postmodern frame as a device for questioning the values and purposes of historically reconfigured artworks, images and/or objects. They examined appropriate artworks produced by artists from the past including Duchamp, Gentileschi, Manet and Picasso.

In better responses, candidates revealed a deep knowledge of the chosen artists and artworks and analysed them comprehensively, articulating how artists employ strategies to subvert an existing image or idea, reinterpret it and give it new meaning. This notion was central to their explanations and analyses of examples. In these responses, candidates were also selective and broad in their scope and their choice of diverse artists allowed for the communication of complex knowledge about art.

Better responses were oriented from the question. Supporting examples explicitly addressed the significance of the repositioned imagery and the artist's intent.

### **Question 9**

In response to this question, candidates used the Subjective Frame to analyse the ways in which artists' create artworks to generate meaning to an audience. The emotional content of artworks and their personal, social, political, environmental, cultural and gender issues were identified and interpreted with many candidates sourcing material from a broad range of historical and contemporary contexts. A diverse range of artists was referred to including Bennett, Banksy, Picasso, Piccinini, Goya, Picasso, Kahlo and Kruger.

In better responses, candidates synthesised and interpreted how issues and ideas are generated in the exploration of the emotional qualities of artworks. They identified distinguishing factors in an artist's intention to either 'provoke' or 'simply' generate discussions about ideas and issues, and also recognised that aspects of the agencies of the artworld and also the Postmodern Frame, could be used to support analysis.

In these responses, candidates offered a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the artists, artworks and audience, using examples that explored the artists' subjective intentions as a way of engaging or provoking the audience and generating meaning. They further examined the significant role of the audience in interpreting and constructing meaning in a variety of artworks and contexts.

Better responses explored and identified the emotional components of an artist's practice, artworks and the subsequent effect on an audience. In some responses, candidates offered particular definitions of emotion as either personal (from the artist) or social (reactions from the audience, including critics).

Case study material should address all the demands of the question and provide relevant examples to support the analysis or argument.

## **Body of work submissions**

### **General comments**

There was a diverse range of approaches to the body of work. The most popular expressive form remains painting, although there continues to be a greater awareness and integration of technology.

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

There was a range of responses, including single works and works with a number of individual pieces. Some candidates presented single works that were evidence of a sustained engagement with practice in a particular expressive form, such as painting, sculpture or drawing. It is important for teachers and candidates to note that this is an acceptable way for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of practice. In other works, candidates revealed a knowledgeable awareness of contemporary interests in the artworld and an awareness of audiences and their role.

Candidates used the frames and the conceptual framework in ways that extended their ideas. A strong engaged study of relevant artists and their practice, along with contemporary issues and ideas in the artworld, was evident. A number of candidates demonstrated an

understanding of contemporary exhibition practice, seeing the opportunity for bodies of work to be presented to audiences in intentional and considered ways, including documentation of site-specific works, installations and performances.

Many candidates presented works that thoughtfully reflected on their own immediate world of personal, social and cultural identity; origins and connections; friends, families and relationships; and histories and traditions. Many candidates worked within historical genres and conventions of studio 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.

Candidates should carefully consider their audiences. The public contexts for the production of the works in schools and the marking of the examination may make some forms of representation inappropriate. Advice to schools regarding content in HSC submitted works is provided on the Board of Studies website in the document *HSC Performances and Submitted Works – Advice to Schools Regarding Content*.

Teachers should carefully consider issues such as child protection legislation in relation to how they are able to appropriately supervise the production of certain works, including those that involve nudity, sexuality, mental health, abuse, self-harm, drugs or potentially controversial material. Teachers need to be conscious of their responsibilities and of audiences within the school, as well as the broader examination context, and aware of the possible implications for candidates.

### **Selection of works for body of work submissions**

The syllabus outlines the importance of the selection of works for submission. When selecting works for submission, candidates should carefully consider how each work demonstrates the candidate's knowledge, intentions 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 time-based elements included as one aspect of their 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.

Some works included an artist's statement or other documentation in the form of diagrams, photographs, photobooks, working drawings or film/video pieces.

The inclusion of an artist's statement should be carefully considered, and in most cases is unnecessary. If an artist's statement is submitted, it should be brief and related to intentions rather than a summary of the artmaking processes used by the candidate to make the body of work. A well-considered title is often sufficient to provide insight into the intentions of the work. Titles should be in English or include a translation so that they are understood by the markers.

### **Assigning submissions to a particular expressive form**

Candidates should place their work in one of the 12 expressive forms nominated in the syllabus.

They should select the expressive form that has been their primary artmaking interest or focus. The multidisciplinary nature of contemporary art will mean that edges between forms are often blurred. Candidates need to make choices that reflect their primary intentions.

## **Breaches of requirements**

All bodies of work, including 2D and 3D submissions and submissions with 2D and 3D components, must comply with the size limitations when displayed for marking.

In 2012 a number of submissions breached the limits for size, weight, duration, and dangerous and prohibited materials. Teachers and candidates are referred to the course prescriptions in *Assessment and Reporting in Visual Arts Stage 6* on the Board of Studies website. The rules on size, weight, duration, and dangerous and prohibited materials apply to works whether they are marked corporately or itinerantly. Submissions that did not meet the requirements of the course prescriptions for size, weight, duration, and dangerous and prohibited materials were not able to achieve the same marks as those submissions that worked within the course requirements.

A number of submissions in the collection of works expressive form exceeded the one cubic metre maximum size for 2D and 3D works. The volume of a submission with 2D and 3D works should be measured first, then other requirements should be checked. For 2D or flat works, the limit is two square metres for any single item – a painting *or one panel in a series of paintings* – and the area of the whole submission is to be no larger than six square metres.

A small number of submissions included food products such as confectionery, rice, beans, liquids, glass bottles and glass light bulbs, which are prohibited materials. Ammunition casings must not be included in any submission.

## **Instructions for display for marking**

Candidates should include instructions for displaying multiple panel works in order to indicate their intentions clearly. A picture, diagram or photograph indicating how the work is intended to be displayed may be useful. However, candidates need to be mindful of the limitations of the marking process and must ensure that their requests can be accommodated in a reasonable amount of time and without complex set-up requirements. They also need to carefully consider whether their set-up plan will comply with the required size limitations.

The size of a body of work is determined when the work is displayed for marking. Further advice about calculating the size of a body of work can be found in the *Assessment and Reporting in Visual Arts Stage 6* document on the Board of Studies website.

## **Itinerant marking**

Advice to schools regarding the set-up and display of works at schools for itinerant marking is available from *Schools Online*. Itinerant markers should not be expected to spend time setting up complex or multi-panelled works for marking.

## **Labelling of works**

All submitted works must be labelled. Clerical staff and markers at corporate and itinerant marking spent considerable time checking the labelling and paperwork presented by schools. In 2012 many itinerantly marked schools did not clearly label each artwork within a submission, and did not check that all pieces in the submission were displayed for marking. On a number of occasions, the labels for candidates' works were not completed correctly. It is

important that teachers ensure that all the paperwork is correctly completed, and that the set-up of works during itinerant marking is checked.

### **Time-based forms**

Teachers and candidates should refer to the advice about time-based forms submissions and submissions in each of the expressive forms in the *Assessment and Reporting in Visual Arts Stage 6* document to ensure that the duration, software and presentation formats are consistent with the examination specifications.

Candidates should ensure that the software and the format for presenting works on DVD and CD-R can be used on standard consumer computer hardware. Candidates should clearly label DVD and CD-R submissions with the format and program used. Candidates are reminded that they are not permitted to submit works that can only be viewed online. All interactive works must be copied to a disc to enable viewing.

## **Expressive forms**

### **Ceramics**

Candidates explored a wide range of material practices and concepts with large sculptural forms and vessels most popular. Many submissions consisted of multiple forms, with conceptually linked pieces reinforcing layered meanings. A wide range of ceramic practices was investigated including hand-built, slip cast, slab, raku and coil building techniques. Functional ceramic ware and wheel-thrown works were less common as was the use of the found object. Surface treatments included glazes, stains and underglazes, slips, oxide washes and the use of acrylic paint. Applied and rubbed back oxides were popular as was a more discerning use of gloss glazes. Surfaces were stamped, scraped, carved, incised, pierced, stencilled and press moulded to create patterns and textures. Photographs contextualising the work in a specific site were used to a lesser extent. Concepts included homages to cultural traditions of the vessel, celebrations of the natural world, the impact of popular culture and explorations of the human condition.

Candidates whose submissions were in the higher mark range demonstrated an informed understanding of construction processes and decoration techniques and an awareness of the potential of clay to represent a concept and engage an audience. In better works, candidates invited a sustained investigation through the creation of highly worked surfaces that enveloped the form. The clay body was often dissected and reconstructed to create a postmodern interpretation of functional ware. An awareness of contemporary ceramic practice was further evident in the layered surface treatments often reflecting multiple firings. Matt surfaces predominated, reflecting knowledgeable restraint. Candidates whose submissions consisted of multiple pieces further articulated the concept of the work and provided layered meanings for an audience.

A display diagram should be included where a conceptual or formal relationship between forms is fundamental to the interpretation of the work.

### **Collection of works**

Many candidates explored concepts such as social media, the critical self and the critical gaze related to body image and mental health. Other notable themes included the macro world, travel and culture, the natural environment and environmental issues.

In successful submissions, candidates used the intrinsic qualities of the different expressive forms and related materials as a means to explore aspects of the subject matter and to underpin the conceptual strength of the work. Paper sculpting and stencilling, needlework and stitching, etching and laser cutting were popular. The more feminine, ‘neglected’ crafts of crocheting, weaving and knitting were also revived in works showcasing their use by referencing contemporary artists’ practice. Layouts and artist statements augmented some submissions and worked as a device to unlock further meaning in the works. Books and photographs continue to remain a popular inclusion in submissions and were used to investigate the multiplicity of meanings rather than as a documentation of method.

In better works, candidates demonstrated reflective curatorial practice while the conceptual intent was presented with subtlety and multiple entry points inviting a sustained viewing of the work. Highly resolved material practice was found across all aspects of the work.

Collections of works containing two-dimensional and three-dimensional items must not exceed the maximum size of one cubic metre when displayed for marking. Time-based elements, when included with two-dimensional and three-dimensional components, must not exceed the maximum duration of three minutes. Information about the size, weight and duration of works, and dangerous and prohibited materials is located in *Assessment and Reporting in Visual Arts Stage 6* and should be referred to throughout the development of the body of work.

## **Designed objects**

Although wearables in the form of garments and their accessories dominated submissions in this expressive form, there was a wide range of other submissions in architectural designs, product designs and their advertising, models, toys, home furnishings and jewellery. Submissions explored diverse concepts and involved investigations into ethnicity, personal histories, gender and social issues such as the environment and its decay, consumerism, fashion and popular culture. An extensive variety of materials were employed to represent the candidate’s intentions including natural materials, found objects and recycled materials such as plastic bags, bottles, books and vinyl records, latex, metal washers, aluminium wire, perspex, paper and a range of hand-dyed, printed or commercially produced fabrics. These materials were drawn on, painted, hand-sewn, machine-stitched, moulded, knitted, glued, and embellished through beading, appliqué and a variety of printmaking and image transfer techniques. Digital technologies such as CAD drawing and photography supported and extended many submissions.

In better works, candidates demonstrated a comprehensive and insightful understanding of the way material selection and practices can symbolically link and elaborate on conceptual ideas and intentions. These submissions were innovative and represented a highly developed understanding of both contemporary and conventional art and design practices. The intended function of the design was paramount in these works and a strong curatorial practice was evident.

Photographic documentation of wearables is not required. Mannequins must not be included, and other constructed methods to display works may result in the works being oversized.

## **Documented forms**

Submissions in this expressive form investigated documentation as a practice using photomedia, sculptural works and time-based forms. Concepts explored included environmental and political issues, body image, vanitas and street art. In some submissions,

candidates also investigated the documentation of an installation within a gallery context and the recontextualisation of the candidate's knowledge of the artworld. Submissions also explored the body as a painting tool and documented this as performance art.

In better works, candidates were concise and clear in their conceptual intent. Candidates elaborated on subject matter and opened up the work for interpretation on a number of levels. The curatorial practice was also an integral part of the work as it informed its development and outcome. The material practice was highly sensitive, refined and technically proficient across all components. The photographic and audiovisual components were complex and displayed high proficiency in controlling such elements as light, depth of field and focus. These components served to further elaborate on and develop the themes in the submission. Audio elements were successfully employed, most notably with the use of constructed soundscapes which enhanced the visual experience.

When audiovisual components and objects are included, they should elaborate and extend the conceptual intent of the whole work rather than reiterate it.

## **Drawing**

Submissions in this expression form explored a range of approaches including large expressive gestural figurative drawings, small-scale series of finely detailed panels, digital/computer drawings and 3D constructions. Media used to create the works were varied and extensive and included charcoal, pencil, graphite, scraperboard, coloured pencil, paint, watercolours, inks, biro, texta and drawing tools in computer programs – all reflective of a substantive engagement with drawing and the expressive potential of mark-making. There was an increase in the presentation of intricate fine line drawing techniques with attention to detail and realism.

Subject matter referencing interests in figuration and portraiture continued to dominate the submissions and were representative of historical and contemporary approaches to drawing. Animals, especially dogs, celebrated the fondness for the family pet. Botanical and topographical studies and drawing of birds explored environmental and personal concerns and interests.

Submissions in the higher mark range were characterised by the depth of conceptual investigation and an understanding of the relationship of that with a refined material practice. Selection of materials, skills and techniques reflected a confident and knowing understanding of the practice of drawing. In these submissions, candidates displayed consideration to compositional devices, selection of imagery, curatorial intent and an awareness of the audience.

The title of a work is an important and valuable tool in revealing conceptual intentions. Candidates must also ensure that submissions adhere to the size limitations.

## **Graphic design**

Submissions in this expressive form included illustrative narratives, handmade and self-published books and magazines, magazine covers, storybooks, graphic novels, manga comics, posters and product promotions in the form of skateboards, T-shirts and CDs. Designs incorporated a variety of media and techniques including pen and ink, collage, painting, print, scanned images, and computer-generated images. Hand-cut and laser paper stencils are an emerging trend and were used in imaginative and layered compositions in the better works. Concepts were diverse and included literature and poetry, contemporary re-works of heroic themes and fairy tales, social and political concerns, cultural identity, environmental issues such as animal extinction, the degradation of land, personal relationships and fantasy. A

blurring between the forms of photomedia and graphic design was evident, with submissions which referenced cinematic rather than graphic genres.

In better submissions, candidates covered topical political issues such as Wikileaks, media suppression and the problematic issues associated with new communication technologies such as Facebook and social media. In some of the better responses, candidates successfully referenced the styles and messages of political activists Banksy and Shepherd Fairey. Typography as image was another compositional device which was given a sophisticated and graphic treatment. Candidates also considered the interaction with audience and selectively used imagery to communicate layers of meaning. Curatorial practice was also evident in these works and added to their resolution.

Candidates need to understand the importance of file size and how it can affect the quality of digitally generated images. The inclusion of a layout is also helpful if works are intended to be viewed in a particular configuration.

## **Painting**

Submissions in painting reflected an interest in the portrait genre. Self-portraits and family portraits, and friendship and cultural groups were represented in large-scale and smaller scale works, with particular interest in expressive qualities and emotional connections that underpin or scrutinise relationships. Abstract paintings demonstrated a sophisticated understanding through manipulation of formal elements, use of repetition and the grid to reinforce motifs across single and multiple panels.

In some submissions, candidates presented narratives that unfolded through a series. Knowledge of art history and historical periods were referenced and recontextualised, with an investigation of surrealist distortion prevalent. Application of significant and personal symbols was well considered and integrated in urban, city and pastoral landscapes that reflected concerns for environmental degradation and globalisation. Graphic and illustrative conventions were evident with a number of works using the painted surface to reflect digital media conventions.

Investigation of the painted surface through experimentation was evident across canvas, board and paper and with surfaces that were richly textured, multi-layered, often subtle and minimal, opaque and transparent with some integration of collage across both abstract and figurative works. Scumbling, combed surfaces, glazes, sgraffito, stencilling and graffiti-inspired images were applied using a variety of painting mediums.

Better works were characterised by a depth of understanding of historical and contemporary practice, the art world and how to engage an audience. Conceptual investigations and subject matter were clearly extended and amplified. Vibrant and rich tertiary colour was harnessed in ways that extended meaning with sophisticated investigation of colour relationships. Presentation of modular, shaped components and panels to construct a narrative were also popular.

Works should be labelled carefully with clear instructions and include, where necessary, a photograph of how the work should be set up for marking. Submissions of multiple works should extend meaning and conceptual richness rather than reiterate ideas.

## **Photomedia**

Submissions in this expressive form included digital and traditional analogue practices exploring the genres of portraiture, landscape, still life and the human condition. The representation of documentary, cultural and fictional narratives, light painting, environmental, animal welfare and the recontextualising of historical images were popular concepts. Material

practice was explored using a variety of cameras ranging from the digital SLR, medium format and toy cameras showing an increased interest in *lomography* and *iphonography*. Books were used as a major component or the only element of many submissions and DVDs were occasionally submitted to extend the conceptual intent of the work.

Many submissions seeking to appear analogue had been manipulated digitally with the use of filters or mimicking processes such as *Instagram* or phone apps as well as more traditional processes such as cyanotype. Printing was carefully considered in relation to the selection of paper stock in order to strengthen the meaning of the work. Paper stocks ranged from the more traditional matt, semi-gloss and gloss papers to the more contemporary metallic and fine art papers. Some candidates used alternative stock such as canvas, vinyl or vacuum seal surfaces and there was a noted increase in the use of acrylic light boxes and inventive interactive technologies. Software applications such as High Dynamic Range (HDR) filters were also popular, allowing candidates to enrich the quality of their images.

In the better works, candidates demonstrated a strong understanding of contemporary photographic practices. Submissions included highly resolved images with well-considered decisions of camera craft such as the control of aperture, shutter speeds, depth of field, well-directed cinematic narratives and staged studio lighting plans. There was technical proficiency in studio lighting practices with considered use of background papers, subtle shifts of focus and refined understanding of exposure.

When using *iphonography* and jpeg files, resolution size should be appropriate for the printing workflow/output. Candidates are not permitted to submit works that can only be viewed online.

## **Printmaking**

Submissions in this expressive form explored a range of relief and intaglio printmaking processes. In particular, lino printing and drypoint etching remain popular choices of technique and there was a significant growth in the number of submissions exploring collograph, stencilling and lino reduction processes. An increasing number of submissions also explored the use of multiple plates. Works demonstrated ways of extending the printmaking process through conventional forms of embellishment such as hand colouring and investigated a variety of surfaces for printing. Diverse investigations of subject matter were explored including the family and relationships, natural and built environments, the animal kingdom, and abstraction. Concepts referred to diverse global and local concerns such as cultural heritage, migration, the human psyche, and the political arena.

In better submissions, candidates moved beyond illustrative or derivative representations of subject matter and were able to sustain significant and meaningful investigations of conceptual practice. These candidates demonstrated technical proficiency and were prudent in selecting material processes to articulate and enhance the conceptual integrity of the work. Candidates acknowledged the conventions and traditions of printmaking, and many sought to extend these by investigating highly expressive ways of presenting the printed image.

Candidates should be discerning when selecting pieces for inclusion in the final submission so that when multiples are presented they enhance the central idea rather than extend the bulk of the work. Titles may also assist in revealing the conceptual focus of the submission.

## **Sculpture**

Submissions in this expressive form explored a diverse range of approaches to sculptural practice, including freestanding, frontal and relief works, assemblages, hanging works, installations and cabinets for display. These included both multiple and singular forms.

Popular techniques included construction, collage, carving, casting, wrapping, moulding, weaving, welding, deconstruction and assemblage. Works included found and recycled objects and materials including plastics, computer components, materials from the natural world such as salvaged timbers, musical instruments, foam, cardboard, paper, and books. The use of ceramics, plaster and resin casting were popular, as were electrical and hanging works.

There was an increase in the number of works that included audio or video components. Many works explored decorative surfaces and were embellished with colour, text, collage and delicate patinas. Furniture drawers were widely used as framing devices. Plinths, perspex boxes and the inclusion of a base in most cases were successful inclusions in the submission.

Subject matter included notions of cultural and personal identity, family and relationships, music and popular culture and social media. Themes relating to the natural world, the protection and conservation of animals and environmental issues were popular as were works exploring the impact of technology on humanity. Some submissions referenced history and the museum object.

In better submissions, candidates demonstrated a deep knowledge of the traditions and innovations of sculptural practice. There was a synergy between the materials used, subject matter and form, which were successfully combined to create meaning. There was consideration given to curatorial practice and a strong acknowledgement of the audience and its engagement with the work.

A number of submissions did not comply with the course prescriptions for size, weight, duration and dangerous and prohibited materials. Information about size, weight and duration and dangerous and prohibited materials in *Assessment and Reporting in Visual Arts Stage 6* should be reviewed throughout the development of the body of work.

## **Textiles and fibre**

Submissions in this expressive form revealed an extensive and varied exploration of traditional and contemporary textile and fibre practices. The works demonstrated a range of forms representative of the expressive potential of this medium including sculptures, quilts, fabric collages, wall hangings, single and multiple piece paneled works. Personal journeys, family, historical narratives, the environment and landscape, and aspects of cultural identity underpinned many conceptual intentions of the submissions. Submissions included the exploration of a range of threads, wool, lace and silks; natural objects including twigs, raffia and seed pods; found objects and recycled materials; handmade, printed and purchased papers; commercial, hand-printed, dyed or painted fabrics; photographs, and digital transfers of images and text. Fabrics were embellished with hand and machine stitching, beading and a variety of printmaking and image transfer techniques. The traditional fibre craft of felting appeared in a number of submissions.

In the better works, candidates combined and manipulated materials in a sensitive manner to create visually rich and engaging surfaces and forms. They also revealed an extensive understanding of past and present textile and fibre practices and a confidence of technique. These submissions selected materials knowingly to develop, represent and elaborate on the conceptual intent of the work.

Candidates submitting wearables in this expressive form should consider the intention of the work and whether this aligns with textiles and fibre.

## **Time-based forms**

Submissions in time-based forms showcased a range of technologies to generate moving images in a variety of genres with most submissions demonstrating a high degree of

competency in camera craft and audio application. The image quality in terms of resolution was also high due to the use of SLR cameras. Approaches included stop motion and real time films, such as music-inspired videos and documentaries. Stop-motion animations employed a range of materials such as plasticine, paper cutouts, toys and people in innovative ways. Most candidates demonstrated knowledge of film conventions, with discernment towards camera angles, continuity and emotive viewpoints to convey key ideas and propel the intended approach to filmmaking.

In better works the value of production equipment such as the suitability of the camera, use of tripod and sound recording ensured the technical qualities both in image and sound were maximised. There was a sophisticated amalgamation of camera craft that allowed for innovative approaches towards the depiction of subject matter. A refined understanding of editing software was evident and appeared seamless in terms of the fluid transition of scenes complementing the intent and scripting of pace and rhythm. Mastery of technique in production and postproduction was evident, ensuring the concept was clearly and subtly conveyed.

Candidates are reminded of the critical importance of the script and storyboard to establish a clear narrative or artistic intention in the submission. The use of sound to unify the film needs to be considered and reviewed. The importance of titles and credits in their submissions, especially for the recognition of sources of sounds and images should also be included.