



Government of **Western Australia**
School Curriculum and Standards Authority



VISUAL ARTS

GENERAL COURSE

Year 12 syllabus

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This syllabus is effective from 1 January 2016.

Users of this syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

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Rationale

The Visual Arts General course encompasses the practice and theory of the broad areas of art, craft and design. Students have opportunities to express their imagination and develop personal imagery, skills and engage in the making and presentation of artworks. They develop aesthetic understandings and a critical awareness that assists them to appreciate, and make, informed evaluations of art.

This course places value on divergence, uniqueness and individuality. It assists students to value and develop confidence in their own creative abilities and to develop a greater understanding of their environment, community and culture. The Visual Arts General course engages students in a process that helps them develop motivation, self-esteem, discipline, collaborative practice and resilience, all of which are essential life skills. Enterprise and initiative are recognised and encouraged.

Within contemporary society, there is increasing demand for visual literacy; the ability to perceive, understand, interpret and evaluate visual information. The Visual Arts General course enables students to develop their visual literacy and communication skills and become discriminating in their judgements. Particular aspects of life are understood and shared through visual symbol systems that are non-verbal modes of knowing.

The Visual Arts General course encourages students to develop problem-solving skills together with creative and analytical ways of thinking. Innovation is encouraged through a process of inquiry, exploration and experimentation. Students transform and shape ideas to develop resolved artworks. They engage in art making processes in traditional and new media areas which involve exploring, selecting and manipulating materials, techniques, processes, emerging technologies and responses to life. This course allows them to engage in traditional, modern and contemporary art forms and conventions, such as sculpture, painting, drawing, graphic design, printmaking, collage, ceramics, earth art, video art, installations, textiles, performance, photography, montage, multimedia, and time-based works and environments.

Students gain knowledge, understanding and appreciation of art and culture, both in Australian and international contexts. They analyse and evaluate their own works and the works of others from a range of historical and cultural viewpoints and develop an appreciation of the role of art in the community and their daily lives. Through their art experiences, they come to an understanding of broader questions about the values and attitudes held by individuals and societies and gain an awareness of the role that art plays in reflecting, challenging and shaping societal values.

The Visual Arts General course aims to enable students to make connections to relevant fields of study and to more generally prepare them for creative thinking and problem-solving in future work and life. It aims to contribute to a sense of enjoyment, engagement and fulfilment in their everyday lives, as well as to promote an appreciation for the environment and ecological sustainability.

Course outcomes

The Visual Arts General course is designed to facilitate achievement of the following outcomes.

Outcome 1 – Visual arts ideas

Students use creative processes to research, develop and communicate art ideas.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- research and generate ideas
- use visual language (elements and principles of art) to express ideas
- develop and refine ideas for specific purposes, contexts and audiences.

Outcome 2 – Visual arts skills, techniques and processes

Students use creative skills, techniques, processes, technologies and conventions to produce resolved artworks.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- use art elements and principles in the production of artworks
- use skills, techniques and processes to complete artworks
- select and present artworks for audiences and contexts.

Outcome 3 – Responses to visual arts

Students respond to, reflect on and critically evaluate their own art and the art of others.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- respond to the qualities of artworks
- reflect on the thinking and creative processes of their art experiences
- critically evaluate artworks referring to visual language (the elements and principles of art and design) and using art terminology.

Outcome 4 – Visual arts in society

Students understand the role of visual arts in society.

In achieving this outcome, students:

- understand how art varies according to time and place
- understand the social, cultural and historical contexts of visual arts.

Organisation

This course is organised into a Year 11 syllabus and a Year 12 syllabus. The cognitive complexity of the syllabus content increases from Year 11 to Year 12.

Structure of the syllabus

The Year 12 syllabus is divided into two units which are delivered as a pair. The notional time for the pair of units is 110 class contact hours.

Unit 3 – Inspirations

The focus for Unit 3 is inspirations. Students become aware that artists gain inspiration and generate ideas from diverse sources, including what is experienced, learned about, believed in, valued, imagined or invented.

Unit 4 – Investigations

The focus for Unit 4 is investigations. Students explore and develop ideas for art making and interpretation through the investigation of different artists, art forms, processes and technologies.

Each unit includes:

- a unit description – a short description of the focus of the unit
- suggested contexts – a context in which the unit content could be taught
- unit content – the content to be taught and learned.

Organisation of content

The course content is the focus of the learning program.

The course content is divided into two content areas:

- Art making
- Art interpretation

Art making

Inquiry

Investigation, development, planning, documentation and refinement of artwork describe the inquiry process. The development of ideas includes a range of investigative approaches, including direct observation, exploration and expressive drawing. Researching and selecting information and inspiration provides a basis for portraying ideas, thoughts and feelings. Resource and time management are central to the creation of artworks and the development of ideas.

Visual language

Visual language involves using the elements and principles of art, signs, symbols, codes and conventions to arrive at visual solutions to communicate ideas. The use of visual language helps shape the creation and evaluation of artworks.

Visual influence

Viewing and exploring others' artworks and visual sources provides the challenge of considering a range of approaches to adopt, extend or reject in one's own work. Viewing and appraising others' artwork informs and influences the inquiry process.

Art forms, media and techniques

Students combine and manipulate media and techniques in selected art forms. This provides opportunities to work flexibly, discover innovative solutions and develop original approaches to art making through exploration and experimentation.

Art practice

This involves the use of skills and processes in order to produce and present artworks. Health and safety guidelines, together with the exercise of civic, social and environmental responsibility, must be adhered to in the learning environment. Art practice requires discernment and the ability to make informed and sensitive choices with an awareness of ethical, legal and economic issues, such as appropriation, copyright, censorship and marketing.

Presentation

Display of artworks provides opportunities to participate, promote and critique own and others' artworks. Presentation therefore involves arranging, organising and displaying ideas and artworks for audiences.

Reflection

Reflection involves revisiting and reconsidering options and alternatives when developing ideas and artworks. Describing, analysing and critically evaluating thinking and working processes enhances one's own artistic practice.

Art interpretation

Visual analysis

Visual analysis promotes critical thinking through strategies of formal analysis and the use of critical analysis frameworks. Analysis involves comparing, commenting on and making informed judgements about artworks which are representative of a range of art forms from various times and places. Visual analysis takes into account formal concerns as well as contextual factors relating to time, place, race, culture, gender identity, religion and politics in order to make informed judgements about how meanings are communicated.

Personal response

Personal response involves sharing, discussing and justifying opinions about artworks, both first-hand and in reproductions. The field of visual arts is subject to different interpretations and informed responses should take into account varying contexts from which a work is created and experienced. Responding to artworks can stimulate insights, encourage deeper understandings, challenge preconceived ideas and involve making connections between oneself and others.

Meaning and purpose

Each viewer constructs their own meaning based on their own experiences and the evidence provided in artworks. Commentaries on art by critics, historians, theorists and artists provide essential information and further access to the meanings and purposes of artworks.

Social, cultural and historical contexts

Knowledge about the relationships between artists, artworks, audiences and contextual factors is fundamental to interpreting and understanding visual artworks. Research into contexts includes consideration of the stylistic and technical aspects of artworks in order to locate them in particular times, places and cultures. Visual arts practice plays an important role in forming a significant part of the economy and providing career opportunities in Australia and internationally.

Representation of the general capabilities

The general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the capabilities into the teaching and learning program for the Visual Arts General course. The general capabilities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Literacy

The general capabilities may be explicitly taught or may be an inherent part of a particular learning area. The visual arts rely on multi literacies; oral, visual, kinetic, text based and digital literacy, all of which are fundamental to learning, communicating, creating and responding.

Numeracy

An ability to apply numerical concepts, such as space, scale, proportion, depth, ratio and pattern, is the foundation of all composing and creating in the visual arts.

Information and communication technology capability

The information and communication technology (ICT) capability enables students to use digital tools and environments to represent their ideas and artwork. They use digital technologies to locate, access, select and evaluate information, work collaboratively, share and exchange information, and communicate with a variety of audiences.

Critical and creative thinking

The visual arts are dependent on the development of creative and critical thinking. In creating artwork, students draw on their curiosity, imagination and thinking skills to pose questions and explore ideas. They consider possibilities and processes and make choices that assist them to take risks and express their ideas creatively.

Personal and social capability

Learning in the visual arts promotes self-discipline, initiative, confidence, empathy and adaptability as students work individually and collaboratively. As art makers, they acquire facility with tools, media, skills and techniques and they develop and apply personal abilities, such as self-discipline and goal setting.

Ethical understanding

Ethical understanding is developed and applied in the visual arts when students encounter or create artwork that requires ethical consideration, such as artwork that is controversial, involves a moral dilemma or presents a biased point of view. They actively engage in ethical decision making when reflecting on their own and others' artwork.

Intercultural understanding

Intercultural understanding in the visual arts assists students to explore new ideas, media and practices from diverse local, national, regional and global cultural contexts. Students are encouraged to demonstrate open-mindedness to perspectives that differ from their own and to appreciate the diversity of cultures and contexts in which artists and audiences live.

Representation of the cross-curriculum priorities

The cross-curriculum priorities address the contemporary issues which students face in a globalised world. Teachers may find opportunities to incorporate the priorities into the teaching and learning program for the Visual Arts General course. The cross-curriculum priorities are not assessed unless they are identified within the specified unit content.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

The study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures enriches understanding of the diversity of art making practices in Australia and develops appreciation of the need to respond to artworks in ways that are culturally sensitive and responsible.

Many Australian Indigenous artists affirm connection with Country/Place, People and Culture through their visual arts making, with more traditional artworks representing cultural and clan knowledge that can only be used with permission. Study of the visual arts created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders exposes students to a view of the Australian landscape that is unique, expressive and personal.

Other Australian Indigenous artists offer a more contemporary view of Australian society. Many of these artists are part of the wider community of Australian artists and their artwork is as various and individual as other contemporary Australian artists.

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia provides rich, engaging and diverse contexts in which to investigate making and responding to visual artwork which has arisen from the rich and diverse cultures, belief systems and traditions of the peoples of the Asian region.

Sustainability

Sustainability provides engaging and thought-provoking contexts in which to explore the nature of art making and responding and enables the investigation of the interrelated nature of social, economic and ecological systems.

Students can use the exploratory and creative platform of the visual arts to develop world views that recognise the importance of social justice, healthy ecosystems and effective action for sustainability. Through their art work, they may persuade others to take action for sustainable futures.

Unit 3 – Inspirations

Unit description

The focus for this unit is inspirations. Students become aware that artists gain inspiration and generate ideas from diverse sources, including what is experienced, learned about, believed in, valued, imagined or invented. The breadth of this focus allows choice of learning contexts that are related to students' interests.

In this unit, students develop their knowledge and understanding of visual language and apply this to both art making and art interpretation. Through exploration, investigation and experimentation, they develop skills in inquiry, recording observations and manipulating media to create artworks in selected art forms.

Students, through research and/or first-hand experience of artworks and art making, actively engage in perception, research, reflection and response and consider the ways in which artists, past and present, have been inspired to develop artworks. They are given opportunities to present or exhibit their work, to describe their source(s) of inspiration and to evaluate the process and success of their finished artworks.

Suggested contexts

Teachers and students may explore one or more of the suggested contexts in this unit (this list is not exhaustive):

- concepts: emotions and imagination, universal issues
- styles and approaches: drawing and other visual documentation strategies or styles from different times and cultures, transformation or metamorphosis, styles of representation
- materials: clay, textile materials, 2D, 3D or 4D materials
- meanings and messages: visual narratives, personal response to artworks, literature and mass media
- purposes: traditional and/or contemporary body adornment, wearable art

Unit content

An understanding of the Year 11 content is assumed knowledge for students in Year 12.

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

Art making

Inquiry

- use direct observation, expressive and exploratory drawing to create artwork
- explore alternatives, experiment and make informed decisions about the development of artwork
- organise information, research, plan and document design development process

Visual language

- use strategies for developing visual language in artwork - elements and principles of art

Visual influence

- examine specific artists and artwork with similar techniques, subject matter or approaches
- select sources of information and inspiration to develop own artwork

Art forms, media and techniques

- test and experiment with media when developing artwork
- apply and refine techniques in selected art forms

Art practice

- experiment and selectively apply materials and skills to produce artwork
- make appropriate and considered choices when developing artwork
- follow correct health and safety practices, respecting and acknowledging the work of others
- examine a variety of art forms and visual arts practices, referencing sources of information

Presentation

- record and arrange work in progress
- display finished artwork with an audience in mind

Reflection

- reflect on and maintain documentation of the development of thinking and working practices
- describes the ideas, meaning and personal direction taken in art making - artist statement

Art interpretation**Visual analysis**

- use guided questions and critical analysis frameworks to interpret and evaluate artwork
- comment on subject matter, meaning and formal organisation – composition of artwork
- discuss artwork referring to visual language and using art terminology

Personal response

- structure responses giving reasons for opinions and interpretations about artwork
- identify various inspirations behind the development and creation of artwork

Meaning and purpose

- identify the purpose and discuss the techniques, visual language and approach used to communicate meaning in artwork

Social, cultural and historical contexts

- examine the subject matter of artwork, identifying the stylistic and technical aspects that locate it in a particular time, place or culture

Unit 4 – Investigations

Unit description

The focus for this unit is investigations. Students explore and develop ideas through the investigation of different artists, art forms, processes and technologies. Students investigate spontaneous and analytical styles of drawing, experimenting with a range of media and techniques. They further develop their knowledge and understanding of visual language and apply this to both art making and art interpretation.

In particular, students explore the expressive potential of media techniques and processes, considering their inherent qualities in the development and presentation of their artworks. They investigate ways to document their thinking and working practices, refining their reflection and decision-making skills.

In this unit, students investigate a variety of artworks and media to further develop their understanding of the creative process and learn how to apply new analytical and production skills and techniques in the communication of their own ideas.

Suggested contexts

Teachers and students may explore one or more of the suggested contexts in this unit (this list is not exhaustive):

- concepts: a sense of place: myth and reality, objects or phenomena, illusion, symbolism, dreams and imagination
- styles and approaches: postmodern, traditional and/or contemporary art practice, art as record, illustration, art styles and media use
- materials: fibre, glass, oil and acrylics, found objects, digital media
- meanings and messages: issues of personal interest and passion, exploration of universal issues, such as poverty, comics, art as social comment, anatomical studies
- purposes: architecture, stage set, personal interests or passions

Unit content

This unit includes the knowledge, understandings and skills described below.

Art making

Inquiry

- use observed, spontaneous and analytical drawings to develop artwork
- manipulate media and use a variety of investigative approaches to develop and produce artwork
- gather, collect and organise information, research and inspirational stimulus materials to plan and develop artwork

Visual language

- use visual language in the development and production of artwork - elements and principles of art

Visual influence

- collect and use inspiration gathered from across a range of artists, genres, times and places in the development of own artwork

Art forms, media and techniques

- adapt and apply materials and techniques to create artwork in selected art forms
- experiment and refine the use of media and techniques to produce innovative artwork

Art practice

- experiment with materials, skills and processes to develop artwork
- follow correct health and safety practices, respecting and acknowledging the work of others
- examine a range of visual arts practices by selectively applying skills and processes to own artwork

Presentation

- organise, document and present thinking and working practices
- display a body of work for critique and exhibition

Reflection

- reflect on, refine and evaluate the development of thinking and working practices
- describes the ideas, meaning and personal direction taken in art making - artist statement
- acknowledge visual influences

Art interpretation**Visual analysis**

- use guided questions and critical analysis frameworks to interpret artwork
- discuss subject matter, meaning and formal organisation of artwork
- refer to visual language and use art terminology to comment on artwork

Personal response

- provide and give reasons for interpretation and opinion about artwork
- discuss ways artists have investigated themes in their work

Meaning and purpose

- discuss the meaning of artwork from different times and places making links to contextual factors
- discuss how artists have used different approaches , techniques and visual language to communicate meaning in artwork

Social, cultural and historical contexts

- examine the subject matter of artwork and identify a range of social, cultural, historical and other contextual factors that have influenced or impacted the development and production of artists, groups or movements over time

School-based assessment

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Manual contains essential information on principles, policies and procedures for school-based assessment that needs to be read in conjunction with this syllabus.

Teachers design school-based assessment tasks to meet the needs of students. The table below provides details of the assessment types for the Visual Arts General Year 12 syllabus and the weighting for each assessment type.

Assessment table – Year 12

Type of assessment	Weighting
Production A body of work that incorporates resolved artwork(s) and documentation of thinking and working practices. This typically involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigative approaches, including drawing to create artworks (inquiry) • using elements and principles of art (visual language) • using sources of information and research (visual influence) • transforming and developing artworks (art forms, media and techniques) • producing artworks (art practice) • displaying artworks (presentation) • evaluating and refining production processes (reflection). 	65%
Analysis Response to, analysis and evaluation of artworks sourced from a variety of forms, periods, times and/or cultures. This typically involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretation of meanings • commenting on the relationship between the art form's structure, purpose, ideas, issues, beliefs, attitudes, emotions and/or values. 	10%
Investigation Case studies involving research and visual analysis focused on Australian and/or international visual arts practice. Visual arts practice should be examined with consideration of historical, cultural and contextual factors influencing production and interpretation.	10%
Externally set task A written task or item or set of items of one hour duration developed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and administered by the school.	15%

Teachers are required to use the assessment table to develop an assessment outline for the pair of units.

The assessment outline must:

- include a set of assessment tasks
- include a general description of each task
- indicate the unit content to be assessed
- indicate a weighting for each task and each assessment type
- include the approximate timing of each task (for example, the week the task is conducted, or the issue and submission dates for an extended task).

All assessment types must be included in the assessment outline at least twice with the exception of the externally set task which only occurs once.

The set of assessment tasks must provide a representative sampling of the content for Unit 3 and Unit 4.

Assessment tasks not administered under test/controlled conditions require appropriate validation/authentication processes. Visual Arts practical (production) tasks must be developed mainly in school time, and any work away from school must be regularly monitored.

Externally set task

All students enrolled in the Visual Arts General Year 12 course will complete the externally set task developed by the Authority. Schools are required to administer this task in Term 2 at a time prescribed by the Authority.

Externally set task design brief – Year 12

Time	One hour
Format	Written
	Conducted under invigilated conditions
	Typically between two and four questions/items
	Questions can require students to provide and refer to one page of documentation on processes of production and design
Content	The Authority informs schools during Term 3 of the previous year of the Unit 3 syllabus content on which the task will be based

Refer to the WACE Manual for further information.

Grading

Schools report student achievement in terms of the following grades:

Grade	Interpretation
A	Excellent achievement
B	High achievement
C	Satisfactory achievement
D	Limited achievement
E	Very low achievement

The teacher prepares a ranked list and assigns the student a grade for the pair of units. The grade is based on the student's overall performance as judged by reference to a set of pre-determined standards. These standards are defined by grade descriptions and annotated work samples. The grade descriptions for the Visual Arts General Year 12 syllabus are provided in Appendix 1. They can also be accessed, together with annotated work samples, through the Guide to Grades link on the course page of the Authority website at www.scsa.wa.edu.au

To be assigned a grade, a student must have had the opportunity to complete the education program, including the assessment program (unless the school accepts that there are exceptional and justifiable circumstances).

Refer to the WACE Manual for further information about the use of a ranked list in the process of assigning grades.

Appendix 1 – Grade descriptions Year 12

A	Art making (production)
	Produces resolved artworks showing highly proficient communication of ideas.
	Displays highly proficient use of materials and techniques.
	Creatively explores complex ideas and displays highly considered use of visual language.
	Displays refined selection and application of media, skills and processes.
	Art interpretation (analysis and investigation)
	Provides an informed and coherent analysis explaining the construction, meaning and aesthetic organisation of artworks.
	Provides a thoughtful and detailed personal response that is clearly justified and supported with evidence, including contextual information.
B	Undertakes detailed research based on multiple sources of information, formulating clear conclusions and selectively integrating research in own production work.
	Art making (production)
	Produces resolved artworks showing effective communication of ideas.
	Effectively manipulates materials and techniques.
	Explores and develops refined ideas.
	Demonstrates highly effective application of visual language.
	Art interpretation (analysis and investigation)
	Provides detailed and structured analysis that interprets how artworks have been constructed to convey meaning.
C	Provides a structured personal response with interpretation and opinions that are supported with reasons and evidence, including simple contextual information.
	Undertakes research identifying sources, organising information and applying key aspects of research in own production work.
	Art making (production)
	Produces completed artworks showing successful communication of ideas.
	Proficient use of materials and techniques.
	Develops broad and general or obvious ideas.
	Demonstrates proficient use of visual language.
	Art interpretation (analysis and investigation)
D	Provides broad and general analysis based on key features and offering some interpretation of meaning.
	Provides a personal response with some reasoning for their interpretations and opinions.
	Undertakes sound research forming general conclusions and showing some application of research in own production work.
	Art making (production)
	Produces artwork showing limited communication of ideas.
	Basic use of materials and techniques.
	Ideas are simple, under-developed and mostly unresolved.
	Demonstrates limited or inappropriate use of visual language.
E	Art interpretation (analysis and investigation)
	Provides minimal analysis with obvious or superficial interpretation of meaning.
	Provides little reasoning to support interpretations and opinions.
	Undertakes minimal research with limited relevance to own production work.
	Does not meet the requirements of a D grade.

Appendix 2 – Glossary

This glossary is provided to enable a common understanding of the key terms in this syllabus.

Abstraction	A style of art that selects and emphasises one or a number of the elements and principles of art in order to depict an object or idea without attention to depicting the object in a realistic manner.
Aesthetic	Relating to or characterised by a concern with beauty or good taste (adjective); a particular taste or approach to the visual qualities of an object (noun).
Analysis	Comparing, commenting on and making informed judgements about artworks.
Appropriation	The intentional borrowing, copying and alteration of pre-existing images and objects in a new context or for a new meaning.
Art terminology	Words and phrases which have meaning specific to the visual arts.
Censorship	The act of suppressing artwork deemed objectionable on moral, political, aesthetic or other grounds.
Composition	The placement or arrangement of elements or parts in artwork.
Conceptual	Emphasising ideas rather than objects (or skills).
Context (historical, social and cultural)	Historical, social and/or cultural context refers to the time and place in which an artwork was created and the influence on artwork of those contexts.
Conventions	Traditional or culturally accepted ways of doing things based on audience expectations.
Copyright	The exclusive right to make copies, license or otherwise exploit an artistic work.
Critical analysis frameworks	Critical analysis frameworks provide scaffolds for analysis of artworks. The four critical analysis frameworks, recommended for use by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA), are included and defined on the Visual Arts page of the SCSA website.
Elements of art	Line, colour, shape, texture, space, value (tone) and form.
Influences	The capacity or power of persons or events to be a compelling force on or produce effects on the creations, actions, behaviours and/or opinions of others.
Innovation	A new invention or idea.
Practice	Refers to the conceptual and physical processes of art making and how ideas, concepts and themes are developed.
Principles of art	Accepted conventions associated with organising the elements; can include unity, balance, hierarchy, scale, proportion, emphasis, similarity, repetition and contrast.
Resolved artwork	A resolved artwork is an artwork that would generally be considered display or exhibition ready.
Style	A distinctive or characteristic manner of expression; the influencing context of an artwork, such as Impressionism or Romanticism; or postmodern, twenty-first century or contemporary.
Visual devices	The elements and principles of art and symbols and conventions are visual devices that the artist uses to communicate his/her intent.
Visual language	Visual language is the use of the elements and principles of art, symbols and conventions to arrive at visual solutions to communicate ideas.
Visual literacy	The ability to perceive, understand, interpret and evaluate visual information.
Visual symbol systems	Non-verbal modes of communication, for example, signs, symbols, perspective, representation.