



Key information for the Visual Arts Stage 6 syllabus (2016)

- Schools and teachers use syllabuses to develop educational programs for students. The [Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus \(2016\)](#) requires students to investigate Artmaking 50% and Art Criticism and Art History 50% over 240 hours.
- Visual Arts Stage 6 specific course requirements are outlined in the [Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus \(2016\)](#) including Preliminary and HSC course components.
- Schools are required to develop school-based assessment programs for each of the Preliminary and HSC courses. School-based assessment requirements are outlined at [Assessment and Reporting in Visual Arts in Stage 6](#).

Professional learning

There are a range of 'on demand' professional learning resources to support the implementation of the Visual Arts Stage 6 syllabus including:

- [Writing in Stage 6 Visual Arts](#)
- [Visual Arts Stage 6 and the body of work](#)
- [Joining the dots preparing for the HSC examination](#)
- [Assessing Visual Arts Bodies of Work](#)
- [Advice for developing the Body of Work and use of the VAPD](#)

The Creative arts curriculum team also offer a range of live online and face to face professional learning events throughout the year. To view any upcoming events, go to the [Creative arts Statewide Staffroom](#).

HSC Examinations

- The HSC Visual Arts examination involves both a written exam and submitted artwork. Details on the HSC Visual Arts examination can be found at [Assessment and Reporting in Visual Arts in Stage 6](#). The written examination is a 1 hour and 30 minutes examination paper, consisting of 2 sections (totalling 50 marks / weighting 50%).
- The Body of Work (50 marks/ weighting 50%) student submission should demonstrate the understanding of artmaking as a practice representing students' ideas and interests. Body of work examination criteria reflects on conceptual strength and meaning, and resolution. See [HSC Visual Arts Marking Guidelines – Artmaking – Body of work](#).
- The body of work must comply with the prescribed dimensions for HSC submitted artworks as set out in NESA advice regarding content and certifying works in [Practical exam rules](#) and [Certifying HSC practical component](#).
- Past HSC papers by NESA help students to become familiar with the examination format and structure. Past papers for Stage 6 Visual Arts can be found at [Visual Arts HSC exam paper 2025](#) and include marking centre notes for Body of Work submissions and written examinations.
- HSC standards materials by NESA provide a collection of resources of sample responses typical of work at the boundaries between HSC bands. The [Visual Arts Stage 6 standards material](#) can be found on the NESA webpages.

Support materials

The Creative arts curriculum team provides resources to support NSW teachers in the implementation of the Visual Arts Stage 6 syllabus and can be located on the [planning, programming and assessing visual arts 11-12](#) webpage. You will find sample scopes and sequences, assessment schedules and tasks, teaching and learning resources for Preliminary and HSC Visual Arts, including [Assessing Visual Arts Bodies of Work](#).

NESA also has a range of support materials on the Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus (2016) webpage, Artexpress and [Artexpress Virtual](#).

General HSC information

- The [NSW Education Standards Authority \(NESA\)](#) oversees the Higher School Certificate (HSC), offering resources for students on exam preparation, course selection, and academic integrity.
- The [NESA HSC glossary](#) provides teachers with guidance on how to use key terms consistently, ensuring students understand their meanings and apply them appropriately across various subjects for effective exam preparation.
- The NESA [HSC assessment moderation](#) process ensures fairness by adjusting school assessment marks based on exam results, making them comparable across schools.
- The [ACE rules](#) outline HSC school-based assessment integrity, task development, marking, appeals, and record-keeping. They cover malpractice policies, illness/ misadventure procedures, task notifications, ranking, and restrictions on reporting final marks, ensuring compliance with NESA's assessment standards.
- HSC monitoring advice, Section 1.6 outlines HSC record-keeping requirements, including teaching programs, assessment documentation, interventions and work samples. Visit [Stage 6 – monitoring implementation and support](#) for more information.
- School-based assessment for the HSC contributes to a student's final mark and is designed to evaluate students' understanding and skills based on syllabus outcomes.

Contact us

If you would like further information or support, please email creativearts7-12@det.nsw.edu.au or reach out to our team via the [Creative arts Statewide Staffroom](#). You can also subscribe to our [Creative Arts Newsletter](#).