

Visual arts

Process portfolio assessment criteria clarification

Examiners and teachers should note that the same assessment criteria and level descriptors are provided at HL and SL for the process portfolio and examiners must apply these consistently to all candidates' work avoiding any bias because of the level for which each candidate is registered.

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 process portfolio, HL candidates are required to submit for assessment more screens than SL candidates and also to experiment in greater depth with additional art-making media, techniques and forms.

Examiners and teachers must also be aware of the following:

Art-making forms: the *Visual arts guide – First examinations 2016* states the number of art-making forms with which candidates at HL or SL must engage with and the art-making forms table on pages 20 and 45 offers some guidance about possible choices. Teachers and examiners must check that each candidate has worked in the correct number and a correct combination of art-making forms because failure to do so has an impact on the awarding of marks for criterion A.

The following points are worth clarification:

- the art-making forms required are denoted by the bold text in each of the three columns. This means that to satisfy this assessment requirement at HL, candidates would need to create, for example, a drawing and a painting plus an artwork in one of the forms listed in any of the other two columns, rather than a painting in oil and a painting in acrylic as these examples both fall within the painting form
- the table on pages 20 and 45 of the *Visual art guide – First examinations 2016* is not intended to represent a definitive list and candidates are free to work with media that are not mentioned
- the same technique may allow the production of both 2D or 3D art-works, for example collage or textiles, therefore checking that the selection of art-making forms is meeting the course requirements might imply some judgement about the form of the artwork produced using a certain technique
- where a candidate submits work that falls across multiple media reasonable judgement should be applied to determine which art-making form is the predominant.
- **Level descriptors:** where a range of marks is available for a criterion level, the nature and extent of the evidence for each level descriptor will of course determine the mark to be awarded. A process portfolio that has strong evidence for one element of a descriptor, yet the other elements are poorly represented will not achieve the top mark. The mark chosen within a level will reflect the extent to which the work has met that level descriptor: the lowest mark if it has only just exceeded the previous level, the highest if it is approaching the next.

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 - First examinations 2016* teachers should ensure that candidates are acknowledging all sources used and referencing them appropriately. Overall there should 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 process portfolio 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 assessment must be authenticated by a teacher and must not include any known instances of suspected or confirmed academic misconduct.

There is no marking criterion 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 process portfolio: as stated on page 45 of the *Visual arts guide – First examinations 2016* (March 2014):

- every image used must be appropriately referenced to acknowledge the title, artist, date (where this information is known) and the source, following the protocol of the referencing style chosen by the school
- candidates must ensure that their own original work is identified and acknowledged in the same way to ensure examiners are clear about the origins of the materials
- when the candidate is aware that another person's work, ideas or images have influenced his or her conceptual or developmental work but it has not been referred to directly in their work, the source must be included as a bibliographic reference within the submitted portfolio screens.

In addition to this it is worth clarifying that:

- the visual arts guide requires candidates to acknowledge the title, artist, date (where this information is known) and also to cite the source of every image that they include in their process portfolio, but details about the medium of the cited artworks can be very useful and should therefore be mentioned in the captions
- where deliberately appropriating another artist's image, candidates must fully acknowledge the original work and make explicit reference to the appropriation process
- any image taken from the Internet and used as inspiration by candidates when creating their work must be appropriately referenced

A judgement will sometimes need to be made by examiners to distinguish between occasionally confused or incomplete citation (sloppy referencing) and issues that concern academic honesty.

When marking a process portfolio that has incomplete referencing or is suspected of academic misconduct examiners should not spend time investigating the issue in any detail. Examiners must complete the marking of the work at face value and then refer the case to the IB following the examiner instructions.

Clarifications about the application of the assessment criteria

In the process portfolio assessment criteria, the word "work" is used to refer to the submitted process portfolio and should not be confused with singular artworks, although artworks may form a part of a submitted process portfolio. When considering the "work", the examiner is considering the process portfolio as a whole.

CRITERION A: skills, techniques and processes

In this criterion examiners are looking for evidence of an art-making practice that reflects sustained or continual experimentation and the purposeful manipulation of a range of techniques and processes; candidates are required to demonstrate their ability to select and use materials, techniques and processes that are appropriate to their intentions using the required number of art-making forms from the table on page 20 in the *Visual arts guide – First examinations 2016*.

The *Visual arts guide* specifically states that candidates who fail to submit works reflecting the minimum number of art-making forms required for the level will not be awarded a mark higher than 3 for criterion A.

The word “incoherent” is used to describe weaker process portfolios in the 1-3 level. In this context, a process portfolio might be considered incoherent when a candidate fails to justify the choice of media, materials and/or technique to realise any stated intention for an artwork. Experimentation might lack direction and purpose; the documentation and/or articulation of the artistic processes might be incomplete or of a poor standard.

The phrase “assured and sustained” in the 10-12 level refers to the candidate’s ability to articulate a confident, competent and purposeful artmaking practice which directs him or her to undertake ongoing experimentation and manipulation of a range of materials and techniques. Examiners are also looking for evidence of consistent refinement of the artwork and of further developments that show that the candidate extended and challenged his or her own abilities.

CRITERION B: critical investigation

Unlike the comparative study, the process portfolio is not a formalised study into artists from a range of cultural contexts, rather it encourages students to engage critically with the work of other artists to help inform their own artmaking practice. Candidates are encouraged to consider artworks with common material, technical or conceptual concerns to their own studio practice and employ in-depth critical analysis to help solve material, technical or conceptual problems emerging in their own artmaking.

Criterion B in the process portfolio is formative in nature, and requires students to engage critically with the work of other artists as they engage in studio practice to inform and enrich their artmaking.

Background biographical or cultural information has little or no relevance to this criterion.

In order to fully match the descriptors for this criterion candidates may have to rely upon some bibliographic sources of information, but it must be noted that while in the previous visual arts course the assessment criteria were rewarding the quality of referencing, now this is dealt with as a more general matter of academic honesty.

The criterion B focuses on the quality of the critical investigation and examiners are looking for evidence of candidates being aware of the impact that the critical investigation had on their artistic practice.

CRITERION C: communication of ideas and intentions

In this criterion examiners are looking for evidence of the candidate’s ability to clearly articulate how their initial ideas and intentions have been formed and developed, and to communicate how they have assimilated technical skills, chosen media and ideas to develop their work further.

The phrase “but with room for further depth” in the 3-4 level descriptor implies that the work attempts to identify how initial ideas and intentions have been formed and developed, but this is underdeveloped, or not developed as expected in the 5-6 level. The work begins to communicate how technical skills, media and ideas have been assimilated, but, at times, lack sufficient detail/depth or sophistication.

CRITERION D: reviewing, refining and reflecting

In this criterion examiners are looking for evidence of candidates' ability to review and refine selected ideas, skills, processes and techniques, and to reflect on the acquisition of skills and their development as a visual artist.

Again, the phrase "but with room for further depth" is used in the 3-4 level descriptor. For this criterion this phrase implies that the work demonstrates a process of reviewing and refining ideas, skills, processes and techniques, but this is underdeveloped. The work presents some reflections upon the acquisition of skills as an artist, but at times, lacking in sufficient detail/depth or sophistication.

The phrase "highly effective" is used to describe stronger process portfolios in the 5-6 level. A process portfolio might be considered highly effective when an ongoing process of reviewing and refining ideas, skills, processes and techniques is evident and when there is evidence that the successes and failures in previous work inform and enrich subsequent work.

The phrase "meaningful and assured" is used in the 5-6 level descriptor. A process portfolio might be considered to demonstrate a "meaningful and assured" reflection if the candidate considers all aspects of his or her artmaking practice including skills, ideas, techniques and processes, and makes realistic and considered evaluation of success and failures that reflect a developed level of discernment.

CRITERION E: presentation and subject-specific language

In this criterion examiners are looking for evidence that the information is conveyed clearly and coherently in a visually appropriate and legible manner, supported by the consistent use of appropriate subject-specific language.

The phrase "visually appropriate, legible and engaging" is used to describe stronger process portfolios in the 3-4 level. This refers to process portfolios that show a good balance of text and visuals. The screens are not just formal text, nor unannotated images. Screens are content rich without being overcrowded. Layout is clear and considered. Content is coherent. Presentation overall is creative and engaging, without being fussy or over-embellished.

The words "accurately and appropriately" are used with reference to the use of subject-specific language in the 3-4 level descriptor. This refers to candidates confidently and consistently using appropriate subject-specific terminology when required and demonstrating a fluency with the metalanguage of visual arts.