VISUAL ARTS

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-12	13-26	27-41	42-55	56-71	72-85	86-100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-12	13-26	27-41	42-55	56-71	72-85	86-100

Higher level exhibition

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-8	9-13	14-17	18-22	23-26	27-30

Standard level exhibition

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-8	9-13	14-17	18-22	23-26	27-30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The first examination session for the exhibition component of the new course brought a wide variety of responses ranging from outstanding exhibitions well supported with eloquent and articulate rationales to some weaker exhibitions that may have reflected some misunderstandings of the criteria and objectives of the new course.

In terms of media, 2D work was predominant, with little 3D examples presented by candidates. The 3D work that was submitted ranged in scale and ambition from fascinating architectural models and complex installations to small clay masks and 'dreamcatchers'.

Photography was frequently submitted, but rarely taught or explored in adequate depth. There were many examples of very basic "snapshot" digital photography with arbitrary use of filters and little evidence of preparation, editing and refinement. Candidates who presented most or all of their work through digital photography often demonstrated little or no exploration of other photographers or lens based artists in their associated rationale or exhibition texts.

Digital media were used effectively in several centres. However, a thorough approach to the fusion of art and technology as well as a full development of skills linked to digital art are still rarely seen. Where candidates chose to experiment and work with new media, digital animation or photography, teachers should support and stimulate the creation of works that are truly informed by contemporary visual arts practices and projects which promote full understanding and appreciation of these media.

Many strong exhibitions contained large scale artworks. Although, none of the assessment criteria refer to the size of the art in the exhibition, working on a large scale can present specific creative and compositional challenges to candidates and can also lead to work that has impact in the context of the exhibition. Of course, creating a large artwork does not mean that the exhibition will be successful, but in a number of schools large artworks showed ideas, sophistication and complexity and intricacy that were stronger because of the scale in which they were depicted.

Some students uploaded 'collaborative' artworks. This presents moderators with a challenge – how much of the work did each individual candidate contribute? This must be explained in the curatorial rationale or in the exhibition text, but in many cases this did not happen. If candidates wish to submit collaborative works, they must make it clear what areas each individual part of the collaboration is responsible for

A number of candidates uploaded video artworks. Most had a soundtrack, however any audio component used as part of an artwork is not assessed in the IB visual arts course. Examiners are required to assess only the visual arts and therefore ignore any audio element that candidates use in their art pieces. The sound is turned off when moderating the exhibition component, so that the focus is purely on the visual creative content and there is no interference from the audio.

Most of the submitted videos were within the 5 minute time limit but some appeared to have a larger file size than allowed. This sometimes caused problems when attempting to view the video. Please keep all file sizes within the indicated limits.

For what concerns the documentation accompanying the collection of artworks part of the exhibition the following points were noted by examiners.

Exhibition photographs: these were not always as helpful as they could be. In some cases these photographs showed crowds of people in the exhibition space with their bodies obscuring views of the artworks. In other cases the photographs show the candidate standing in front of

their collection of artworks. It may be that some teachers misunderstand the purpose of these photographs. The exhibition photographs should show clear and uninterrupted views of the candidate's exhibition, giving the moderator the opportunity to get an idea of the whole display, including scale, arrangement, presentation, colour, impact.

Some exhibition photographs showed more art than had been submitted by the individual candidate: for example, the photograph may have included the work of other students, or other artworks by the candidate that were not among the submitted artworks. Either way these images did not help the moderation process.

Exhibition text: in some cases the details accompanying the artworks images were not detailed and precise enough: in particular many entries in the "Medium used" text box were unhelpful. The examiner needs to know exact details about the technique of the work submitted. When examiners cannot easily detect what the artwork is made of, it is difficult to assess it. (Some examples of unhelpful 'medium used' responses include "various", "yes", "media", "image" and "unconventional media" "mixed media").

Many candidates correctly used the exhibition text to mention their source of inspiration or their artistic intentions for the specific piece: this information along with the curatorial rationale is very useful to the examiners moderating the work. Influences and appropriated images were sometimes effectively and accurately referenced in the exhibition text or in the curatorial rationale but this needs still to become a more common practice.

Optional additional supporting photographs: the file slots dedicated to the two optional supporting photographs were sometimes used unnecessarily. In some cases it seemed that teachers felt that they had to use all slots when it is absolutely not necessary to do so. These photographs are optional and can be very helpful to the examiner, for example for viewing a 3D piece from different angles or to show detail that reveal technical mastery. However, for example, it is a complete waste of time to submit additional supporting photographs when good, clear, moderately high resolution images, providing a good view of the artworks, are submitted.

Teacher's supporting comments: the IB requires teachers to upload a comment, explaining the marks awarded to the internally assessed work of each candidate. These comments must be written referring to the artworks and to how the candidate's exhibition achieved in relation to the specific assessment criteria. Some teachers took the time to carefully compose and upload thoughtful, articulate and frequently honest appraisals of their students' work. However, some comments were not as helpful as they could be. In the worst case no comments at all or too brief comments were uploaded.

It is obviously difficult for the moderator to understand what the logic behind the teacher's mark is if so little information is provided. 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.

At the other extreme, it is not helpful if teachers include details that are not relevant to the moderation process: the mention of the candidate's love of art or of their punctuality to the art lessons are examples of completely unnecessary pieces of information.

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

Just copying and pasting the descriptors that match the marks awarded is also not very useful.

Planning and progress forms 6/PPF: some teachers incorrectly thought that the form would be seen by the examiner and also thought that they could use that form to explain and justify the marks they awarded. Both these assumptions are incorrect: the only purpose of the Planning and Progress Form (as well as of the new Coursework Authorization Form that is going to replace the PPF) is to authenticate the candidate's work.

Exhibition candidates performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Coherent body of works

Performance relating to a "Coherent body of works" was variable. Some candidates appeared to have a simplistic approach and may have assumed that it was sufficient just to have a "theme". These candidates often found it difficult to create dynamic links between groups of works. In some cases the idea of coherence seemed to be a stretch or an afterthought as to how the artworks could be connected. At the other extreme, some outstanding exhibitions showed creative, authentic and sometimes surprising relationships between pieces within a coherent body of work.

Many candidates built their exhibition around a single theme or idea. This sometimes resulted in a successful exhibition but there were many cases that indicated the opposite: the theme in effect limited success and the candidate's artwork looked contrived as if to keep in line with their 'theme'.

As mentioned in the clarification document (available on the OCC) "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 needs to be synergy and a sense of coherence across the collection of artworks presented as part of the exhibition. The relationships should 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. Success in this context is more about the ideas, the depth of involvement, the way artworks relate to each other and the creative and imaginative approach taken.

The coherence descriptor also refers to stated intentions being fulfilled through the selection and application of media, processes and techniques. The curatorial rationale should support and explain the candidate's selection of works and their relationship to each other or to the collection as a whole. In some weaker collections there was little or no evidence that the candidate's intentions informed the selection of processes/imagery.

Given the link between coherence and the rationale it is important that the sense of coherent purpose and scope is evident in the curatorial rationale. Overall there should be a correlation and coherence between the submitted artworks, the rationale and what is mentioned in the exhibition texts.

International Baccalaureate
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

Criterion B: Technical competence

Although competence was variable, the majority of candidates showed technical competence with more traditional skills such as drawing and painting.

In many cases video work and installations did not show a full understanding of the technique; the same occurred with photography. Although some candidates produced great photographic pieces that demonstrated consideration of the medium others just submitted simple snapshots.

An unnecessarily wide variety of media may have hindered achievement in this criterion: many exhibitions contained work in a wide range of art making forms, and this sometimes had an impact on the overall quality of the exhibition, in the sense that the variety of media sometimes reflected a lack of sustained development in any single process. There are no requirements relating to how many or how few art-making forms should appear in the exhibition: exhibitions can feature work in one or more art-making forms, what is important is that the artworks selected for the exhibition represent the candidate's most successful achievements against the assessment criteria.

Of course, exhibitions that showed work in a single medium/art-form did not all show evidence of outstanding competence in that art-form, however, some 'limited media' exhibitions were exceptional and clearly showed excellent competence through sustained, focused and in-depth explorations.

In some cases candidates with solid and sometimes very good technical skills appeared to compromise their achievement by not exploring work that had a greater conceptual or compositional complexity. These exhibitions sometimes contained a series of simple and straightforward renderings of single found images, showing competence but little evidence of conceptual or creative ideas. Some exhibitions seemed to include weak work possibly submitted in order to fulfil 'minimum number of artworks' requirements.

As already mentioned, photography was frequently submitted, but appeared to have been rarely taught or explored in adequate depth. There were examples of basic snapshot digital photography, occasionally with arbitrary use of filters, but with little evidence of preparation, technical competence or refinement.

Criterion C: Conceptual qualities

The curatorial rationale affects judgments made in criterion C because there is reference to the communication of intentions in the descriptor for this criterion. In some cases it was difficult to evaluate the degree to which intentions were communicated (minimal, adequate or effective) because the rationale and exhibition text did not refer to artistic intentions at all.

Some candidates appeared to interpret the conceptual qualities criterion as being about the main idea behind their exhibition. Sometimes, if there was a theme, it related to an issue that the candidate felt strongly about. Occasionally this issue was a springboard to successful and creative art-making, but in many cases the candidate's strong opinions did not lead to a strong exhibition. For example, artworks that were in effect posters about a particular issue did not achieve highly in conceptual terms. In some cases the art submitted in this context was

simplistic and naïve and related more to the wording of the lower levels (e.g. "the imagery, signs and/or symbols used are obvious, contrived or superficial. There is minimal communication of artistic intentions")

Candidates need to show evidence of a thoughtful and considered approach: the examiner is looking for evidence of subtle and/or complex ideas and imagery. Some substantial research and contextual exploration is needed to underpin successful work for criterion C. Some very successful exhibitions achieve high marks in this criterion with a series of linked ideas (e.g. light, reflections, dreams) because the artworks show a sophisticated approach and a depth of exploration. But without this approach these same ideas could result in poor marks for conceptual qualities: the depth of thought and exploration are frequently more important than the concept itself.

Whatever ideas the candidate has, the examiner is looking for a thoughtful and considered approach to the expression of these ideas.

Some of the ideas and imagery seen in highly marked candidates showed a very thoughtful, considered and well researched approach.

Some candidates equated "Conceptual qualities" with conceptual art and, for example, submitted a series of found objects that lacked elaboration of ideas and showed little or no evidence of subtle use of complex imagery, signs or symbols. Simply assembling a collection of found objects that are predictable and obvious will not achieve well in criteria B or C.

In weaker submissions, paintings or drawings often contained cliché, trite and predictable imagery; the work of these candidates didn't show evidence of sophisticated thinking and tended to be obvious, contrived or superficial.

Criterion D: Curatorial practice

The curatorial rationale is one of the more obviously 'new' elements of the exhibition component and appears to have been misunderstood by a number of candidates.

In some cases candidates explained their intentions, justified the selection and arrangement of their art and (at HL) explained the relationship between the art and the viewer within the space made available. Some candidates were obviously confused with the HL and SL requirements and often SL candidates unnecessarily spent time explaining the viewer experience.

Some students were very vague in the presentation of artist intent. Meaning was too general and lacked clarity and focus. Where artist influences are noted it is best to move beyond the specific technique or subject matter that is used by the source.

But the major issue with this new element of the course was that many rationales seemed to be very similar to the old 'candidate statement' of the previous course. These tended to recount what had been done, explaining problems they encountered and how they resolved them, sometimes also referring to challenges and growth. There was often no mention of intentions, or the way the art works were arranged/displayed, with little or no reference to the space and relationship to the viewer/audience. Sometimes the arrangement and viewer were mentioned

briefly in the last paragraph. In some cases it was difficult to give the candidate any marks for their curatorial rationale because it failed to address any of the elements of the assessment criterion.

Some candidates uploaded rationales in excess of the word count maximum, and wrote about their artworks, piece by piece, duplicating the exhibition texts: please note that examiners are instructed to stop reading the rationale beyond the word limit. Some candidates also inserted photographs of their art into the rationale: this is not a requirement and it is the teacher's role to guide candidates and offer them guidance about accurately preparing and submitting the required work for assessment.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers must offer foundational teaching and direction in relation to the assessment criteria in order for candidates to become self-directed. Without a framework to work from and with, and without a sense of purpose and guidance, candidates cannot realize their best potential. For candidates coming into the course without any experience in the art theory or practices, this is just as critically important as for those who have chosen to study art for years. For example, engaging at the start of the course in teacher led and activities in drawing, media exploration, and in writing relevant curatorial rationales would greatly help candidates to find their way more independently and successfully.

In some cases there was evidence of too much teacher direction. At the beginning of the course, techniques and teacher lead projects are needed. However, there comes a time when the student needs to express their individual creativity. Allow students to explore and create their own approaches to expression using their own concepts and ideas.

At the other extreme in some schools there was evidence of insufficient teacher direction. It is vital that teachers guide, advise and instruct candidates throughout the course.

Internal assessment of the exhibition

The exhibition is now the internally assessed component of the visual arts course: this means that the exhibition is marked by the teacher and then a sample of the teacher's marks is moderated by examiners.

40% of the final mark for the visual arts course is awarded for this component, so we have placed a significant value on the judgement of the teachers who have been working closely with the students. Teachers, who have experienced the artworks and the exhibition first-hand, are best suited to assess this component. The teacher's marking is then moderated so that it is in line with the global standard. There was evidence of generous marking in all criteria from a number of teachers, with subsequent moderation of the sample to a lower mark. Sometimes this moderation was substantial. When assessing and submitting marks for the exhibition it is vital that teachers apply the assessment criteria accurately being as objective as possible. It is important that candidates do not get rewarded or penalized for aspects of their work which are not mentioned in the assessment criteria.

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

Accuracy of assessment will be enhanced if the teacher familiarizes himself/herself more with the IB visual arts standards by referring to resources and guidance available on the Online Curriculum Centre.

Students must be encouraged to develop a full understanding of the assessment criteria level descriptors.

Teachers are required to provide marking comments to support their marks. These comments should be written by referring to the qualities of the submitted exhibition, explaining how the candidate achieved in relation to the assessment criteria and against the different level descriptors. Marking comments should justify the marks awarded in a meaningful manner not simply reiterate the level descriptors. Examiners are looking for information about what the candidate has done in the artwork submitted and for useful observations about the submitted art collection in order to better identify evidence that relates to the assessment criteria

Academic Honesty

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.

Teachers must ensure that candidates acknowledge all sources used and reference them effectively and appropriately. In the work submitted for assessment there must always be a clear distinction between what constitutes the candidate's work and what are the ideas or the work of others.

To better understand the expectations in relation to academic honesty and referencing, teachers must refer to the guide and to the resources available on the OCC including the IB publications about academic honesty in the DP Programme.

Recommendations relating to each criterion:

Criterion A: Do not ask students to choose a theme for their artwork: a formalized theme is not required. What makes an exhibition strong is a thread or connections between artworks in order to give the collection coherence. This might be something as simple as the symbolic use of line throughout the work.

Criterion B: Plan the course considering that many candidates, especially those who have not had a lot of previous art instruction, need to spend some time developing technical skills and an understanding of how formal elements and design principles can be used. Candidates need to be encouraged to develop, perhaps in the second year of the course, a medium that works well for them and for their ideas to a level of technical competence, as there is now no reference in the exhibition assessment criteria to using a range of media. Candidates should focus on relevant skills to showcase their best work.

Photography, video and any form of digital art should be discussed in class with examples of contemporary art works, in order to help the candidates to better understand good practice and artistic processes in lens based and digital art forms.

Criterion C: Candidates need to be made aware of what is actually meant by 'contrived and superficial' imagery vs. 'subtle, complex imagery' by their teacher through examples, in order to address this criterion effectively. Indeed, students should be encouraged to develop an understanding of all the level descriptors.

Candidates should ideally explore issues that are meaningful to them, not arbitrarily selected. These do not need to revolve around a single theme. Issues that are obviously meaningful to the candidate but reflect a weak conceptual basis and understanding should be discussed and candidates should be supported in moving away from work that is predictable and banal and encouraged to explore concepts in depth and to develop work which conveys ideas that are sophisticated.

Criterion D: To formulate a good curatorial rationale, teachers need to encourage and teach students to identify "what" is their intention, "what" pieces they selected and "why", "how" have they shown their intentions, process, use of media, technique and imagery; "how" they will organize the exhibition and "why".

Teachers and candidates must note the different descriptors for criterion D at HL and SL.

Recommendations about the presentation of work

Teachers need to explain how to set up an exhibition clearly and in the most interesting way to showcase the work according to artist's intention, making the best possible use of the space. Candidates must provide evidence of their curatorial practice but the actual space in which the exhibition is set up does not influence the marking. Visits to local museums and galleries will help inform students on best curatorial practice.

Students should be guided by teachers in the selection process. When selecting from the total body of their resolved works the pieces for their exhibition, candidates must be familiar with the assessment criteria and must understand that the exhibition is assessed as a whole. For example, candidates must be encouraged to carefully consider the level of each and all the pieces that they include in the submission, because one weak artwork could impact the quality of the whole collection.

Schools are encouraged to keep coursework submissions anonymous. Candidates are asked to avoid using their name, session number or the name or number of their school in their work, whether on the title page, headers, footers or anywhere else on the document. Candidate names or session numbers can be used in the document filenames only.

As the work for this course is now assessed solely from photographs on screen, therefore it is important that these are of good quality, uploaded with correct orientation. It is best not to frame artworks because it is hard to photograph without reflection behind glass.

Candidates should be encouraged to independently manage their own e-portfolio in order to become familiar with the process of digitally documenting their own artworks as early as possible in the course. In this way they will acquire important skills and gain full ownership of the digital reproductions of their own artworks. It is the teacher's role to encourage candidates

to review the digital documentation of their artwork and to advise them about the best ways to obtain an accurate and true representation of their work.

No text should not be included in the image files reproducing the artworks as it detracts from the image and all the additional details about each artwork must be entered in the dedicated text boxes on the upload system. Each artwork must be accurately labelled: data about the size and the medium/media are crucial to allow accurate assessment. 'Mixed media', for example, must be described in more detail. Indicate series, diptych, or triptych in the exhibition text when a group of works are presented as one. Found objects need to be clearly identified.

Exhibition photographs must not include the work of other candidates and work that is not submitted for assessment.

Higher level comparative study

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-11	12-17	18-23	24-29	30-35	36-42

The range and suitability of the work submitted at higher level

This new assessment task demonstrated an exciting engagement between students and the art of others. There were examples of outstanding achievement: insightful analysis, thorough background research and precision in written comments. Some presentations were of very high standard and the range of different effective ways to present the comparative study to elicit meaning and cogently communicate knowledge was impressive. In the work of many candidates, the connections with their own art making were creative, sometimes even visceral in their engagement with ideas and media. These studies effectively addressed the criteria and exceeded expectations. There is no doubt that this new component has inspired students and their learning has been considerably enhanced.

This was in marked contrast to the work of those students who had not been taught the necessary research and analytical skills to tackle this task well. Many less successful studies compared artists rather than artworks and consequently failed to address the criteria. Those who had taken this approach found making meaningful comparisons challenging, resorting to simplistic observations often presented in Venn diagrams. In this format they tended to compare artists very basically, for example: "painted portraits" or "was Spanish" rather than showing an understanding of how artworks communicate ideas.

Students often did not understand the importance of research or how to apply new knowledge to the selected artworks. As a result, portions of art history or cultural context were presented in the study but not linked or applied to analysis.

The balance between research and opinion/analysis was also often problematic: while there was some very good work, a number of studies were primarily descriptive, with little analysis,

while others are highly opinionated, based on conjecture, misunderstanding and without any indication of research.

The choice of art works is important in achieving a meaningful comparison. Students who had written a focused introduction of a considered selection went on to make insightful connections. However, many failed to introduce their study, rather adding artists as they progressed leading to spurious and superficial links. The choice of artworks was disappointingly narrow. While works by artists such as Van Gogh, Kahlo, Magritte and Dali can lead to excellent analysis, students should be encouraged to develop a much broader international and/or local choice of artworks. The selection of website based images with limited information led to superficial responses.

Standard level comparative study

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-18	19-22	23-26	27-30

The range and suitability of the work submitted at standard level

There were examples from all across the different levels of achievement in this new component at standard level. The introduction of the comparative study seems to have been a challenge for some candidates, but overall the studies submitted for assessment showed candidates fully engaged with research, analysis and comparison of the artworks that they selected for their studies. It was obvious when candidates were familiar with the new requirements and the assessment criteria and when, on the contrary, the key aspects of the new task were not fully understood.

Many comparative studies were carefully planned with interesting selection of art pieces which permitted effective comparisons. There was in many cases evidence of very good analysis and of research and investigation done using a variety of sources, and this was often complemented with well supported personal opinions. Some studies presented a theme which connected the art pieces and contributed to draw the investigation together.

Less developed studies showed descriptive work examining general matters, such as artist's life or art movements outlines, and were not focused on the analysis of the selected art pieces. Often too many works were considered and this made it difficult to develop in depth analysis or connect the works for effective comparison. Some studies showed little research, or research from sources that are not suitable.

Comparative study candidate performance against each criterion

The best candidates synthesised their knowledge such that they addressed the criteria throughout the study. Most chose to itemise the criteria tackling each separately, this was often

highly successful and is clearly a well-focused teaching approach that thoroughly supports students. However, in the weaker candidates this led to the repetition of limited research and analysis. If the student had not understood the nature of the task, simply writing the criteria heading as a screen title was not helpful.

Criterion A: Analysis of formal qualities:

This was often very well achieved, particularly when text was combined with creative graphic presentation to enhance analysis by the juxtaposition of details or through composition analysis. Weakness in subject specific language was sometimes a limitation in meeting this criterion, but the greatest difficulty was when candidates relied on description rather than analysis.

Criterion B: Interpretation of function and purpose:

Weaker candidates relied on personal opinion and/or instinctive inferences rather than evidence of artists' intentions and purpose. This was particularly evident where wider research had not been used to deepen understanding of purpose. Students particularly struggled if they had chosen a little known contemporary artist that they were unable to effectively place in a cultural context. Balancing such choices with related, but contrasting, material is a useful way to develop understanding of function.

Criterion C: Evaluation of cultural significance:

Weaker candidates placed too much emphasis on presenting general background, which was not then applied and explained in relation to chosen artworks. Sometimes detailed contextual material was included that had minimal relevance to the particular nature of the artworks.

Separating screens with 'cultural significance' from the analysis of the artworks does not best support the evaluation of content. Students would benefit by selecting more carefully from research and ensuring that they are 'evaluating' cultural material in relation to the artworks rather than becoming distracted by the lives of the artists.

Criterion D: Making comparisons and connections:

Many students understood that this was the essence of the study and the best instigated the nature of the comparison in their introduction. Appropriate choices of artworks are crucial to meeting this criterion successfully. There was, however, a tendency to list 'similarities and differences' often repeating earlier information when comparing rather than synthesising research into meaningful connections. An over reliance on tables, grids and Venn diagrams at the expense of thoughtful juxtaposition of ideas, techniques and styles through image and word was disappointing.

Criterion E: Presentation and subject-specific language:

At the top end the use of subject specific language was fluent. This vocabulary is the key to developing student's critical understanding and leads to insightful analysis. Where this was lacking students were unable to go beyond simplistic description.

Presentation was often excellent with particularly good use of graphic skills to juxtapose, to highlight and to explain visually. Generally students understood the importance of choosing a visual 'look' that was appropriate to the works studied. However, pre-designed power point templates do not make for engaging presentations in a visual art exam. Students sometimes used very small fonts (less than 12 point) and strongly contrasting backgrounds that interfered with legibility. Some candidates decided to scan in visual arts journal pages or hand written text: this was in some cases a successful option but too often the scanned material was not fully legible and this hindered the assessment. Sketches and visual explorations are very useful and to be encouraged; some students used these most effectively.

Criterion F: Making connections to own art-making practice: (HL only)

The best responses made insightful links, whether conceptual, stylistic or technical and sometimes a combination of all three. However, others misunderstood the purpose and importance of this criterion.

There are three aspects for the student to address: to reflect on the outcomes of the investigation; to identify connections between one or more of the artworks and student's own art making practices and to explain how these influenced their own development.

The most common mistake made was to discuss creative ideas and process at length without making explicit links to artworks studied. Similarly even some of the strongest did not always 'analyse and reflect upon the outcomes of the investigation'. Some failed to include images of their artmaking to support the explained links as required, while others included images with no supporting explanation of their relevance.

Academic Honesty:

Many students are using effective academic referencing both in their list of sources and at the point of use. However, others believe that if they have included the source in the list then they can use content without citing at the point of use: this is not the case. Some candidates lift short phrases from references without citing the source or acknowledging that they are using the words verbatim by using quotation marks. Supporting images, such as contextualising photographs of artists, are frequently still not referenced. Similarly, the student's own images are often not labelled. A great number of comparative studies seem to indicate that a greater focus in teaching how to comply with the requirements of academic honesty is still required.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates
- Students should be made fully aware of the formal requirements and of the assessment criteria before they start their comparative study.
- It is part of the teacher's role to discuss each candidate's choice of selected artworks in order to support students in better addressing the criteria. In particular candidates should consider how their choice will lead to meaningful comparisons and effective analysis of function and purpose.
- Students should be reminded of the importance of an introduction.
- Analysis of formal qualities, together with subject specific vocabulary, should be taught. As well as the ability to develop from the simple description of artworks, which is not assessed to the effective analysis of art works, which is.

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

- Students should be reminded that they are comparing artworks, rather than comparing artists.
- The development of analysis and the understanding of cultural significance should be based in focused research, a skill which should be taught.
- Citation of sources at the point of use and academic honesty in the referencing of all sources, including both text and all images should be checked by teachers and guidance about effective referencing should be offered in class.
- Teachers should read and give advice to students on one draft of the comparative study. It is the teacher's role to provide oral or written advice on how the study can be improved but the teacher must not edit the draft.
- Teachers are advised to review studies with students prior to upload to ensure legibility.
- Students should ensure that the connections with their own art making for criterion F are explicit in their text.

Higher level process portfolio

Component grade boundaries HL

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-9	10-13	14-18	19-24	25-29	30-34

The range and suitability of the work submitted at higher level

The new guide represents a significant shift in approach and the nature of the tasks. This is certainly true for the process portfolio, which in its essence, bears some resemblance to what has come before in the form of the Investigation Workbook and Research Workbook and certainly has a sense of familiarity to it, but remains a departure from previous guides in that the process portfolio is assessed in its own right – not as supporting documentation for other work. Most approaches to addressing the process portfolio were not new, and could indeed have been reproduced from pages drawn from IWBs. However, the process portfolio is a different task and affords candidates greater liberties, particularly in the area of format, editing and retrospective reflection (that is coming back to pages from the visual arts journal and adding additional reflective or evaluative annotations).

The process portfolio, with the use of the "screen" nomenclature compels students to be cognisant of the notion that their final outcome will be viewed electronically on screen. This is not a prescription for students to generate each screen electronically.

For the process portfolio to be an authentic learning tool (as well as an assessment component), the relationship to the visual arts journal cannot be understated or undervalued. Where students (or their schools) have misunderstood this relationship, students have included small thumbnails of pages from the visual arts journals, and then painstakingly transcribed the text from the page to the screen, where often the handwriting on the page is perfectly legible and more coherently linked to the rest of the page content. Such a practice generates an additional workload for students who are already time poor and adds no significant value (unless of course

International Baccalaureate
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

their handwriting is indeed illegible), while simultaneously negating the significance of the visual arts journal. The visual arts journal, if used effectively, will be a crucial part of every students' art-making practice and is likely to contain the best evidence for use in the process portfolio.

Where a visual arts journal page is the best evidence against some of the criteria, students need to feel free to include full size, unedited reproductions of such pages as a screen in their process portfolio. Weaker candidates generally reveal a process of art-making that includes few or no strategies for using some form of visual journal which impacts the process portfolio significantly. Also, teacher directed projects or tasks were often prohibitive in students attaining the higher mark levels.

A substantial number of students failed to meet the minimum number of forms from the forms table in the guide. Because of the random allocation of samples to examiners, it was difficult to determine if this was isolated to particular schools, or if a large number of schools had at least one student who just didn't manage to work across the forms.

Thorough documentation of the artmaking process was lacking in a large number of submissions. Visual evidence is critically important. Any student can write about what media or forms they have used, but examiners must see evidence to be able to assess the outcomes against the criteria, and to give credit for the candidate to have worked across the minimum required number of forms. The senior team considered that the "double-dipping" restriction resulted in students being cautious of including too much imagery that was too close to the final exhibited version of the work.

Generally, most candidates successfully addressed each of the criteria. Most were able to demonstrate or articulate a process from the conception of an idea for a work, through its development, and various stages of refinement. In the stronger samples genuine connections between candidates' art-making and the work of other artists emerged from critical investigation and helped to add greater sophistication to the outcomes.

Referencing continues to be sloppy in a large number of samples, resulting in many candidate's work having to be sent to the IB Academic Honesty team for review. This ranges from inadequate citations of other artists works, to minimal referencing of information that has been cut and pasted from sources or paraphrased, to images used in collages cut from magazines and newspapers.

The guide also explicitly requires students to include citations against images of the own work (titles, media and size). This information is useful to examiners, not simply to be able to distinguish the candidate work from reference artist's work (although, this sometimes was a challenge), but more importantly, this information gives the examiner a greater sense of processes and the scale of work. In keeping with the effort to maintain candidate anonymity, it is appropriate for candidates to us "My own work" or "Candidate's work" in place of their own names.

Stronger submissions had considered the process portfolio as a whole, rather than an assemblage of supporting evidence for a component that remains unseen by the process portfolio examiners. They focussed on fewer works from their oeuvre and were thereby able to show more of the ideation, experimentation, processes, refinements and reflections. Their

critical investigations were not used for the purpose of appropriation, but an opportunity to explore another's technical or conceptual practice and add greater refinement to technique or sophistication to representation.

Standard level process portfolio

Component grade boundaries SL

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-8	9-12	13-17	18-23	24-28	29-34

The range and suitability of the work submitted at standard level

The process portfolio submissions at standard level evidence whole range of the spectrum with excellent work achieved at the highest levels in all criteria. As often happens, the lowest scores were performed by candidates who obviously had little understanding of the assessment criteria or worked superficially sometimes even forgetting that the subject being assessed is visual. Other times, the task was completed in retrospective without using evidence of art-making processes examined in the arts journal or other sketchbooks and materials explored during the art-making practice.

Essential to the new parameters of the task is experimenting with and manipulating a variety of media and techniques, and selecting art-making materials that are appropriate to student's artistic intentions as a developing artist. Although there were very good responses and many candidates were able to achieve satisfactory levels in most criteria, in many cases examiners reported that it had been difficult to find a sense of coherence in candidates' presentations because documentation of the work processes was sometimes absent. Documentation of the work should include visual examples that demonstrate direct involvement with work, with examples of developmental processes, technical efforts and reflection on both formal and expressive qualities and additional inquiry on the work of other artists. In short, the documentation of processes should demonstrate in depth visual engagement and not just verbally tell the story of the research.

Some portfolios poorly examined the requirement to show experimental work from different columns in the art-making forms table. A sketch for a 3-D project or a snapshot for lens-based media do not fully develop manipulation of skills and processes in that media, sometimes making it hard to decide whether or not the candidate had complied with the requirement of exploring media from two different columns of the visual arts art-making forms table.

In some cases, the process portfolio seems to be treated relatively detached from the actual art-making processes. Often candidates presented a series of unrelated skill-building exercises or stand-alone finished pieces that only underlined the steps they had followed in creating the work. So often, the portfolio contained more text than visual imagery, it was presented as a retrospective polished document that purged direct and authentic sense of effort, technical and material research, success, failures, turnovers and refinements that are important to

International Baccalaureate
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

understand the depth of commitment studio work and reflections which accompany it. The process portfolio must show the developmental processes engaged during actual production of work demonstrating both visually and through annotations, reflections and explanatory text showing the examiner how these ideas were developed and refined.

Process portfolio candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Skills, techniques and processes

There were two major areas that negatively impacted candidates in Criterion A. Firstly, the requirement at higher level to work across three forms from at least two of the form columns in the IB DP visual arts art-making forms table. As stated previously, this impacted a significant number of students who either failed to work at all, or provide sufficient evidence of having worked across a sufficient number of forms.

The second area that impacted student achievement against Criterion A was the need to provide sufficient evidence, particularly visual, of student engagement with a range of skills, techniques and process.

The highest level of achievement also infers that students need to justify material and technical choices they make to demonstrate how they have considered a medium or form and its suitability for the work they intend to make.

While a photographic log with critical annotations is very helpful in documenting a candidate's art-making practice and the development of an artwork, the process portfolio affords students to include evidence that comes from sources beyond the visual journal. Photographs of experiments with media with some annotations is also valuable.

The level of documentation for lens-based, electronic and screen-based forms (LBESB forms) was often poorer than more traditional forms. As in previous IB DP visual arts courses, it is critical in LBESB forms that candidates thoroughly document their processes in these forms to demonstrate their personal level of engagement with the form. Examiners expect to see evidence of contact sheets/proof sheets, test sheets, darkroom experimentation, screen shots of screen-based work in development, photographs or diagrams of studio or improvised lighting set-ups. The possibility of generating process portfolio screens electronically gives students working in electronic or screen-based forms greater access to accomplish this.

Criterion B: Critical investigation

The guide does not prescribe a critical model for this component. In stronger samples, a range of approaches have been observed, including annotating formal and visual qualities of a chosen work, various written critical analysis (variations on Feldmann etc.), but also visual and practical investigations, where a candidate has looked closely at an artist's style or technique, and then tried to replicate the style into their own work.

In weaker candidates, there is simply no or insufficient consideration of the work of other artists and the impact on the candidate's own development as an artist or the development of an

artwork or artworks. Sometimes in weak to mediocre examples, there is evidence of some degree of critical investigation, but it is detached and unrelated from the candidate's own work.

It is not expected that candidates include biographical information on artists they choose to investigate. It is certainly not prohibited, but unless the candidate is drawing connections between (or interpreting) an aspect of the artist's life or cultural experience to an aspect of their art-making practice or imagery, then such research does not address the marking criteria. Candidates are asked to critically investigate the work and draw connections with their own work.

It was very pleasing to see that a number of portfolios included reflections or critiques of exhibitions and museum or gallery visits. For many candidates, this continues to be very valuable, particularly when they serendipitously stumble upon artists that they have previously been unaware of, but stimulate some material or conceptual connection to the candidate's own practices.

Criterion C: Communication of ideas and intentions

Overall, this was the criterion that was addressed most poorly by the largest number of candidates. In most submissions, students seem to start documentation once the processes towards realising the artwork as a physical object has commenced.

This may be a result of some schools continuing to present to students overly prescriptive projects with limited scope for students to come up with their own ideas and concepts to pursue. This is often denoted by students in annotations such as "For my still-life project…". Such tasks really limit the students' potential to achieve highly against all criteria. While this might be an appropriate introduction to the course, it is not the best practice for students preparing for final assessment.

Otherwise, the ideation stage of the artmaking process can be an awkward one, visually for visual journal pages, and subsequently process portfolio screens. Students seem reluctant to include such pages as evidence in a process portfolio that includes presentation amongst its assessment criteria, but are also apprehensive about include evidence of false-starts and dead ends.

Evidence of initial brainstorming using any form of strategy such as concept webs, mind mapping or lists are essential for examiners to see and understand the starting points for work covered in the process diary. Equally important is evidence of an awareness of how a work might be perceived by an audience. Students need to show evidence that they are considering their imagery, the signs, symbols or visual codes they employ to communicate their ideas visually, and the appropriateness of the techniques and materials they choose to use.

Criterion D: Reviewing, refining and reflecting

Where students have intentionally recorded, in both visual and written forms, the processes of realising an artwork as a physical object, they invariably also provide evidence of a process that includes refining.

Stronger candidates include reflective evaluations on the development of their work that may reference the advice of peers, the class teacher or some other mentor, such as a visiting or resident artist as they complete this, which begins to address the "reviewing" aspect of the descriptor.

Where a more significant number of candidates failed to reach the higher levels of the marking descriptors is in a reflection on their own development as an artist and upon the skills they have acquired. This became evident in stronger submissions where the outcomes of earlier works were used to inform subsequent works. The student would candidly acknowledge perceived weaknesses or gaps in their skills that were evident in the previous work and articulate how they might attempt to address this in the next.

Importantly, reflection is not something that students should only do at the completion of a work. Students need to be encouraged to reflect upon their art-making throughout the process.

Criterion E: Presentation and subject-specific language.

This descriptor, while only accounting for a maximum of four marks, actually addresses two distinct areas. Presentation and subject-specific language. Consequently, an immaculately presented process portfolio could score two marks from four if insufficient subject specific language is used.

For presentation, in the stronger samples, there was a clear relationship and a good balance between the visual and written elements. Good screens were often dense without being over crowded. Screens were correctly oriented, and text direction was mostly consistent. Where samples relied on reproductions from visual journals, the reproductions were sharp and legible. The stronger digitally produced samples often included a large number of samples from a hand-written visual journal, sometimes using smaller extracts, rather than complete pages, that were more pertinent to what the candidate was trying to communicate. The content had a coherence to it.

In weaker samples, it was apparent that neither the visual journal nor the process portfolio had played a significant part in the candidate's artmaking practice. Writing was illegible, either through poor handwriting, or poorly selected fonts entered over excessively busy backgrounds, or poor contrast between text and page. No consideration was made for the examiner, with pages shifting in orientation. Where examples were drawn from a visual journal, these were sometimes included as illustrations or thumbnails, preventing close inspection.

In subject-specific language, examiners are not considering grammar or syntax, but a fluent usage of visual arts metalanguage that was appropriate to the form or medium being used.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The process portfolio needs to be considered as a folio of evidence of a candidate's artmaking processes and development as an artist. It is critical for the examiner that they are given the clearest and detailed picture of this process from the start to as near to the finish as the "double-dipping" requirement permits.

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

The IB DP visual arts guide does not compel students to document the development of all works that are bound for the exhibition component in the process portfolio. This is more closely reflected in the role of the visual arts journal. A better strategy for many students in completing the process portfolio may be to focus on a smaller number of works in greater detail, addressing all criteria for all included works – and just ensure that the minimum number of forms requirements are met.

Discourage students from organising screens in the order of the assessment criteria. The criteria are ordered according to their respective weighting. Rather, organise screens in a manner that gives the examiner the clearest, most coherent narrative of the development of the works included in the submission. Using headings to direct the examiner to content that a student believes addresses a particular criterion is acceptable – but it is important that the student's understanding of the criterion is adequate.

In ensuring that the process portfolio addresses a sufficient range of forms and media, it is critical to realise that the forms are denoted by the bold text (thus oil painting and acrylic painting come under the same form "painting"). At Higher level students must work across at least two of the columns and in three different forms.

Ensure that when students work in LBESB forms that they include sufficient evidence of their involvement in the process. Examiners expect to see evidence of contact sheets/proof sheets, test sheets, darkroom experimentation, screen-shots of screen-based work in development, photographs or diagrams of studio or improvised lighting set-ups. The possibility of generating process portfolio screens electronically gives students working in electronic or screen-based forms greater means to accomplish this.

Discourage students from unnecessarily "editing" a perfectly acceptable visual journal into a digital slide show version for the process portfolio. This creates additional unwarranted work. Rather, encourage students to consider every page completed in their visual journal as a potential process portfolio screen. Encourage students to work digitally if/when it best suits their learning style or the form that they are working in at the time (for example, it makes perfect sense to begin a digital visual journal while working in Photoshop, where students can cut and paste screenshots directly into their journal and annotate them with critical reflections.

Encourage students to develop their process portfolio screens horizontally. This better fills the screens upon which examiners will ultimately view and judge their work (and avoid writing in spirals or in various directions as desktop computers can be difficult to rotate).

Students are reminded, that as an Academic Honesty requirement, every image used within the process portfolio must be appropriately referenced to acknowledge the title, artist, medium, date (where this information is known) and the source, following the protocol of the referencing style chosen by the school. Students must ensure their own original work is identified and acknowledged in the same way to ensure examiners are clear about the form used and range of the media. When the student is aware that another person's work, ideas or images have influenced their conceptual or developmental work but it has not been referred to directly in their work, the source must be cited at point of use and may also be included in a list of sources.

Plan the course to allow for skills development over time**:** the new visual arts course requires candidates to experience a range of media and techniques, allowing candidates time to experiment within these media, and develop proficiencies; the course should also offer them guidance on how to investigate, analyze and reflect on the work of other artists and cultures as well as on their own work, and help them develop strategies and techniques to undertake this independently. There is a balance to be struck between broad explorations and sustained focus.

The visual arts course needs to be structured and a series of assignments frequently forms a strong basis for students to have justified confidence in their skills and understanding when embarking on more independent work. Ideas and strategies develop when there is a structure that allows and supports this development. The material developed and used for each of the new assessment components should emerge organically from the investigation undertaken through the course using the Visual Arts Journal. When developing the curriculum content, limit overly prescriptive tasks to the early stages of the course to give the students a firm grounding in art-making practices and critical investigation but then increasingly give the students greater opportunities to pursue genres, media, forms and ideas that interest them. Provide ample opportunities for formal and informal critiques with their peers, but then give some directed time for students to consider and reflect upon the critiques in their visual journals.

Refer regularly and often to the assessment criteria, giving feedback to students in terms of their achievement against the criteria.

Further comments

Adjusting to the requirements of a new guide, while balancing everything else that needs to occur within a school year, is always challenging. It has been evident from this session, the enormous amount of work that schools and art teachers specifically have done in preparation for the delivery of this new syllabus and to ensure cohesion between the three assessment components. Teachers are congratulated for their efforts.