

2024 ASSESSMENT REPORT

CAP315124 CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICE

General Comments

2024 has been the first year for Contemporary Art Practice, and results span the spectrum of achievement, with notable increases at the high and low end compared with the previous version of this course. There was notable success with many students achieving strong outcomes via a diverse range of fascinating art inquiries. 50% of students (20 out of 39) reached High or Exceptional Achievement awards. These results are indicative of the hard work of students.

There was however also a concerning amount of Limited and Preliminary achievements with 20% (8 out of 39) achieving either of those results. This coupled with the lack of Satisfactory Achievements (only 1 out of 39), suggests students struggling to pass the course may not have attempted the final folio, or chosen not to submit it. In the future, we highly recommend students submit the major folio, even if it isn't fully resolved, as they may be able to achieve results against some criteria.

Folio Component

1. Analyse artworks using concepts and principles of contemporary visual art theory

This criterion is the most extensive in terms of standard elements, comprising five elements spanning a range of essay writing conventions. As such, it is also the most thoroughly assessed by examiners. Some observations from examiners are listed below:

Element 3 - Comparison of features, requires students to make judgements between artists, artworks and/or exhibitions. Consistently this is a challenging element where students often fall short. Many students missed B or A ratings on this criterion due to not comparing artworks in suitable detail. As critics of art, it is vital that students compare artworks in line with the essay inquiry topics. By making these comparisons, readers can better understand the nuanced decisions of artists and importantly, how those decisions are interpreted by the student. There is scope within *Section 1: A contemporary art inquiry* to achieve this while writing concisely and doing so aids the flow and keeps the reader engaged.

Element 4 - Research outcomes is the only element where referencing is directly assessed, and as such, has significant weighting. In some instances, students were penalised up to one grade (A to B for example) due to poor referencing. This penalty is outlined in the external assessment guidelines for this course. Very simply, some students failed to include a bibliography, reference list or both. Additionally, many sources of information were uncited throughout essays. It is important that students get drafts of the major folio to teachers early enough to ensure suitable support in proofreading this section of their folio. In 2024, the external due date being 3 days into Term 4 likely contributed to the failure to rectify these issues in some folios. It is important to get the folio to your teacher well before the end of Term 3 to ensure they can provide feedback.

In addition to incorrect referencing, there was a general lack of exploration documented in bibliographies. With the expectation that students investigate both historical and contemporary contexts and potentially also curate an exhibition, a broad range of artworks should be looked at and documented. Unfortunately, many folios only listed articles relating to artworks within the folio. Selecting and rejecting artworks, artists and ideas plays a vital role in forming a sound argument and documenting the development of the folio through the bibliography needs to reflect this.

Overall, this criterion had noticeably lower ratings than others.

2. Analyse social, cultural and historical contexts of visual art

This criterion was hardest for students to achieve an “A” rating on, perhaps due to the range of contexts that need to be addressed. Historical, cultural and social contexts each have their own elements that are assessed, and it is vital that students holistically cover all three within *Section 1: A contemporary art inquiry*.

This brings attention to the importance of writing concisely to ensure these contexts can be evaluated. Often, “A” rated essays analysed 4-6 artworks, allowing 300-500 words to cover everything. Comparisons are again a key feature of assessment with *E04 - Comparison and contrast* requiring students to use this contextual information as part of their evaluations.

4. Analyse professional contemporary visual art industry knowledge

The focus on professional industry skills and knowledge has been a positive inclusion in the course, resulting in many nuanced investigations that would often have been overlooked previously. In some cases, students physically visited exhibitions, analysed the spaces and spoke to curators. These students are to be celebrated for engaging with the course in such a valuable and authentic way. Often, these local exhibitions provided a wealth of information and framed entire sections of the inquiry.

Comparatively, it is important to know that examiners are fine with students looking beyond local contexts for *Section 2: A professional context inquiry – Part A*. This decision was discussed, confirmed and communicated to teachers during/after Moderation Meetings held in September. This broadening of scope allowed for more relevant samples of curation and critique to be analysed in line with inquiry questions. In either case, students were not penalised for cohesion or lack-of between these sections.

5. Communicate using contemporary visual art language

Another positive aspect of this new course is the range of communication styles seen in *Section 2: A professional context inquiry – Part B*. It was clear to examiners that students had been exposed to a range of different writing conventions, and that the purpose and theoretical audience of their writing were understood. *E02 – Form, content, style and visual art terminology* and *E03 – Communication of ideas* strongly featured in the assessment of this criterion. When writing from the perspective of the curator, responses ranged from proposals to galleries and internal documents to stakeholders to public facing communications. Each style of writing has its own unique properties, and it was a joy to see the voices developed by students. In some cases, diagrams of literal spaces, mock-ups of exhibition hangs, and floorplans helped communicate their

intentions. Anything like this that helps improve the understanding of the students' intentions is always welcomed by examiners.

Positively, *E04 - Control of language* was an easily achieved "A" element for most students, with nearly all folios free of any major language errors. Well done to all students on overwhelmingly strong writing.

8. Analyse and synthesise a visual art inquiry

Overall, students achieved the strongest results on this criterion, with 40% of students achieving an "A" rating externally. Examiners noted that this achievement was a result of students holistically addressing their topics across the three parts. These successful students built the reader's awareness and comprehension of those topics by scaffolding information across each section. They weren't repetitive with their information, but rather, provided new artwork examples in each section to support their arguments. In the cases where artworks and/or artists were used multiple times, they were often presented in new contexts that extended the student's knowledge and strengthened their topics.

Looking more specifically at elements, achieving an "A" rating on *Element 1 – Perspectives and Issues* requires students to "*synthesise a range of diverse and complex perspectives and issues when solving research questions*". This requires folios to have an inquiring aspect that explores diverse perspectives. Simply listing a range of artworks that relate in some way isn't enough to achieve higher than "C" ratings.

Strong folios tackled challenging questions and provided multiple viewpoints and examples. In some cases, this thorough investigation is implicit in the folio title. For example:

- *Around the sexualisation of women through the history of painted imagery*
- *How has the Queer Community used Art as Protest?*
- *The Tortured Artist: How is mental illness portrayed in contemporary art?*
- *Exploring the connections between Abstract art, Human interpretation, and the Natural world.*

These essays questioned a range of artworks that met their folio topics while ensuring a coherent and balanced approach.

Element 4 – Research Outcomes explicitly requires students to reach conclusions in their writing. The "A" rating states "*presents logical conclusions that coherently synthesise and explain research outcomes from the inquiry.*" A lot of the heavy lifting for this element came from *Section 1: A contemporary art inquiry*, that allowed students the word-count to unpack their arguments. Successful students also ensured similar findings were presented in the other two sections, supporting conclusions made.