

## Art - Theory and Criticism

Course Code: ART315116

For 2016, the first year of Art Theory and Criticism, a rich variety of papers, were submitted. Many were well composed and explored their topics from original perspectives but the usual mishaps occurred with referencing and bibliographies in that some students did not have both. This requirement has not changed with the new syllabus and aligns with the requirements of many academic university arts courses of which Art Theory and Criticism is a pathway into. The reference list contains everything that the student has cited, paraphrased or borrowed ideas from and the bibliography contains everything that the student has looked at including those media items listed in the reference list. It is paramount that students don't just reference quotations! They must reference information/ideas/facts and any information that is not the student's own. Many papers also had a very small bibliography. Teachers need to instruct their students to build a bibliography all year and to start in term one while exploring topics.

Normal conventions of titling art works need to be followed and to be followed consistently. How images are titled will be taken into consideration by examiners. An example is provided in the 2015 examiners report for Art Appreciation. When an artist's name first appears in the paper it should be in full, with the year of birth and death following in brackets. After this just the surname can be used.

The comprehensive analysis of art works and ideas remain the key to providing students with a voice of their own and has an impact on all the criteria but particularly criteria one, three and four. It is this deconstruction of artworks that makes the paper an individual composition rather than the mere repetition of what is already known and published. Students should not use anyone else's analysis unless it is for the sake of making comparisons.

Images of art works are to be chosen for the illustration of ideas. Thorough analysis, preferably using the DAIE process, should link them to the ideas being explored. Make the relationship clear - do not just illustrate and expect the reader to know what is meant. Make sure that image quality is good - do not use an image with pixilation.

Some papers were a little shallow in their exploration and consideration of the issues relating to their topic and needed to push beyond 4500 words. Students should really aim for 5000 words. The word count must be on the front of the paper! This is stated in the folio guidelines. Students must not use a font less than 12 point.

Teacher should encourage students to try to think about engaging the reader, not just expressing themselves - what might the reader need to know or think about? Consider the flow of a paper – yes, it is a research document but it is a composition too. It is an exploration of an idea or a question/field of inquiry. When reading a paper examiners ask themselves what has the writer learned? What has the writer discovered about a field/artist/idea/technique.

A good and useful practice that enhances students learning as well as the quality of their writing is to use peers to edit papers. For clarity of expression reading the paper out loud can help allowing students to hear their own words more clearly and objectively. In addition, getting others to read their papers back to them in phrases is particularly useful.

Ensure that the tenses in sentences, in paragraphs and then across the paper are in agreement and always have someone else check punctuation. Long fancy sentences are always harder to check than crisp 14 word sentences.

First person can be used for real time experience sharing, for invoking an exhibition or artwork for the reader. The sharing of experiences of viewing art can bring a paper to life and indicate to the examiners the student's engagement with not just their topic but the art world in general. This subject should not supply a history paper and there were a few examples out there of mere history papers.

Concluding a paper is essential! It could be helpful for students if they keep a running page of notes during the year of notions that might build a good conclusion later in the year.

Some of the titles of folios submitted in 2016 were:

Censorship of the Male Nude

Mental Instability in Self-Portraiture: A Comparison of Van Gogh, Schiele and Kahlo

Bystanders: an exploration of the role of bystanders in paintings depicting Jesus

Art as the Pole Star for the Navigation of Ethics

Religious and Spiritual Animal Symbolism in Art

What you see is not what you get

Controversial Art: which sex pushes the boundaries further?

How has the image of Prometheus changed throughout the History of Art?

Do not abandon me: Motherhood according to Louis Bourgeois

Motion from Stillness

How are women portrayed by Australian Artists? – Vulnerability and Empowerment

The Evolution of Performance Art and its induction into Pop Culture

Youth – The Portrayal of Children in Photography

The impact of Feminism during its Second Wave in Art History

The Self through Portraiture

The Art of Dying - Death and Dying in Contemporary Art

Art as an Agent

The Portrayal of Venus – The ideal woman seen through the eyes of male artists

How Animal Activists use Artworks to Illustrate the Cruelty Inflicted upon Animals by Humans

How are men and women depicted in paintings through their lover's eyes?

Existentialism in Art

An Exploration of the Present through the Comfort of the Past: The Simple Life