

ART PRODUCTION (ART315117)

FEEDBACK FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Art Production continues to prosper within this state with the number of examined candidates increasing again this year to 860. The interpretation of the course requirements was variant, with some enormous folios and some teetering on the edge of minimum requirement. In this respect, many folios maintained a profile of visual cohesiveness, suggesting that the interpretation of the topics had been considered in the broadest, and in some instances, the most imaginative manner. The very literal acknowledgement of 8 required works suggested that some candidates were encouraged to edit or cull their exhibition for the sake of aesthetics, whereas examiners always hunt for demonstrative evidence of a year's engagement within the subject. There was a significantly high degree of innovation within the folios, suggesting that the unitised kick-starts are being condensed within the school year to allow greater and earlier individual actualisation. The impact of this in some institutions was astonishing, with some incredible diversification observed. There remains, however, continued evidence of a style template in some instances.

CRITERIA 1: ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

The critical foundation of this criteria is demonstrated fundamentally in the actual display. Those candidates who had a strong sense of design choreographed their exhibition with near-professional sophistication, which in-turn alerted examiners to further evidence of exemplary design sensibilities within individual images or objects. The alternative ratings were the result of little planning in the actual execution of the display and rudimentary manipulation of content within the work. It was obvious that issues that impacted on the design elements often had their genesis within other criteria. Candidates who demonstrated active engagement with the totality of their display provided constructive evidence of their conclusive intentions within their support material. Candidates who were deemed exceptional clearly delivered a very convincing compendium of planning and outcome.

It is within the technology driven studios that the greatest opportunity for verification of intension exists. Proof sheets, contact sheets and screen-shots of process provide evidence of mechanisms of design sensibilities rather concisely, whereas, physically interactive outcomes often require the traditions of scribing. One is not superior to the other, in each instance it is the selection of compositional elements and the manoeuvring of dynamics which provide the clues to a demonstration of this criteria's requirements.

There were breathtaking bodies of painting and photography, where gesture, reality and abstraction were pushing the boundaries of contemporary art practice, but there were also examples of the naïve and the snapshot. This is ultimately the strength of this subject as it offers possibility of engagement to all students.

CRITERIA 3: TECHNOLOGIES AND TECHNIQUES

There was significant evidence of very diverse technical competence. The Plastic Arts are rising from the cinders with the most significant number of folios experienced in perhaps a decade. As it takes substantial experience with a material to achieve maestro consequences, hand-built objects were acknowledged for their mostly raw competency, and in some instances, their ascendant realisation. Photography increased its predominance and its variance within eminence. Hamstrung by the logistics of the digital epoch and the cult of personal devices, true virtuosity is inconsistent. Many folios addressed subject/content/narrative rather than proficiency. It was about taking pictures as a document of self rather than an art practice. While digital clearly dominates, there also still appears to be an almost righteous need to alert examiners of analogue outcomes. Moderation processes appear to be hampered by this dominance, as exemplary needs to be obvious above the proficient.

Painting and drawing re-acknowledged the fundamentals of skill. A resurgence in illustration and gestural abstraction moved beyond the certification of the observed world. Where anachronistically reflective daubing of the environment occurred, it was deeply engaged and respectful of its origins. They looked to and trusted past innovators to give them a current language. Similarly, the Pop Surrealism world of improbable fantasy has engaged candidates significantly. Political activism appeared to be a distant whisper as rigorous, metamorphic, bestial teenage apparitions were conjured.

Whereas the technological anchorage of Media Production has been the splint for video, animation and virtual reality submissions in the past, this year's offerings tended to lack sophistication. In some instances, the art content was negligible.

CRITERIA 4: COMMUNICATE IDEAS, EMOTIONS AND INFORMATION

It is possible that this criteria requires greater scrutiny as a potential Professional Learning opportunity. As the most critical opportunity to provide evidence of a candidate's conceptual and contextual machinations, it is symbiotically fused with Criteria 7 (Observe, analyse and respond to cultural influences and art works). Consistently candidates mired the opportunity to concisely express their ideas by padding their support with miscellaneous images, contact sheets, process screen shots or random preliminary sketches. It is noted that all of these items are crucial to developing ideas within an art practice, but if they are disconnected from the theory and unannotated, they serve little purpose in developing strong resolutions. The support material is a window to the heart and mind of the candidate for an examiner. Clarity enforces conviction and some technically exceptional folios were under-resourced and therefore undermined by inadequate evidence of idea development.

It is worthy of note that this is a new course requiring a deviation from the previous requirements traditionally embedded in this criteria. It was apparent in some instances, that candidates may not have been fully aware of these distinctions and were perhaps guided by exemplar samples from the previous course.

CRITERIA 6: CREATE AND DISPLAY A COHESIVE BODY OF WORK

As the display initiates the first point of entry for examination, the measure of cohesiveness is usually determined before the further scrutiny of supporting material. It is either cohesive or it's not and either represents a year's work or it doesn't. Interpretation varies, but in the broadest sense, this criteria refers to the candidates' individual fingerprint which is qualified by stylistic intersections that connect imagery or objects within a single studio area. A misunderstanding of this is the notion of repetition, similarity or recurrence. The exemplary folios were extremely convincing, roaring with virtuosity and visceral dynamism, but there continues to remain some uncertainty about the submission of folios for those occupying the alternative scale of achievement. The course clearly initiates the possibility of generating the absolute minimum of 8 works. Resolved or not, this is

still evidence of engagement with work processes. Likewise, candidates should be encouraged to find their studio focus as early as possible to prevent straying beyond the boundaries of cohesion across multiple studios.

Photography dictates standards in many respects because of the sheer weight of numbers. At 455 folios, it takes extraordinary bodies of work to be deemed exemplary because the large number of participants who file-share across social media, results in the same subject matter being repeated infinitum. It was within this studio area that the question “Does this represent a year’s work?” became the most familiar utterance. The most exhilarating work stepped beyond subject matter to explore pure abstraction. Painting and Drawing maintained the status quo in terms of previous statistics and, while the content remains fairly traditional, if not retentive, there were several maestro painters who could easily undermine the Abstract Expressionists. One was the Examiners’ Choice. Ceramics more than doubled this year in folios and its resurgence is encouraging. Digital and Graphic Design has found a surrogate in Photography and while the remaining studio areas had minor variations in numbers, Sculpture presented 50% less this year.

CRITERIA 7: RESPONDS TO CULTURAL INFLUENCES AND ART WORKS

A firm understanding of the nuances of this criteria is critical to the assessment process because any misapprehension of the exam requirements for this criteria has the potential to unravel the algorithm. This criteria is not simply about the Visual Diary, Journal or Support Material. It is concerned with the very fibre of responses to ‘cultural influences and art works’. Not only should the material show evidence of a candidate’s idea development, it is critical that their responses to the art milieu be contained within this as well. Annotation, commentary, criticism and analysis are crucial, and all of these issues are clearly represented within the 5 compulsory theory assignments. The examination process was mostly buoyed by clearly marked folders presenting the assignments either as essays or power-point printouts. If an alternative non-essay assignment possibility is utilised, its existence should be clearly evident to the examiners and not buried in the bulk.

Some confusion still remains concerning the consequences of missing assignments. Regardless of the quality of the support material, if there appears to be missing assignments at the time of assessment, the candidate will receive no greater than a ‘t’ rating. This should have also occurred internally. This represents acknowledgement of an incomplete folio.

Examining Art Production is the highlight of the school year. Experiencing such a diverse range of skills, ideas and passions is professionally invigorating and the constant growth of the subject in terms of numbers suggests that creativity is potentially a gargantuan commodity within this state. The deliverers of this subject do an awesome job and through the Moderation process makes the actuality of examining consistently such a pleasure. What a brilliant team!

2018 STUDIO STATISTIC BREAKDOWN

- Photography - 53.4%
- Painting - 17.9%
- Drawing – 11.3%
- Ceramics – 3.18%
- Printmaking – 2.38%
- Digital – 4.12%
- Mixed Media – 3.18%
- Sculpture – 0.4%
- Installation – 4.0%
- Collage – 0.7%
- Graphic Design – 1.29%
- Video – 1.29%
- Textiles - .07%