

VISUAL ARTS

Introduction

This report is for the May 2011 examination session and includes reference to the performance of candidates in HLA, SLA, HLB, and SLB courses. The report sets out to provide information about the examination session as well as to provide some advice to assist in improving the achievement of candidates in future examination sessions.

The visual arts subject report is organized into the following sections:

1. The studio work component
2. The investigation workbook component
3. Recommendations relating to IB procedures, instructions and forms

Although the two components for each of the four visual arts courses are separately examined, it can be difficult to separate these components when discussing the outcomes of the session due to the integrated nature of the tasks that candidates undertake in developing and creating their work. Consequently the information contained throughout the report may be relevant to either or both components.

Resources on the Online Curriculum Centre (<http://occ.ibo.org/ibis/occ/guest/home.cfm>) provide teachers with access to:

- subject reports
- the current *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*
- extended essay reports
- the *Visual arts subject guide* (for first examination May 2009)
- the *Visual arts teacher support material* (for first examination May 2009)
- the *Assessment clarification, June 2010* (replaces and includes the document published in November 2008)
- the visual arts online virtual gallery

It is essential that Diploma Programme visual arts teachers regularly consult with these documents, regardless of previous experience, and make appropriate information available to candidates during their course.

Candidates should have access to the assessment markband descriptors at all times.

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level option A

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 13	14 – 28	29 – 43	44 – 58	59 – 70	71 – 85	86 – 100

Higher level option B

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 12	13 – 27	28 – 42	43 – 57	58 – 67	68 – 82	83 – 100

Standard level option A

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 13	14 – 28	29 – 43	44 – 58	59 – 70	71 – 85	86 – 100

Standard level option B

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 12	13 – 27	28 – 42	43 – 57	58 – 67	68 – 82	83 – 100

Studio work

Higher level option A

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 9	10 – 12	13 – 14	15 – 17	18 – 20

Higher level option B

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 9	10 – 12	13 – 14	15 – 17	18 – 20

Standard level option A

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 9	10 – 12	13 – 14	15 – 17	18 – 20

Standard level option B

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 6	7 – 9	10 – 12	13 – 14	15 – 17	18 – 20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

In general the reports on the range and suitability of studio work this session were favourable, although examiners experienced a wide range of work showing a spectrum of appropriateness for the course.

The range of work that candidates presented for assessment demonstrated a variety of techniques and media being explored, including some emergent media and multi-media work. The majority of schools continued to work with very traditional materials, tools and approaches. Some examiners felt that some schools have learnt how to meet certain criteria and developed a formulaic approach to the creation of works submitted for assessment, which is detrimental to the development of the individual artist and at the cost of the holistic aims and objectives of visual arts within the Diploma Programme.

Painting was the most common technique from the traditional media exhibited. Some examiners reported painting work displayed a mundane and simplistic use of media and approaches to visual expression, where small-scale A4/letter-size or A3 sized works in pencil, acrylic paint, with some oil painting watercolour painting and mixed media dominated candidate submissions at some schools. More adventurous use of printmaking was reported this session (including block-print, mono-prints, transfers, gum Arabic, stencils and linocuts).

When digital photography was chosen as a means for visual communication candidates achieved against higher markbands when they had undertaken pre-planning and their investigation workbooks evidenced the depth and breadth of the application of the media. Some examiners were concerned at the lack of creative use of digital media with the result that the work resembled everyday snapshots. They felt this was evidenced by a lack of recording digital manipulation processes in the candidates' investigation workbooks.

Examiners reported interesting use of collage and mixed media, often approached more subtly than in previous sessions, interesting work using non-traditional media, more installation work, more digital imaging, and more interesting combinations of familiar and unfamiliar media, techniques and methodologies. In some schools multi-media and film animation were significant in candidate submissions.

Anime and fantasy art were more prevalent this session and examiners reported that where this was done well the investigation workbooks included evidence of the study of figure drawing and observational drawing.

Examiners reported that they saw very little sculpture or ceramic work this session. They found it disappointing when candidates had created works but had not glazed them, or in some cases kiln-fired them, resulting in examples presented for assessment that were brittle, broken, shattered and sometimes muddy-looking pieces, which were limited from reaching higher markbands.

Some examiners commented, once again, that candidates had tried a variety of media without any solid focus on growth or development to an accepted level of technical ability. The quality of some art appeared to be hindered because insufficient time had been spent acquiring the relevant skills: examiners commented on candidates spending too much time experimenting with a large variety of media and techniques, as opposed to time spent acquiring skill. Other examiners were disappointed by candidates who were described as playing safe, concentrating on one or two media with which they were comfortable and

familiar, not taking risks and extending their capabilities even in experimental work in preparation for a studio piece.

Examiners agreed that candidates should be taught at the beginning of the course, and at relevant points throughout the course. They reported that where candidates had been left to make art without teachers working with them to develop skills and techniques, work usually displayed a lack of analysis, critical observation, the development of contextual and historical referencing and resulted in artworks that lacked personal engagement. At the other extreme, courses based solely on teacher generated projects where candidate work is strongly directed to fulfil assignments do not allow candidates to develop any personal relevance, inventiveness, self-direction or independent judgement.

A visual arts curriculum that is created to incorporate ways to develop critical analysis and the exploration of ideas and artistic qualities was reported to facilitate candidate achievement. Some examiners felt that where candidates demonstrated confidence and inventiveness their learning had been focussed around experimentation and innovation using appropriate materials and provided them with opportunities to work to their strengths. Curriculum that provided opportunities for candidates to be reflective, make mistakes and refine their work as it progressed also gave candidates a better ability to reach the higher markbands.

Examiners expressed concern at the tendency for candidates to rely on using photographs as the source to create studio works. As well as academic honesty implications where candidates must acknowledge photographs that they have not taken themselves, paintings produced in a formulaic manner by copying photographs remove the need to engage with composition and design. Using photographs should not replace looking at and making observational studies of sources in the real world, though they can be a useful resource in the investigate process for creating a studio work.

The use of the internet by candidates was an area that examiners frequently commented on. Copying downloaded images was, like using a photographic image, seen as a lazy and easy option, and depending on the context may also constitute plagiarism. Examiners reported that even when minor alterations were made there was frequently too little in the way of the developmental process to make the work meaningful or successful. Possibly related to the ease of relying on the use of photographs or the internet is the area of whether candidates were willing to take artistic risks.

Many examiners expressed their wish to see more three-dimensional work, more risk-taking and more experimentation undertaken by candidates as staying within a comfort zone does not tend to lead to exciting art. Examiners linked improving technical competence to the idea of risk-taking. Where candidates understood the notion of transgression and/or taking risks, it was reported that there were often more inventive outcomes.

The concept of the 'theme' is still misunderstood by some schools. Examiners commented that although there were some successful exhibitions built around themes, teachers and candidates should be reminded that it is not a requirement to create a theme-based collection of work. Sometimes adhering to a strict or narrow theme limited the potential of the candidate and the work. Some teachers imposed the idea of the theme on candidates to the detriment of their work, and some candidates chose personally relevant themes that were difficult to translate into visual form. Whether or not a candidate adopts a thematic approach to art, they should be taught to articulate how they moved from idea to idea, from studio work to studio

work, and how they made significant decisions about that development. Some personal and social issues were presented, often in response to both local and global developments; peer pressure and conformity, feminine beauty, materialism, nature, and conflict were topics that were often seen again this session.

Candidate performance against each criterion

As Visual arts is assessed against holistic markband descriptors and not individual criteria, the bullet points within the markband descriptors have been treated individually as far as is possible in the following section although some crossover is inevitable:

Understanding of artistic expression

Examiners reported a wide range of achievement in the development of ideas and levels of understanding. Where candidates generated imagery based upon initial ideas or impulses, without pushing them into new realms of creative image-making, conducting research, reflection and analysis of their thought processes, it was difficult to create significant work reaching the higher markbands.

Some examiners felt that candidates could have benefitted from more emphasis being placed on the elements and principles of design, of composition, and a greater understanding of formal analysis.

As noted in the previous section some examiners felt that the notion of a 'theme' is still an area that causes problems.

Personal relevance, cultural and historical awareness

Personal relevance was evident in much of the work examined with personal experiences often being more prominent than cultural, historical or artistic qualities. Often work was so personally symbolic it was to the detriment of the consideration of historical and/or cultural awareness or visual qualities. It was commented on that although for some candidates there was evidence of a developing sense of self in relation to a current social issue or problem, there was little evidence of cultural and historical sources being used appropriately to inform and construct artwork. Some candidates who had evidenced good artist references in early stages had not developed cultural and historical understanding alongside personal growth, not continued to feed work as work progressed and therefore limited achievement in summative assessment. Often cultural and/or historical awareness was limited to artistic influences from Europe and/or the USA. Examiners recommend that candidates take advantage of their situations to explore cross-cultural referencing.

Candidates need to be prepared to discuss their exploration of cultural, historical and artistic ideas, rather than to talk about personal relevance alone, during the examination interview. These explorations should show depth and not remain superficial. Weaker candidates struggled to connect historical and cultural research with their studio work, opting for what tended to be a rather superficial solution. The dichotomy between expressing individual feelings and emotions and using visual arts as a means of examining issues was evident in much of the work examined. Some candidates worked with personally relevant ideas which *were* related to their own and other cultures. Through investigation of various artists and styles, they showed the development of their ideas to varying degrees.

It was commented upon this session that candidates who were recent immigrants did not draw in depth or breadth on the cultural references from their country of origin. Where candidates do not use their known contexts but rely upon the contexts from their new location they are limiting themselves. Where candidates are presenting studio works created in response to teacher prescribed assignments the personal relevance of these works is limited.

Development of ideas and strategies for expression

In some schools whereas a freedom to experiment with materials allowed candidates to develop personal strategies, a more directed strategy may have encouraged a more in-depth development of ideas. Many candidates intelligently investigated ideas though some examiners reported that others had been following the requirements of the markband descriptors so closely when planning and developing their work that the qualities of experimentation, exploration and depth of meaning were absent; the resulting work being very safe but limiting achievement against the markband descriptor. Some examiners commented that candidates had been unable to talk about the basic knowledge of the elements and principles of design and that the development of their ideas had been missing.

Sensitivity to materials and their use

Where candidates were able to talk about how their use of materials had been successful, or not and needed to be refined, examiners reported that they were often able to progress autonomously with good ideas, and were able to give a reflective view. Many examiners reported that this was one of the weakest areas, along with technical competence, in the work that they assessed.

Review, modify and refinement of ideas to resolution and medium

The evidence of candidates reviewing, modifying and refining their work as it progressed was variable. Examiners reported that where candidates further reviewed and refined ideas as they progressed, rather than just following the first successful resolution that they found, this enabled them to evidence thoughtful progression.

Examiners felt that candidates who gained knowledge of skills through being taught in a structured environment were generally able to produce better results. Also, better work was often created by candidates who acquired skills at the beginning of the course, and who were then allowed to develop a body of work independent of teacher led projects.

Technical competence

Although there were many schools presenting evidence of outstanding technical competence, in some schools this was not the case. In order to create successful art some degree of technical competence is required, whatever the media or technique used. Examiners frequently expressed that the candidates needed more instruction and actual teaching of these skills. In particular, concern was expressed about lack of competence in drawing, painting, basic photography, computer/digital imaging, sculpture and installations.

Confidence and inventiveness

Many candidates were able to talk about their work and/or explain it in the interview, often demonstrating good levels of confidence in discussing their body of work; inventiveness was sometimes evident in the presentation of their work.

Examiners reported seeing some evidence of inventiveness (for example with recycled materials), but often being 'inventive' was not enough: frequently this needed to transcend craft to become a more complex and effective visual statement.

Self direction and reflective judgement

Examiners commented that where candidates had been able to achieve against the higher markband descriptors in the previous three categories they were well placed to show an informed, reflective judgement that challenged and extended their person boundaries. Candidates who had received good teaching in the early part of their course were usually equipped to successfully express their ideas and were better able to develop their ideas within their own style.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Many of these recommendations repeat the assistance and guidance provided in previous subject reports.

Teachers should share the assessment criteria with candidates from the start, in order that they are aware of course expectations. The clarification of the assessment descriptors in the *Assessment clarification* document highlights what evidence the examiner is looking for in each component and should be used by schools when preparing for assessment.

Candidates must be taught skills. However personally relevant their ideas, these cannot be satisfactorily resolved without a knowledge and understanding of some of the processes and techniques of artistic expression.

The teacher could use class based projects aimed at developing observational and media skills as a starting point at the beginning of the course. Where possible provide input from artists in residence; this can be particularly useful if the teacher is not confident in some techniques/media.

It is important that teachers teach, advise, demonstrate and guide: candidates do not become independent by being left alone, but rather by being taught and thus acquiring skills, conceptual awareness and confidence. In particular, examiners recommended providing structured lessons on drawing, especially from observation, and demonstrations of techniques and use of media to help improve technical skill.

Teachers should support candidates in selecting appropriate ideas for their own artwork.

Encourage candidates to make links and extend connections to other subject areas. Provide experience in working with a variety of media but try to work in depth with at least one, so that candidates learn to acquire sufficient technical competence. Although experimentation with a wide range of media can be productive, it is important to ensure depth of understanding in at least one.

Candidates should be taught to think and develop their ideas visually by exploring alternatives and/or composition in the form of, for example, thumbnail sketches, preparatory studies, or maquettes.

Integrate first hand experiences into the curriculum: examiners commented that life drawing was a common source for drawing, but was only rarely developed into studio activity or the skills learned developed and explored further.

Culture is a complex area, and candidates should be taught about these complexities, so that exploring ideas reflecting cultural and historical awareness can go beyond the predictable, the obvious and the simplistic and would avoid the superficial notion of announcing “this is my cultural piece” as was reported by some examiners..

Investigation workbooks

Higher level option A

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 8	9 – 11	12 – 14	15 – 17	18 – 20

Higher level option B

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 8	9 – 11	12 – 13	14 – 16	17 – 20

Standard level option A

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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The range and suitability of the work submitted

Overall there was a good range of work submitted with some coherent, focused and individual investigative strategies amongst candidates achieving against the higher markbands. At the lower end, there was a tendency for the selection of investigation workbook (IWB) pages to be random, with no clear links to studio work and sometimes with little connection to visual arts practice. Some examiners noted an improvement on previous sessions with evidence of a clearer understanding of the requirements and purpose of the component. Some examiners commented on the good balance of images and text while others noted a reliance on text to explain processes and ideas instead of including images in a more creative and visually-stimulating way; some examiners noted pages with only sketches and no written content. A number of examiners found it difficult to read the text where the candidates had written on coloured backgrounds: others observed that highly decorated pages compromised content.

Examiners noted that the highest achieving candidates submitted evidence of very engaging, exploratory and experimental investigation while weaker candidates resorted to

indiscriminately downloading information without the use of an appropriate visual arts vocabulary or sometimes correct acknowledgement. At some schools the nature of the IWB had not been understood with candidates using it as a sketch book for drawings, a scrapbook for collected images (mostly unreferenced), or a workbook full of teacher directed formal essays or biographies. Referring to the selection of appropriate pages examiners commented on the wasted opportunity of including pages printed from the internet or photocopied from a book, or even of submitting notes from other subjects. Occasionally the selection of pages was made entirely in relation to one studio project, thus making it hard to judge the breadth of the investigation.

In some cases, it seemed that analysis was not understood as an educational tool. Candidates would say they 'liked' something without any contextual understanding. The transference of analytical skills from other diploma subjects and approaches was often disappointingly lacking.

As in previous sessions, it seemed that the higher-achieving candidates analysed intelligently and used this to inform the development of their work with strong connections made between investigation and studio work, while an absence of investigative strategies, visual analysis and understanding of artistic processes was often found in weaker candidates' submissions.

There were interesting developments where candidates had made use of digital photography, incorporating screenshots and thumbnails to document their work and to enhance their ideas, particularly when these were supported by the documented use of software and a real ability to manipulate images. However in general it was felt that there were some issues with evidencing digital art works with more teacher guidance on selecting appropriate sample pages needed.

While stronger candidates were able to display confidence and technical competence supported by focused investigation, the weaker ones displayed a limited amount of work and lacked creativity; instead, there were usually works that relied heavily on images extracted from the internet with little development of ideas, critical observation or analysis of art from different cultures.

The most successful investigations came from candidates who followed well-structured courses which introduced them to a variety of technical and critical skills. The candidates were then encouraged to work independently with support and guidance through individual projects. In the weaker submissions candidates appear to have been left to explore ideas with little guidance towards the work of other artists and artworks from different times and places and sometimes with very limited sources. In the better examples, candidates were able to process internet information by using thoughtful analysis and reflection, but in many cases, candidates made work that simply copied the technical aims of their chosen artist(s).

Stronger candidates demonstrated an understanding of the complete process of investigation to include the technical and visual aspects, supported by related historical documentation and personal concepts and interests. This resulted in the development of clear relationships between the IWB and the studio work. There were some excellent examples of step by step processes, with notes, analysis and investigation clearly demonstrated. Some examiners were concerned that even in some of the very good CRBs the choice of concept, and its significance to either the candidate or on a broader scale, was not adequately explained. The strongest work showed considerable depth and breadth as required by the criteria and

showed skill across the different fields of practice to include the use of sculpture, installation and moving image successfully.

Work that connected with fashion or textiles was often not well evidenced in investigation. The candidates had not looked at different fabrics or materials nor informed their ideas by looking at the work of other designers or textile artists.

Examiners found that there was still too much evidence of common projects, class lessons/talks and formal assignments in the selected IWB pages. This teacher-directed work appeared to inhibit the development of strong personal involvement in many cases. Examiners also noticed the addition to IWB pages of word-processed, formal critical essays that implied a lack of balance and ease with the IWB criteria and working art journal ethos. Certainly typed entries are acceptable where appropriate but not as the only written content.

Candidates' personal statements varied from the insightful to being weak on personal analysis, in some cases being mere descriptions of their artwork. They did not always correlate with the content of IWBs and references to ideas and artistic sources in them were often rather generalised. Some candidate statements sounded pretentious and somewhat over-intellectualised.

Candidate performance against each criterion

As visual arts is assessed against holistic markband descriptors and not individual criteria, the bullet points within the markband descriptors have been treated individually as far as is possible in the following section although some crossover is inevitable:

The analysis and comparison of art from different cultures and times and the consideration of its function and significance

Examiners reported that this first markband descriptor remains the most challenging for candidates. Stronger candidates demonstrated some focused and rigorous investigation looking into meaning, function and significance of works of art, although most had referred historically and culturally to western 20th century art styles and artists only. A few made an effort to include tribal, African, Indian and Oriental artists and art forms. Some candidates worked with the blurred lines between the visual arts and other arts such as literature, dance, architecture and poetry. Other candidates demonstrated no evidence of how they were influenced by the art they wrote about. In the majority of cases the range of artwork investigated was limited. Issues of function and significance were generally only addressed by candidates achieving in the higher markbands. Some examiners felt that candidates often took a social studies type approach when investigating information about other cultures or countries without considering their art traditions and styles at all.

Artwork from different times and cultures was sometimes included very superficially without consideration of its significance, with some candidates being able to describe but not contextualise their work: real engagement with social and cultural awareness was often lacking, with predictable choices being Aboriginal art, Maori tattoos, and Indian henna patterns. Some examiners questioned whether some candidates understood what constitutes a culture. Evidencing the cultural and historical still remains an issue for many candidates and teachers to grasp. A range of approaches ranging from bullet pointed biographical information copied directly from the internet to essay questions resulting in pages of rambling text, often did candidates very little justice.

This criterion is not satisfied by or concerned with lengthy biographies on artists. In order to reach the higher markbands candidates need to go beyond including reproductions of artworks without any sort of annotation or explanation as this is merely presenting. They need to go beyond simple description of what can be seen in the artwork and begin to analyse how the elements and principles of design have been used, how the media has been manipulated and how the composition has been constructed. They need to begin to compare one work with others by the same artist, or with other artists from different movements or styles working at the same time or at other times, or in different parts of the world. Going further they could compare the work to their own studio practice and they need to consider the function of work, interpreting what the artist might be trying to communicate through it, how signs, symbols and codes have been employed and what the intention for the work is or was within its cultural context. The significance of the work must be addressed through a number of different approaches.

The demonstration of skills, techniques and processes when making and analysing artworks and images

Most candidates had developed either satisfactory or good skills and processes for making and describing images and showed developing sensitivity to visual qualities. The best documentation of skills, techniques and processes when making art enabled candidates to demonstrate their analytical skills. Very few candidates had presented drawings and even fewer had done drawings from life. Over-dependence on imagery downloaded from the internet was a weakness which affected this aspect adversely. Relying on photographs as source material for paintings had a negative effect on developing skills of composition. Many candidates' exploratory work would have benefited from improved drawing skills. Most candidates merely described art works, without learning from them or analyzing techniques and visual qualities. Where the stimulus was personal life and/or social issues, imagery was often drawn from popular visual culture. Some interesting ideas were linked to work in other subjects. Weaker candidates had either not engaged in sustained inquiry or experimented too much. They had insufficient technical skills to be able to visualise their ideas. In some cases candidates did not carry out enough process experiments to develop their ideas and in others there was insufficient research into other artists.

The demonstration of investigative strategies into visual qualities, ideas and their contexts and a range of different approaches toward study and connections between them

The majority of candidates had developed at least some successful investigative strategies, particularly when investigating visual qualities. There were examples of very good focus and organization, especially where candidates had developed different ways of presenting their ideas visually and attempted alternate strategies when considering their own work and that of others. Some candidates appropriated examples of modernist artwork, without sufficient re-contextualisation or further development. Stronger candidates demonstrated clear strategies, with more than one approach. Weaker candidates showed limited investigation, usually with just one approach.

Candidates cannot achieve at the higher markband descriptors if their IWBs consist primarily of teacher directed activities. While this may be appropriate at the early stage of the course, candidates increasingly need to pursue student-centred inquiries that support their artistic work in studio practice.

Photographic and new media processes continue to require thorough investigation and documentation tracked through the submitted pages.

The demonstration of depth and breadth through the development and synthesis of ideas

Most candidates demonstrated breadth but did not present pages that showed depth. Variations in ability to engage in reflection and make critical observation are what most clearly distinguish strong from weaker candidates. Where the latter engaged in social commentary some reflections were naïve. Stronger candidates demonstrated in-depth personal approaches to investigation: their ideas were developed imaginatively, constructively and purposefully from different perspectives to include appropriate connections to work of others. Weaker candidates made more random choices, with little investigation into ideas through related artworks, few variations in media and routinely copied images which often had no accompanying justification. Some candidates confused the breadth and depth of investigation to include generic art history reports that have very little to do with the focus of their DP visual arts journey. Most candidates were able to show some connections between their own work and that of others: the more able candidates were able to explain and justify these connections.

The demonstration of the specialist vocabulary of visual arts

Most candidates made a conscious effort to use appropriate art vocabulary, although examiners observed that the extent of vocabulary was related to the depth of understanding of visual language. Some candidates used clichéd terms that carried little or no artistic or critical value and some used the 'elements and principles' words without much real thought or understanding. Candidates achieving against the higher markband descriptors usually demonstrated very sophisticated and articulate use of specialist vocabulary indicative of in-depth understanding of the subject and related processes.

There was overall a lack of the specialist vocabulary of visual arts, even sometimes in higher band work. If candidates were taught a basic introduction to formal elements and design principles, as well as a basic terminology of art movements and some practice in analyzing works for function and significance, this could be improved. Where it had been included in the curriculum, the level of analysis of candidates' own work and that of others was much stronger, both in IWBs and at interview.

The use of a range of sources which are properly acknowledged

As previously stated the internet was often the primary source of investigation with a heavy reliance on it at the expense of the use of books and journals, and visits to galleries and museums to experience art works at first hand. Acknowledging secondary sources was a weak element in many submissions and equally most candidates failed to show evidence of the use of primary sources. Referencing visual source materials was generally inadequate and many candidates did not document internet sources for artworks and artists. Well trained candidates selected appropriate source material directly related to their areas of investigation while others used borrowed material at times randomly chosen, provided by the teacher, or lacking significance. Examiners generally expressed concern at the lack of proper acknowledgement and citation. Some examiners were of the opinion that sources were better acknowledged than in the past with a good range of appropriate sources being referenced

although others felt that a range of sources was not evident, even sometimes at higher levels. Image referencing in particular was often inadequate.

The effective and creative presentation of work that demonstrates critical observation, reflection and discrimination

For the strongest candidates, the IWB is an invaluable tool and is presented accordingly. The IWB should be a working document used in a highly sustained, ongoing and reflective manner. The pages reflecting the requirements of the higher markbands were carefully considered for visual effect and sometimes constituted artworks in their own right; there were some original, inspired and exciting presentations. The weakest IWB page samples lacked visual impact and sometimes consisted of scribbled notes in very large handwriting, with a few poorly-executed pencil sketches. A creative approach to the composition of the IWB pages could have stimulated ideas and shown candidates that were willing to learn from failures, to see value in unpredictable results from the use of media or processes and see potential in that which is often overlooked. Many candidates reflected upon their own work with critical observation. Some found it more difficult to comment on others' work and pieces from art history. In most cases there was evidence of some reflection and critical observation, albeit limited at the lower level.

The presentation of a relationship between studio and investigation

This was usually at least satisfactory and in the majority of cases the work in the IWBs was clearly linked to studio. Occasionally, candidates simply included copious notes on artists that had no relation to their own work. Some candidates mentioned certain influences in the statement but failed to show evidence of any investigation or reference in the selected pages. For the most part, stronger candidates' CRBs demonstrated clear relationships.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should encourage the balanced use of a range of sources, including scholarly resources, but most importantly, firsthand experiences with art in galleries, museums and artist studios whenever possible. Candidates should be encouraged to work from primary sources/visit local galleries/analyse public art within their own environment. Candidates should be discouraged from copying paragraphs from the internet and pasting copious notes printed verbatim from books and web sites, even when properly acknowledged.

The issue of culture should be tackled and candidates encouraged to investigate the cultural context of the work, while avoiding tokenistic studies of culture such as African masks, aboriginal 'dot painting', cave painting unless these are relevant to the candidate's investigation. Understanding of socio-cultural context can be further deepened if candidates ask more probing questions to answer and discuss, rather than merely describing art forms.

Examiners recommend that teachers ensure that candidates are made thoroughly familiar with the criteria for assessment throughout the course. Candidates should be taught proper referencing techniques in line with the school's academic honesty policy. Insist source materials, including imagery and internet sources, are properly documented at all times.

It can be invaluable to show candidates what constitutes an effective IWB; they need to see good exemplar investigation work to understand best practice and to inspire them to high achievement.

Candidates should be introduced to recognized methods and approaches to image analysis, particularly early on in the course. While many candidates are able to describe works of art, many are not well versed with processes of comparing them and making critical observation.

Candidates should also be taught appropriate use of vocabulary in the visual arts and to avoid the use of slang in their workbooks treating the subject as an academic discipline and not a recreation.

Written investigation can of course be better understood when supported by visual information, as appropriate to the nature of visual arts. Candidates should be encouraged to practice their drawing skills; other methods, techniques and processes should be explored.

Creative and effective presentation is important. Pages that show a balance of images and writing generally work better. Busy backgrounds upon which text is written may not copy well or will be illegible to the teacher and moderator, so this must be considered.

Both depth and breadth need to be shown in the selected pages. Breadth is often fairly well represented. It may be advisable to show the development of any one studio work covering several criteria to show evidence of depth as well.

Digital and film photography require in-depth presentation of the processes, computer programmes and tools used and some step by step documentation of the manipulation process. Screen shots, thumbnails and contact sheets should be included. Photography can be viewed as an easy option without these validating processes.

Even when candidates are not inherently skilled artists, the quality of the work presented can be impressive if the approach is coherent and work is properly presented.

Encourage more, and more in-depth, critical analysis of work by other artists and by artists working in non-western cultural traditions. Ensure candidates consider meaning and function, not just the formal aspects of artworks and look beyond the aesthetic qualities of artworks for inspiration.

Teacher feedback in workbooks is sometimes visually overpowering, can be indistinguishable from the handwriting of the candidate and can be distracting for the examiner. More consideration for the positioning and size of the written feedback from the teacher is recommended - comments could be marked on "post-its" or signed, to show them as separate from the candidate's notes.

Candidates need guidance on completing the CRB and writing, critiquing and editing their candidate statements. Teachers should also oversee the selection of appropriate IWB pages, closely linked to studio, whether in documenting a process, influence, or idea.

Teachers must ensure that candidates present enough examples of all aspects of the markband descriptors in their CRBs and select work that reflects or supports their studio work. Photocopying should be of the highest quality to best showcase candidates' work.

Structured, organized teaching programmes are essential to enable candidates to learn skills, techniques and processes and to acquire an understanding of accepted art practice. Strategies for investigating, describing and analyzing artworks need to be taught and candidates need to comprehend the purpose and nature of an IWB and the ways in which it differs from an artist's sketchbook or a visual diary.

Candidates should be advised to avoid over reliance and uncritical use of internet images. All copied work, whether in studio or investigation, should be acknowledged and referenced. Plagiarism is still a problem, and in particular, copying images from the internet is a concern.

Recommendations for IB procedures, instructions and forms

From examiner feedback the following recommendations are made to schools:

- Teachers should be familiar with all course documentation; there was evidence that the *Visual arts assessment clarification* document is not yet being used in some schools.
- Carefully consider the course that candidates are registered for. Examiners commented on the number of candidates that had been registered for an option whose work was stronger in the component that attracted the least marks
- Check that candidates understand the instructions for compiling the candidate record booklet, and monitor the process to ensure that only the correct number of photographs and pages are included, and that all relevant information is provided,
- Ensure that photographs are good quality and the pages legible: a number of examiners commented that the quality of photographs and/or pages hampered the assessment process.
- Advise candidates of the importance of the careful selection work to reflect all of the requirements of the markband descriptors.
- Ensure that candidates have the ability to reflect on their work, and demonstrate that they can discuss its strengths and weaknesses, reflecting on how it has been reviewed and modified without the use of a prepared speech.
- Ensure to use the correct column of marks for the course and level markband descriptors when awarding the IA mark and when writing the teacher's comments in justification of the mark
- Teachers' marks must be entered accurately in IBIS and on the 6/VACS; an error in even one candidate's mark can affect the school's whole cohort. IA samples and properly completed 6/VACS forms should be appropriately collated and packed, with no loose papers, to facilitate safe delivery to moderators by the appropriate deadline
- Review the administrative material relevant to the submission of internal moderation samples carefully, making sure that all the necessary information is submitted including the printed page from IBIS
- Use courier services to ensure that their sample material arrives on or before the deadline.