Visual arts

Exhibition - Internal assessment clarification

This clarification must be read in conjunction with the *Visual Arts guide* (2014, updated 2017).

The first part of this clarification provides information and reminders about how to approach the marking of the visual arts internally assessed component from 2016, the exhibition. The second part offers clarification about the application of the individual assessment criteria when marking the exhibition. The content of this document is being shared with teachers and examiners and aims to offer the maximum support.

Assessment outline

Teachers and examiners must refer to the *Visual Arts Guide* (2014, updated 2017).

The role of the teacher

Please refer to the *Visual Arts Guide* (2014, updated 2017).

Before marking

Teachers are required to review the quality of each candidate's digital submission and in particular check that:

- the quality of the evidence presented enables examiners to view and assess each candidate's artwork. Please note that the quality of the digital images submitted for e-assessment should allow the examiners to zoom in and be able to view details of each artwork
- the correct number of artworks according to the course requirements at SL or HL is submitted
- all the required additional information about each artwork is provided correctly
- the file types and sizes are matching the IB eCoursework upload system requirements
- the "additional supporting photographs" file slots have been correctly used. These are not mandatory files. This option should be used only when candidates find that one image is insufficient and more photographs are needed to document a single artwork. In the majority of cases this should not be necessary as examiners are anyway able to zoom in to enlarge details of the artworks
- the candidates' work selected for submission fulfils all the academic honesty requirements
- all candidates' exhibition digital portfolios are ready for submission
- all candidates' coursework authentication forms are ready for submission

While marking

Teachers are expected to:

- review each candidate's exhibition portfolio and mark the candidate's work referring to the assessment criteria for the relevant course level in the Visual arts guide (2014 updated 2017)
- remember that the exhibition is assessed as a whole, therefore consider holistically all the evidence presented by the candidate, including the artworks, exhibition photographs, the curatorial rationale, and the exhibition text. The visual arts guide states: "The final presentation of the work is assessed in the context of the presentation as a whole

(including the accompanying text) by the teacher against the assessment criteria."

- consider and refer to the same evidence as that available to the examiner who moderates the marking. Teachers should therefore always refer to the digital, on-screen, version of the submitted work when marking the exhibition. This is important for the integrity of the moderation process (*Visual arts guide* 2014, updated 2017)
- avoid any bias when marking
- record the breakdown of marks for all candidates as they will be required to enter these as well as a brief comment to support the marks awarded to the candidates selected as part of the sample. Examiners will refer to these during the moderation process. The teacher's comment should support the examiner in making their judgement and provide information which is useful to support the moderator in identifying what evidence in the candidate's exhibition matches the assessment criteria.

Teachers should be aware that examiners are instructed to accept the teacher's mark if it is reasonable to do so and it correlates with the assessment criteria and with the standards set by the principal examiner. The teacher's mark should be altered only when the examiner is sure that it is inappropriate.

Teachers (and examiners) must assess only the maximum amount of work required and therefore must:

- not consider pieces in excess of the maximum number of artworks allowed for the level
- ignore any artwork that by mistake is included in the exhibition photographs but is not part of the exhibition submission
- be aware of the word count limits for the curatorial rationale and credit only the work within 400 words at SL and within 700 words at HL. Teachers and examiners are not expected to read what exceeds the prescribed number of words
- remember that the two exhibition photographs - now compulsory- inform the holistic assessment of the exhibition component but are not allocated marks
- stop watching video files after 5 minutes: video files should not exceed 5 minutes and examiners must not continue viewing videos that last longer.

Teachers (and examiners) must be aware of the following points:

Art-making forms: there are no restrictions in the exhibition criteria on the range of media used by the candidate, meaning that the candidate is not required to present a collection of artworks using more than one medium and therefore must not be penalised for not doing so. Candidates at both SL and HL may submit work created in any preferred art-making form for part 3: exhibition (*Visual arts guide* 2014, updated 2017).

Collective pieces: the candidate may present a series of works (for example, a series of photographs) as one piece. This must be clearly stated as part of the title of the submitted piece in the exhibition text, presented in parentheses. For example: *Reflection* (series). (*Visual arts guide* 2014, updated 2017)

Exhibition space: the space where the exhibition is presented must not influence the marking or constitute any bias. Candidates must not be disadvantaged because of the space in which the exhibition is set up. Assessment criterion D refers to the selection of works and to what extent the curatorial rationale justifies the selection and arrangement of a group of artworks in a designated place, but no reference to the quality of the space itself is made in the *Visual arts guide (2014, updated 2017).*

Sound: any audio component used as part of an artwork will not be assessed in the visual arts course (*Visual arts guide 2014, updated 2017*). Examiners are required to assess only the visual arts and are therefore required to ignore any audio element that candidates might have used in their art pieces. The sound should be turned off when marking/moderating the exhibition

component, so that the focus is purely on the visual creative content and there is no interference from the audio. This applies to music, dialogues and any kind of sound that might be part, for example, of a video art or of an installation.

Penalties: no penalties must be applied by teachers and examiners, who must just rigorously apply the assessment criteria. Teachers and examiners must not penalize candidates who submit fewer than the minimum required number of artworks/screens, but rather mark the work applying the assessment criteria to the material provided. Each assessment criterion explicitly states whether a candidate who failed to fully match the component requirements cannot be awarded the top marks for that criterion.

Examiners must keep in mind that some candidates will not be writing in their first language so no penalty should be applied for grammatical inaccuracy.

Academic honesty in visual arts: compliance with the academic honesty requirements is still an area of concern in the visual arts course. According to the *Visual arts guide*, teachers should ensure that candidates acknowledge all sources used and reference them appropriately.

Overall there must be complete clarity in the submission about what constitutes a candidate's work and what is that inspired it.

Teachers and candidates must refer to the *Visual arts guide* and may find useful to consult the publication *Effective citing and referencing* available on the Online Curriculum Centre (OCC).

Additional details about complying with academic honesty in the exhibition submission are listed below, but in general teachers must remember that it is their role to ensure that all candidates understand the basic meaning and significance of concepts that relate to academic honesty.

All work submitted to the IB for moderation must be authenticated by a teacher and must not include any known instances of suspected or confirmed academic misconduct.

There is no marking criteria that rewards or penalises candidates for their referencing as this is a matter of academic honesty but failing to appropriately acknowledge sources could potentially lead to an investigation for breach of regulation which could have serious consequences for candidates.

Academic honesty in the exhibition: the *Visual arts guide* (2014, updated 2017) states that "When the student is aware that another person's work, ideas or images have influenced their selected pieces for exhibition the source must be acknowledged within the exhibition text or in the curatorial rationale, following the protocol of the referencing style chosen by the school". This implies that:

- any found object or image, including those taken from the Internet, used as inspiration by candidates when creating their artwork must be referenced appropriately in the exhibition text or in the curatorial rationale

- for each artwork that refers to another artwork candidates must include in the exhibition text or in the curatorial rationale clear reference to their source of inspiration acknowledging the title, artist, date, medium (whenever possible) and providing a reference indicating where the artwork was accessed and viewed

- where candidates are deliberately appropriating another artist's artwork, the exhibition text should acknowledge the original work and make explicit reference to the process of appropriation; mention of the appropriation process and relevant references can also be included in the curatorial rationale
- in the curatorial rationale all sources need to be referenced in-text, at point of use.

In some instances a judgement will need to be made by examiners between occasionally confused/incomplete citations (sloppy referencing) and an academic honesty issue. Teachers might find useful to know that when in doubt examiners are required to always refer the matter to the IB. Examiners are not required to investigate possible academic misconduct.

Using the assessment criteria

Teachers and examiners should note that the visual arts syllabus demonstrates a clear distinction between the course at SL and at HL, with additional assessment requirements at HL that allow for breadth and greater depth in the teaching and learning. In the case of the exhibition, HL candidates are expected to produce a higher number of resolved works and to demonstrate how their resolved works communicate with a potential viewer. Therefore:

- The same criteria A, B, C are provided for the exhibition component at HL and SL. For criterion D different descriptors are provided at HL and SL.

- Candidates who fail to submit the minimum number of artworks prescribed for the level for which they are entered (4 at SL/ 8 at HL) cannot achieve a mark higher than 6 in criteria A, B, C.

Teachers must refer to the section *Using assessment criteria for internal assessment* in the *Visual arts guide* (2014, updated 2017).

In addition to the general points mentioned in the *Visual arts guide*, it might be worth clarifying that when marking the exhibition a best-fit approach might also require some compensation to be made in cases where the candidate's collection of artworks matches the same criterion at different levels. So for example, if technical competence is generally adequate (4–6) throughout but two pieces are much stronger (assured/effective, 7–9) the teacher/examiner is likely to decide on a final mark of 6 for technical competence.

The following additional clarifications about the application of each of the assessment criteria must be taken in account when marking the exhibition.

CRITERION A: coherent body of works

Teachers and examiners should note that "a coherent body of works" does not refer specifically to a theme, but to "thematic or stylistic relationships" (*Visual arts guide* 2014, updated 2017).

Coherence in the exhibition is not necessarily achieved through visual conformity, or a collection that is just visually similar and/or repetitive. There can be diversity within coherence.

There must be synergy and a sense of coherence across the collection of artworks presented as part of the exhibition. The relationships could be dynamic and surprising, and could involve ideas about styles of artmaking, or there could be thematic relationships but a formalized theme is not required.

For this criterion it is also vital to refer to the curatorial rationale in order to identify the candidate's stated intentions, and when turning to the artwork, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the way in which techniques, media, and imagery have been selected and applied.

The curatorial rationale must support and explain the selection of works and their relationship to each other and to the collection as a whole. It may be that in the case of weaker collections there is little evidence that the candidate's intentions informed the selection of processes/imagery.

CRITERION B: technical competence

The degree of refinement and resolution of individual works will inform judgment when assessing technical competence. Please note that the top level descriptor requires an "assured" level of technical competence which is likely to include evidence of sensitivity, sophistication, control, and an excellent understanding and use of media/materials.

Effective application of formal qualities implies confident and sensitive understanding and use of such qualities as texture, shape, form, etc. and evidence of technical mastery.

There is no reference to stated intentions in this criterion.

CRITERION C: conceptual qualities

This criterion refers to the degree of sophistication in relation to the candidate's thoughts and ideas, and includes the important concept of "elaboration". To achieve well in this criterion, ideas, concepts, or themes must be explored in depth and developed not only to an "adequate" level (markband 4–6) but to a point of "effective" realization (markband 7–9).

For this criterion it is necessary to refer to all the evidence available to understand the candidate's stated intentions: all level descriptors refer to the quality of communication of stated artistic intentions (minimal, adequate or effective) so there is an important link between the candidate's intentions and how successfully these are communicated.

There is consistent reference to imagery, signs or symbols in all level descriptors for this criterion: this relates to the candidate's knowledge, understanding and use of motifs and symbolism, which might mean symbolic use of (for example) colour, choice of imagery, symbolism specific to a particular culture, or considered use of a particular format.

In general terms, to achieve the highest level in this criterion the imagery must show evidence of a thoughtful and considered approach: the examiner is looking for evidence of subtle and/or complex ideas and imagery. Less successful exhibitions are likely to contain imagery that is predictable or dull, with "obvious, contrived or superficial" work.

The curatorial rationale and the exhibition text are important sources of evidence when applying criterion C, as this makes a specific reference to a correlation between the work and the candidate's stated artistic intentions.

CRITERION D: curatorial practice

It must be noted that the rationale must justify the selection and arrangement of the exhibited works as appropriate to the student's stated intentions.

Also in criterion D at HL the descriptors require the curatorial rationale to articulate relationships between the artwork and the viewer within the space available

IA feedback to schools

Teachers are reminded that, as already communicated, IA feedback to schools is provided only when the teacher's marks are found to be out of tolerance. No feedback is provided if the teacher's marking is accurate.