

Creative Arts

2012 Chief Assessor's Report



Government
of South Australia

SACE
Board of SA

CREATIVE ARTS

2012 CHIEF ASSESSOR'S REPORT

OVERVIEW

Chief Assessors' reports give an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, the quality of student performance, and any relevant statistical information.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 1: Product

The creative arts process comprises four interrelated elements common to all creative arts programs:

- investigation
- development
- production
- reflection.

Teachers are encouraged to use the creative arts process outlined above as a basis for designing a teaching and learning program. Task design is then a key factor in creating a learning environment that fosters student success. Students who achieve at a higher level against the performance standards show evidence of all aspects of the creative arts process in their production folios because teachers have provided them with detailed assessment tasks that elicit high levels of achievement.

Scaffolded tasks tend to allow students to display a uniform level of competency. High-achieving students use these competency skills as a foundation to experiment and explore new dimensions of creativity in a body of work that shows methodical planning and productivity against the nominated performance standards. Note that in Stage 2 Creative Arts, students are expected to go beyond the practice of generating brief annotated reflective comments to develop their critical analysis and reflection skills at key points in the creative process.

Teachers are encouraged to counsel students about their interpretations of the creative arts practitioner's role before they commence developing evidence for their product portfolios.

Students were successful when products displayed a refined aesthetic — identified as an intricate combination of concept, technique, originality, and execution in a chosen stream of the creative arts. For example:

- In photography, a high-level product folio would show obvious evidence of technical skills, such as depth of field, theoretical knowledge like the rule of thirds, and aesthetic awareness through framing and composition matched with personal thematic interpretation through juxtaposition and symbolism.

- A film or video product would show planning through storyboard and script, with camera skills matched against an understanding of film theory, such as montage editing and mise-en-scène, combined with stylistic representation like expressionism and film noir.
- A visual arts product would show detailed evidence of experimentation and skilful manipulation of materials aligned with the challenge of representing an intellectual concept against the conventions of art theory.

Assessment Type 2: Investigation

Changes to Assessment Type 2: Investigation will offer the opportunity for students to provide in-depth evidence against the performance standards.

It is important that teachers are fully cognisant of the assessment design criteria when they design the investigation tasks. These assessment design criteria and associated specific features are to be nominated in the learning and assessment plans. Given the individual nature of each school's chosen creative arts stream, it is important that not too many specific features are nominated to assess against in any particular task.

Students are encouraged to investigate an area of creative arts practice that is closely connected to their product in Assessment Type 1. However, the investigation must not repeat evidence of learning used in the folio of evidence for Assessment Type 1.

Students who stepped away from a computer terminal to undertake primary research with working creative artists, through active visits to exhibitions, studios, or performances were able to enrich their learning in the investigation process. They gained experience in gathering in-depth knowledge and understanding of practitioners' creative ideas, intentions, and decision-making processes.

For example, students undertaking a visual arts focus are greatly advantaged by attending art exhibitions and speaking to the artists about the context of their work in relation to both practical processes and intellectual inspirations. Students should be encouraged to synthesise this information in respect to their own development as emerging artists.

Students undertaking music, drama, film, or photography tasks should be encouraged to look within their local communities for practising artists whom they can visit and interview as part of their investigation tasks.

However, it must be noted that students whose evidence of learning is expressed as a simple report of their investigation findings reveal a low level of competency against the performance standards. Similarly, a journal of events or the recount of an interview does not provide evidence against the higher levels of the performance standards.

High-level investigations show strong evidence of student synthesis and personal interpretation of research materials; that is, going beyond the 'what' to consider the 'why'. When guiding students through the investigation process, teachers can

consider Bloom's Taxonomy which provides a structured questioning method that allows for students to engage in higher-order thinking processes.

Students who display an understanding of artistic concepts and contexts and how they impact on the individual reveal an astute and insightful approach to the investigation tasks.

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 3: Practical Skills

The externally assessed practical skills give students the opportunity to provide evidence of their skills development in their chosen field of the creative arts. At the outset it is essential that both the teacher and the students are fully aware of the specific features of the assessment design criteria for this subject that are assessed in the practical skills. The specific features are outlined in the 2013 Creative Arts subject operational information:

- practical application — PA1, PA3, and PA4
- investigation and analysis — IA1 and IA3
- evaluation — E1 and E2.

The practical skills portfolio should represent a body of work developed methodically over time. It is important to note that the practical skills portfolio is not a product but a journey of development that does not necessarily have to have an end point. Students should break down their skills-development phase to individual components through explicit 'signposting'; that is, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Students who achieved highly in the practical skills provided insightful and well-detailed evidence under all three assessment criteria. This task requires students to go beyond skills tutorials to show a methodical program of personal development based on 'astute and detailed exploration and analysis of appropriate creative arts media, materials, techniques, processes, and technologies'.

Students should go beyond describing 'what' they did to discuss 'why' and the choices they made based on their research and investigations. For example, a student working in photography would show evidence of their practical understanding of depth of field based on not only physical theory but through their acknowledgement of the convention as interpreted by established photographic artists. Evaluation can also include evidence of responding to feedback from the teacher or a target audience.

The Creative Arts subject outline states:

For a 20-credit subject, the documentation and evaluation should consist of a maximum of twelve pieces of evidence that best illustrate the key phases of skills exploration and application, and the student's evaluative response. The combined evidence should be a maximum of 2000 words if written or a maximum of 12 minutes of recorded oral communication, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

It is important that students adhere to these guidelines. A daily journal is not an effective way for students to provide evidence unless their reflections directly address

the assessment criteria. If the evidence exceeds the stated limit, the marker is only obliged to assess up to that limit.

To preserve the integrity of the external assessment process, it is important that teachers impress upon students the need to remove all obvious personal identifiers from the practical skills evidence.

OPERATIONAL ADVICE

Changes to the Creative Arts subject outline for 2013 now provide new parameters for Assessment Type 1:

For a 10-credit subject, the folio should be a maximum of 1000 words if written or a maximum of 6 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form, and in a maximum of ten A3 pages.

For a 20-credit subject, the folio should be a maximum of 2000 words if written or a maximum of 12 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form, and in a maximum of twenty A3 pages.

For a 20-credit subject, this means that students have a *total* of 2000 words / 12 minutes oral presentation / twenty A3 pages to document *two* products. How students allocate this documentation is their choice, as they may approach Assessment Type 1 with a stronger emphasis on one product over another.

To work within these parameters, students do not need to submit all developmental work; rather, they submit a sample that shows evidence against all of the nominated specific features.

The investigation for the Assessment Type 1: Product folio (as outlined in the creative arts process) should not be confused with the Assessment Type 2: Investigation. The subject outline encourages students to investigate an area of creative arts practice that is closely connected to their product, but also emphasises that the investigation task must not repeat evidence of learning used as support material in the product folio.

It is important that teachers take note of the requirements of assessment evidence such as word-count, page numbers, and time limits. These are clearly stated in the Creative Arts subject outline.

Moderators do not mark student work; rather, their role is to confirm a teacher's marking against the performance standards. For this reason, the original products are not required as part of the moderation materials; instead, a captured copy through photo or video is appropriate. When submitting student work in digital format (for either external assessment or moderation), it is important to take note of the formats prescribed in the Submission of Electronic Files:

- *Image format:* An image file in PDF, JPEG, TIFF, or GIF format
- *Video format:* A digital video file in MOV, AVI, WMV, or MP4 format.
- *Audio format:* A digital audio file in MP3 or WAV format.

Electronic information files: Word-processed documents, spreadsheets, presentations, database files, and so on, should be submitted in any version

that is compatible with Microsoft Office up to, and including, Microsoft Office 2010.

Web pages: The format used should be accessed through common browsers such as Internet Explorer 7 (or later) or Firefox 3.6 (or later), and should be compatible with earlier versions. All web links should have correct pathways so that they can be easily accessed from the CD-R or DVD-/+R. All web-based evidence should be password free; if it is not, a password must be provided.

Where students choose to work together in teams on their production components, it is important that each student provides unique evidence of their learning specific to the role they undertook. For example, in a film-making exercise where two students are working together, one may take on the role of cinematographer and the other that of director, and, as such, each individual would provide evidence of learning specific to their role.

Teachers can assist the moderation process by ensuring that all moderation materials are appropriately labelled and identified with the students' SACE registration number.

GENERAL COMMENTS

In its second year, over 520 students submitted work for assessment in Stage 2 Creative Arts. Furthermore, the diversity of chosen arts mediums, which included painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, drama, dance, animation, film-making, stage and costume design, print and publishing, needlework, and music, indicates this new subject is fulfilling a strong demand from its target audience.

Teachers, however, are reminded to acknowledge the subject's foundations of art and creativity when guiding students through a learning program. As such, judicious assessment task design provides the best platform for student success.

The challenge for teachers is to now develop and maintain an aesthetic benchmark that befits a Stage 2 level of study. To facilitate this professional standard, teachers are encouraged, where possible, to participate in professional development opportunities, such as attending SACE clarifying forums and developing networks with other Creative Arts teachers to share resources and examples of student work.

Chief Assessor
Creative Arts