

Draft Specification for Junior Cycle *Visual Art*  
(Proposed new title for Art, Craft, Design)



## Reading note: Subject title change

*Visual Art* is the new title for the subject currently called *Art, Craft, Design*. The term visual art is more inclusive and reflects the range of approaches artists may take in realising their work. The new title of *Visual Art* captures the fluidity in the natural way artists, craftspeople and designers work. For example, they may design work that will be realised through craft or use a design artistically to decorate or enhance a piece of craftwork. For an artist, techniques and materials that are common in one medium may be used in another to enhance the aesthetic look and feel of a realised work. The term is also open to recognising any visual methods of understanding and ways of working that may yet not be commonplace and as such allowing them to form part or all of the responses to any artistic challenges a student may face as they progress through the junior cycle *Visual Art* course.

This title is reflective of the title of the *Visual Arts* curriculum for primary schools and as such recognises the continuation of a student's learning through the visual arts in post primary.

The Scottish (Expressive Arts), Australian, and New Zealand curriculum documents all mention the importance of the Arts and maintain that experiences in dance, drama and visual art can be viewed as activities that share learning outcomes through a common Arts stem. From this common stem more particular learning outcomes, related to each separate branch of the arts, for example *Visual Art*, have been developed.

The International Baccalaureate views Visual Art & Media as *Visual Arts* and Dance, Music and Drama as *Performing Arts*. In the UK and Northern Ireland, at GCSE level the subject is referred to as *Art and Design*. However, this overarching title also includes additional *Areas of Study* such as Applied, Fine Art, Graphic Communication, Textile Design, 3-D Design and Photography (lens-based).



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# Introduction to junior cycle

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society, and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. Junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcome for all.

The junior cycle allows students to make a greater connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place, and by offering experiences that are engaging and enjoyable for them, and are relevant to their lives. These experiences are of a high quality: they contribute directly to the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners; and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity, innovation and enterprise. The junior cycle programme builds on students' learning to date and actively supports their progress; it enables them to develop the learning skills that will assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school.

# Rationale

*Visual Art* education is the process of teaching and learning through art, craft and design. For adolescents and young adults, this involves becoming familiar with and applying the elements of art and principles of design, and the knowledge and skills associated with these processes, their histories and their contemporary practices. *Visual Art* also recognises and rewards a number of different forms of intelligence, including emotional intelligence; it develops personal qualities of expression, of empathy.

*Visual Art* encompasses art, craft and design and involves practical work with a specific outcome (e.g. an artwork, a design, architecture, an event). Making art develops the learner's imagination (developing an idea or concept) and allows them exercise personal responsibility for specific tasks.

*Visual Art* is ambiguous - there is no single 'correct answer' in visual art: *Visual Art* promotes divergent thinking ('thinking outside the box') and develops the learner's ability to interpret, make judgement and express opinion on a work. It also promotes respect for the work and the opinion of others.

*Visual Art* is concerned with the personal satisfaction of the learner in the present moment - producing work that gives personal pleasure and reward in the short-term, as well as preparing for long-term distant goals.

The qualities that visual art can provide are crucial components of the rounded general education that all young people should experience. These personal characteristics and attributes include creativity, critical judgement, working with others or working individually, providing and receiving constructive criticism, and respecting differences.

*Visual Art* provides the learner with a space within which it is safe to experiment, to fail and to learn. It allows learners to collaborate on ideas and work. It facilitates and encourages the questions a learner may raise in travelling a path that may not lead to an anticipated outcome or that may produce a different outcome to what was planned. It gives them the capacity to understand and to express ideas, feelings and opinions, both their own and those of others.

Contemporary culture is highly visual. Visual literacy is an essential requirement of active citizenship. It enhances the young person's ability to interpret, critique and decode visual messages. The capacity to engage in critical thinking in the art class fosters the young person's competence and confidence in responding to and engaging with the visual culture of the contemporary world and

with the natural and built environments. It also opens their minds to the traditions and values of other cultures and influences.

In *Visual Art*, students build on the progress and skills they have already achieved in primary school in order to help them further improve. Students of *Visual Art* will develop the transversal skills, such as creativity, collaboration, risk-assessment, problem identification, problem-solving and management of their own emotions that form a natural learning mechanism that can enhance their own development. Students learn how best to use traditional and contemporary technologies for both creative and operational purposes. All these skills and dispositions are key to future learning in senior cycle and third level and also in the world of work.

## Aim

*Visual Art* at junior cycle aims to provide the student with a set of personal attitudes and qualities as well as a set of visual art skills and processes.

Through practical engagement in art, craft and design, students will develop self-confidence, enquiry, imagination and creativity. They will also develop authentic, real-world problem-solving capacities and the capacity to work over time, as an individual and in groups, on the design and execution of artistic and aesthetic tasks.

Within the safe space of the art class, students will experience the authentic visual art processes of imagining, investigating, experimenting, making, displaying and evaluating. They will learn to fail, and learn that failure can often be a hugely positive learning experience. Students will develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to produce and to engage with authentic and original art, craft and design work. In so doing, they will begin to develop the visual literacy, critical skills and language necessary to engage with contemporary culture. This will contribute to the students' understanding of the rich and diverse roles of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary societies and cultures.

## Overview: Links

The tables on the following pages show how junior cycle is linked to central features of learning and teaching outlined in the *Framework for Junior Cycle (2015)*.

Table 1: Links between junior cycle *Visual Art* and the statements of learning

Statements of learning	
The statement	Examples of relevant learning
SOL 3. The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts <sup>1</sup> .	Students will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of visual culture to create and critique their role in the development of their or other's work in art, craft or design.
SOL 4. The student creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved.	Students will create finished pieces of art, craft and design work capturing and presenting the processes and decisions they made through using sketchbooks, visual diaries or portfolios.
SOL 8. The student values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change.	Students, through their own creative ideas and work, will demonstrate that their visual art can be used to reflect the needs, hopes and ideals of their wider communities or society as a whole.
SOL 20. The student uses appropriate technologies in meeting a design challenge.	Students will decide on and be able to justify their use of appropriate traditional or modern technologies or new media in their work based on their learning experiences.
SOL 21. The student applies practical skills as she/he develop models and products using a variety of materials and technologies.	Students will demonstrate the acquisition and development of their own, personal artistic skillset through their drawings, processes and

<sup>1</sup> the definition of texts includes all products of visual art as well as oral language, written texts, music, tactile, electronic and digital.

	finished pieces of work in art, craft and design.
SOL 23. The student brings an idea from conception to realisation.	Students demonstrate that they understand and can apply the different processes and methods in creating artworks, craft pieces and finished design solutions.

## Key skills

In addition to their specific content and knowledge, the subjects and short courses of junior cycle provide students with opportunities to develop a range of key skills. Figure 1 below illustrates the key skills of junior cycle. There are opportunities to support all key skills in this course but some are particularly significant.

Figure 1 The elements of the eight key skills of junior cycle



Table 2 identifies some of the elements that are related to learning activities in *Visual Art*. Teachers can also build many of the other elements of particular key skills into their classroom planning.

Table 2 Examples of links between junior cycle *Visual Art* and key skills

Key skill	Example of key skill element	Examples of associated student learning activities
Being creative	Exploring options and alternatives	Students experience and experiment with visual art processes such as observing, imagining, making and investigating through a wide range of media including digital methods.
Being literate	Expressing my ideas clearly and accurately	Students demonstrate, through conversations discussions and presentations of and about their work or the work of others, that they understand and interpret the development processes involved.
Being numerate	Developing a personal disposition towards investigating, reasoning and problem-solving	Students develop their ideas and work using their knowledge and skills (e.g. measuring, estimating, balancing and weighing in three dimensional work) and personal experiences to do so.
Communicating	Performing and presenting	Students present a range of explorations from their work that best describes and supports their ideas and finished work in a variety of ways, e.g. exhibition, e-Portfolio, Visual Art Pad.
Managing information and thinking	Thinking creatively and critically	Through observational drawing, students learn to record and analyse what they see, either as an end in itself or for use in later, developing work.

Managing myself	Being able to reflect on my own learning	Students, through the development of their own work, reflect on their artistic choices and decisions both at the time of creation and at the end of the process itself.
Staying well	Being safe	Students, within the safe space of the art class, can explain and understand appropriate content, tools and materials in an ethical and responsible way.
Working with others	Contributing to making the world a better place	Working collaboratively within a cultural context and with members of their wider community, students use their artistic skills to improve the spaces they inhabit for all.

## Overview: Course

The specification for junior cycle *Visual Art* focuses on the students' practical and cognitive engagement with art where they will be enabled to progressively improve their skills as an artist/craftsperson/designer in a space that is safe for them to explore ideas both creatively and imaginatively. This can be achieved through the interconnected strands of the disciplines of art, craft and design. A student will experience learning in each of these three strands as they progress through their junior cycle.

Figure 2 The strands of junior cycle *Visual Art*

<i>Visual Art</i>		
Art	Craft	Design

**Art**, or fine art, is the expression of creative skill in a visual form such as painting or sculpture. It emphasises ideas, feelings and visual qualities through imaginative and/or technical skill. Apart from the creation of artworks, fine art also encompasses the criticism and study of art.

**Craft** is the application of a range of particular artistic skills and knowledge to produce artefacts of aesthetic worth and/or usefulness. With an emphasis on the safe and right use of tools and materials, the artefacts created may represent either traditional crafts or a more individual approach by the craftsperson.

**Design** can be the direct creation of an object or the production of drawings in order to show the appearance and workings of it before it is made. Emphasising planning, problem solving and completion, with drawing as a means of thinking, formal visual elements and imagery are used to communicate messages and ideas.

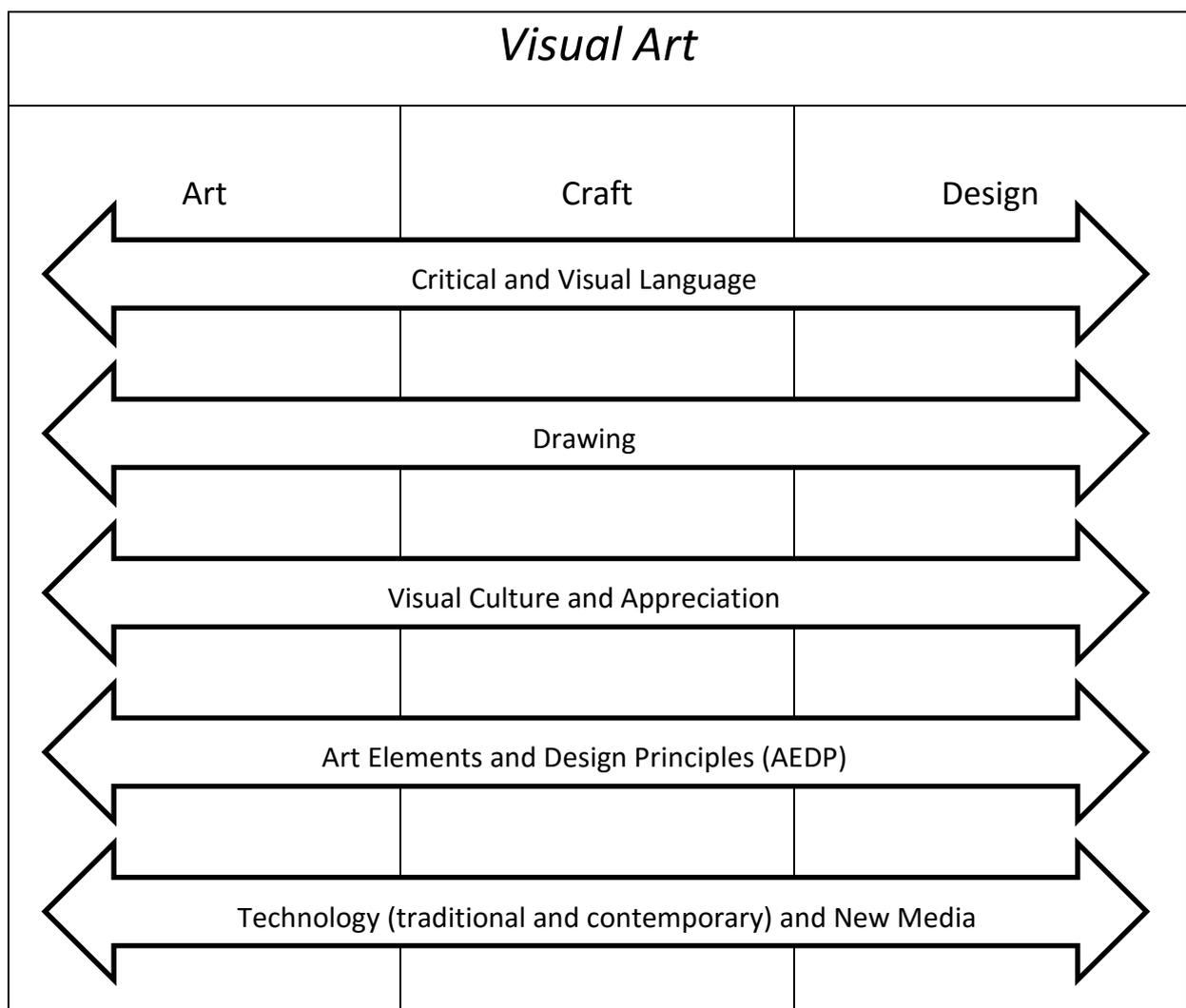
While the learning outcomes associated with each strand are set out separately in this specification, this should not be taken to imply that the strands are to be studied in isolation. The students' engagement and learning are optimised by a fully integrated experience of art, craft and design. To give further emphasis to the integrated nature of learning, the outcomes for each strand are

grouped by reference to five elements:

- Critical and visual language
- Drawing
- Visual culture and appreciation
- The art elements and design principles
- Technology (traditional and contemporary) and new media

Each element focuses on the goals of the learning process, which is the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and values. As the student progresses through each of the strands, there will be systematic development of their fundamental knowledge, principles and values, including the key skills through each of the elements.

Figure 3 The integrated nature of strands and elements



**Critical and visual language** is an important element in all three strands. Students use it to discuss, understand and assess an artistic work, whether it is their own or another's. It allows students to explore imagery more fully and in a more thoughtful way. Students can use critical and visual language to communicate their ideas to their teacher, other students or the wider community. The ability for the student to use it builds a higher level of competence and confidence when they respond to and engage with the visual culture of the contemporary world and natural and built environments.

**Drawing** is the fundamental language integral to all of the activities undertaken by students in the three strands of art, craft and design. It is essential for enquiry, expression and communicating visual information. Drawing from observation, including primary sources and life drawing and experimental and imaginative drawing, as well as developing ideas through 2-D, 3-D or digital methods are important for students to experience. Drawing is also an art form itself. Students need to experience and develop their drawing skills over the three years of junior cycle.

**Visual culture and appreciation** recognises that the modern world has become a more visual place encompassing a wide range of visual stimuli such as architecture and urban design to advertising, digital multimedia, the internet, fine art, sculpture, photography, fashion and more. Students need to gain an understanding of their own culture and that of others' too. This knowledge and understanding needs to be communicated using language familiar to the students but also the critical and visual language associated with the three strands of art, craft and design.

**Art elements and design principles (AEDP)** are the building blocks of any work of art a student will create. Their application in 2-D, 3-D or digital works can be analysed by considering their use either collectively or individually. The art elements include the dot, colour, line, shape, tone, texture and pattern. The principles of design include balance, tension, symmetry, harmony, light, space, scale and contrast.

**Technology (traditional and contemporary) and new media** are an important element that cross-cut the three strands of art, craft and design. Technology as used by students in the work they undertake can be either contemporary, digital or achieved through the use of more traditional tools.

It can also encompass the knowledge of techniques or processes. New media is essentially always digital and through its ability to be interactive, can involve the creation of connections and communication with a wider audience. Examples of new media include websites, computer multimedia, video games, augmented and virtual reality.

The *Visual Art* specification has been designed to assist teachers in planning learning experiences for students and to enable students to develop their knowledge, skills, understanding, aesthetic values as well as taking ownership of their learning. The process of visual art involves the whole student and incorporates their personal outlook and growth too. As students gain experience through their learning and creating work in the three distinct strands of art, craft and design, they will be developing both their artistic and aesthetic skills.

Through learning experiences, planned by the teacher, students will develop not only in the strands of art, craft and design but will experience learning opportunities designed to reinforce these strands through the interlinking connections of the five cross-cutting elements. Students will learn to use critical and visual language to discuss their learning and broaden their understanding of the strands of art, craft and design.

Drawing through the use of two or three dimensional media or using digital technologies is a fundamental method of communication and expression that students will learn to use for their work in each strand. Students live in a world that is visual. Non text-based cues and images are visually read at a much faster rate than text-based messages. At times, bombarded with images, students need to understand and appreciate the visual culture behind them as well as the visual culture of other societies too.

Part of the learning experiences of students in *Visual Art* over the three years of junior cycle involves a growing understanding of aesthetics and the use of the art elements and design principles in their own work as well as being able to analyse these in the work of others. As students develop their skills through the use of different processes and media and in their approaches to creating realised work in all of the three strands of *Visual Art*, they will also learn to use suitable technologies, whether contemporary or traditional. In seeing that the world doesn't stand still, students will also be enabled to see that neither do the methods artists/craftspeople/designers employ to question and respond to it. Students will also be enabled to experience the three strands of art, craft and design through the use of new media.

## Progression from primary to senior cycle

The *Visual Art* curriculum at primary provides students with experiences through the two complementary strands of making art and looking and responding to art.

As they move into junior cycle, this twin approach to learning will be further developed. Junior cycle students will be looking to respond to and shape their world and visual art experiences can allow this to happen in a safe environment. The student will gain knowledge and understanding through both the creating and the understanding of artworks. Students will also improve on and learn new skills through making work across the three strands of art, craft and design.

Students will further their understanding of visual culture through their use of a visual language that is particular to the subject of *Visual Art*. By learning to use their own critical judgement, they will be empowered to make decisions with their own learning which will be reflected in their ongoing drawings, research, studies and realised work. Critical judgement is a skill that students will be able to use across the range of subjects and short courses they undertake during their three years of junior cycle.

Drawing is a language that is fundamental to all three strands of *Visual Art*. Through their work in art, craft and design, students will gain an understanding of using drawing for enquiry, analysis, planning, expression and communication. Drawing from observation, including life drawing and drawing from their imagination will be very important for students to practice. Drawing and sketching of ideas is also a methodology and skill students will be able to use in other subjects. For example, planning the design of an experiment in Science, creating graphical representations of mathematical information and as illustrations for their own short stories or poetry in English.

All of the knowledge and skills that students are learning to build on during their time in junior cycle link strongly with the syllabus for art at senior cycle. The depth and breadth of learning that is possible in junior cycle *Visual Art* will allow students to increase their skillset in not just art, craft and design but also in their understanding and approach to art history. Gaining a critical understanding of works of art, including the context around them and being able to express this through using critical and visual language is a very useful skill to have as students move into senior cycle.

The skills of junior cycle *Visual Art* such as collaboration, creativity, innovation and communication are reflected in the students' learning in the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP). In the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) *Visual Art* module students are enabled to respond personally to issues that are meaningful to them. As with junior cycle *Visual Art*, LCA students undertake a study

of their local built and natural environments where they apply their skills to respond in a personally meaningful way. Both of these modules have the students using skills they will develop through junior cycle, namely researching, developing ideas, making, contextual references and reflection and evaluation.

# Expectations for students

'Expectations for students' is an umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work in the subject or short course specification. When teachers, students or parents looking at the online specification scroll through the learning outcomes, a link will sometimes be available to examples of work associated with a specific learning outcome or with a group of learning outcomes. The examples of student work will have been selected to illustrate expectations and will have been annotated by teachers. The examples will include work that is

- exceptional
- above expectations
- in line with expectations
- yet to meet expectations.

The purpose of the examples of student work is to show the extent to which the learning outcomes are being realised in actual cases. Annotated examples of student work judged by teachers will be included alongside the specification.

## Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements that describe the understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate after a period of learning. Junior cycle *Visual Art* is offered at a common level. The examples of student work linked to learning outcomes will offer commentary and insights that support differentiation. The learning outcomes set out in the following tables apply to all students. As set out here they represent outcomes for students at the end of their three years of study. **The learning outcomes are for three years and therefore the learning outcomes focused on at a point in time will not have been 'completed' but will continue to support the students' learning of visual art up to the end of junior cycle.**

To support the exploration of the learning outcomes by teachers, parents and students a glossary of the action verbs used in the specification is included in Appendix 3. The outcomes are numbered within each strand. The numbering is intended to support teacher planning in the first instance and does not imply any hierarchy of importance across the outcomes themselves, nor does it suggest an order to which the learning outcomes should be developed in class.

## Strand 1: Art

<p><b>Art</b>, or fine art, is the expression of creative skill in a visual form such as painting or sculpture. It emphasises ideas, feelings and visual qualities through imaginative and/or technical skill. Apart from the creation of artworks, fine art also encompasses the criticism and study of art.</p>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b> Students should be able to
<b>Critical and visual language</b>	<p>A1 analyse their work, or that of another, using appropriate vocabulary and knowledge</p> <p>A2 respond to an artwork using critical and visual language</p> <p>A3 critique an artwork using critical and visual language</p>
<b>Drawing</b>	<p>A4 demonstrate how they use drawing to observe, record and analyse their world</p> <p>A5 interpret and communicate through visual means</p> <p>A6 use drawings to communicate their personal outlook or understanding</p>
<b>Visual culture and appreciation</b>	<p>A7 examine the method of a number of artists and the artwork they created</p> <p>A8 discuss examples of historical and contemporary visual art</p> <p>A9 debate the value that they and society place on an artwork</p>
<b>Art elements and design principles (AEDP)</b>	<p>A10 identify the use of art elements and design principles within an artwork</p> <p>A11 consider the use of the art elements and design principles in their own artwork</p> <p>A12 apply their understanding of the art elements and design principles to make 2-D, 3-D or digital artwork</p>
<b>Technology (traditional and contemporary) and new media</b>	<p>A13 identify technologies (traditional or contemporary) or new media, which are used to create artwork</p> <p>A14 use 2-D, 3-D, traditional or contemporary technologies or new media to create their own artwork</p> <p>A15 interpret the choice of contemporary or traditional technologies or new media in their own or others' artwork</p>

## Strand 2: Craft

<p><b>Craft</b> is the application of a range of particular artistic skills and knowledge to produce artefacts of aesthetic worth and/or usefulness. Emphasising the safe and right use of tools and materials, artefacts created may represent traditional crafts or a more individual approach by the craftsperson.</p>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b> Students should be able to
<b>Critical and visual language</b>	<p>C1 identify and use the critical and visual language associated with more than one type of craft</p> <p>C2 interrogate and communicate ideas through different crafts using critical and visual language</p> <p>C3 reflect on their own, or another's, craftwork through use of critical and visual language</p>
<b>Drawing</b>	<p>C4 show they can use their drawings to observe, record and analyse</p> <p>C5 develop their ideas for craftwork through drawing</p> <p>C6 investigate their own personal approach to craftwork through the technical and creative application of drawing and mark-making</p>
<b>Visual culture and appreciation</b>	<p>C7 identify the historical or contemporary skills and materials used in craft works from a number of different crafts</p> <p>C8 interpret the narrative, symbols and functions used in craftwork from their own and other world cultures</p> <p>C9 assess the visual culture references that are incorporated into craftwork/s</p>
<b>Art elements and design principles (AEDP)</b>	<p>C10 describe the art elements and design principles as they are used across a number of different crafts</p> <p>C11 research the use of art elements and design principles in historical and contemporary craftwork from their own and other cultures</p> <p>C12 justify the choice of art elements and design principles in their own, or others', craftwork</p>
<b>Technology (traditional and contemporary) and new media</b>	<p>C13 identify the role of contemporary and traditional technologies or new media in the development of craftwork</p> <p>C14 use contemporary or traditional technologies or new media to create craftwork</p> <p>C15 justify the choice of technology (traditional or contemporary) or new media in their own or others' craftwork</p>

## Strand 3: Design

<p><b>Design</b> can be the direct creation of an object or the production of drawings in order to show the appearance and workings of it before it is made. Emphasising planning, problem solving and completion, with drawing as a means of thinking, formal visual elements and imagery are used to communicate messages and ideas.</p>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b> Students should be able to
<b>Critical and visual language</b>	<p>D1 use critical and visual language to describe 2-D, 3-D or digital design work</p> <p>D2 use critical and visual language to explain their own designs and those of others</p> <p>D3 respond to and critique works of 2-D, 3-D or digital design using appropriate visual language</p>
<b>Drawing</b>	<p>D4 interpret a design brief and represent this through their drawings</p> <p>D5 experiment with design ideas through research and analytical drawing</p> <p>D6 design a final work based on their drawings</p>
<b>Visual culture and appreciation</b>	<p>D7 describe examples of historical and contemporary design</p> <p>D8 discuss historical and contemporary design practices</p> <p>D9 justify the design concepts made by historical and contemporary designers</p>
<b>Art elements and design principles (AEDP)</b>	<p>D10 explain the use of art elements and design principles in examples of 2-D, 3-D and digital design work</p> <p>D11 examine their own and others' design work through the use of art elements and design principles</p> <p>D12 assess their own and others' design work using their knowledge of art elements and design principles</p>
<b>Technology (traditional and contemporary) and new media</b>	<p>D13 explain the use of technologies (traditional and contemporary) and new media in examples of 2-D, 3-D and digital design work</p> <p>D14 utilise contemporary or traditional technologies or new media in their own design work based on a design brief</p> <p>D15 justify design concepts and use of contemporary or traditional technologies or new media in their own or others' work</p>

## Assessment and reporting

Assessment in education involves gathering, interpreting and using information about the processes and outcomes of learning. It takes different forms and can be used in a variety of ways, such as to record and report achievement, to determine appropriate routes for learners to take through a differentiated curriculum, or to identify specific areas of difficulty or strength for a given learner. While different techniques may be employed for formative, diagnostic and summative purposes, the focus of the assessment and reporting is on the improvement of student learning. To do this it must fully reflect the aim of the curriculum.

The junior cycle places a strong emphasis on assessment as part of the learning process. This approach requires a more varied approach to assessment in ensuring that the assessment method(s) chosen is fit for purpose, timely and relevant to the students. Assessment in Junior Cycle *Visual Art* will optimise the opportunity for students to become reflective and active participants in their learning and for teachers to support this. This rests upon the provision for learners of opportunities to negotiate success criteria against which the quality of their work can be judged by peer, self, and teacher assessment; and upon the quality of the focused feedback they get in support of their learning.

Providing focused feedback to students on their learning is a critical component of high-quality assessment and a key factor in building students' capacity to manage their own learning and their motivation to stick with a complex task or problem. Assessment is most effective when it moves beyond marks and grades, and reporting focuses not just on how the student has done in the past but on the next steps for further learning. This approach will ensure that assessment takes place as close as possible to the point of learning. Final assessment still has a role to play, but is only one element of a broader approach to assessment.

Essentially, the purpose of assessment and reporting at this stage of education is to support learning. Parents/guardians should be given a comprehensive picture of student learning. Linking classroom assessment and other assessment with a new system of reporting that culminates in the awarding of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will offer parents/guardians a clear and broad picture of their child's learning journey over the three years of junior cycle. To support this, teachers and schools will have access to an Assessment Toolkit. Along with the guide to the Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) process, the Toolkit will include learning, teaching and assessment support material, including:

- formative assessment
- planning for and designing assessment
- ongoing assessments for classroom use
- judging student work – looking at expectations for students and features of quality
- reporting to parents and students
- thinking about assessment: ideas, research and reflections
- an assessment glossary.

The contents of the Toolkit will include the range of assessment supports, advice and guidelines that will enable schools and teachers to engage with the new assessment system and reporting arrangements in an informed way, with confidence and clarity.

## Assessment for the JCPA

Visual art is a practical subject. The assessment of *Visual Art* for the purposes of the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) will comprise two Classroom-Based Assessments; *From Process to Realisation* and *Reflect and Communicate*. The State Examinations Commission will mark the development work and realised work that comprises the second Classroom-Based Assessment. There is no final examination in this practical subject.

### Rationale for the Classroom-Based Assessments in *Visual Art*

The two Classroom-Based Assessments for Junior Cycle *Visual Art* are distinct markers in the student's learning journey, while still being an integral part of ongoing assessment and routine classroom practice. They will support the student by affording them the opportunity to work authentically as an artist, craftsperson or designer and allow them to focus on their learning and development of knowledge, skills, understanding and values in *Visual Art*. The student may present their work as an individual or part of a group to their teacher and peers and possibly a wider audience. The student will be encouraged to develop their own, personal approach to this work and so take ownership of their learning as well as the processes they applied and their realised work.

How the student has engaged with their work is important in *Visual Art* and this will affect not only the formulation of their initial ideas but also the subsequent working through of those ideas in their choice of techniques and media and of course this will then impact on the realised piece(s).

How the student takes into consideration their audience is also important in *Visual Art*. Whether their work is personal in response or created to make a statement the student will need to communicate through it to an audience. The audience no longer needs to be their peers alone or their teachers. It can involve a wider group of intended recipients should they choose to become involved in work with their community or if it is enabled through the use of digital technologies or new media.

This specification recognises that the voice of the student is very important in any explanation of their work. While this voice can emerge through the works themselves it must also be a reflective voice. As the student progresses through their work they will naturally question their choices and decisions. This reflection is to be welcomed as it indicates a concern about the work itself as well as their own personal artistic development. Students will also be given the chance to self-assess at the end of each Classroom-Based Assessment.

Much of the work that the student creates for the two Classroom-Based Assessments will be generated and recorded in a visual art pad, which is outlined and fully explained in Appendix 1. The visual art pad is a physical and/or digital collection of ideas, processes and work or a combination of these. The student's visual art pad is very important when it comes to the Classroom-Based Assessments. Much of the work involved in creating a realised piece of art, craft or design exists in the initial, developmental and experimental stages. The visual art pad is used to capture all of these stages, including initial ideas, sketches, drawings, colour and media studies, photographs, digital work and research of visual culture and the work of other artists/craftspeople/designers as well.

**Table 3: Classroom-Based Assessments in *Visual Art***

Year	CBA	Format	Student preparation	Completion of the assessment	SLAR Meeting
Second Year	CBA 1 From Process to Realisation	Visual art pad + 1 finished work	Students choose one scenario from a list prepared by the NCCA to generate ideas, experiment and develop these ideas in their visual art pad, and realise an artwork through one of the three strands.	End of April	One review meeting
Third Year	CBA 2 Reflect and Communicate	Reflective Presentation	Students may choose one or more scenarios from a list prepared by the SEC and NCCA to generate ideas, experiments and other preparatory work in their visual art pad. Students present these for two realised artworks using mainly the remaining other two of the three strands. This presentation of ideas and preparatory work is assessed.	Between mid-December and mid-January for the presentation.	One review meeting
	Artefacts for assessment by the SEC	Students continue to both develop their ideas further and realise two pieces of work for the SEC assessment. These pieces of work are based mainly on the two strands not primarily chosen for the Classroom-Based Assessment in second year.  Realised works and associated development work submitted for SEC assessment by early May.			

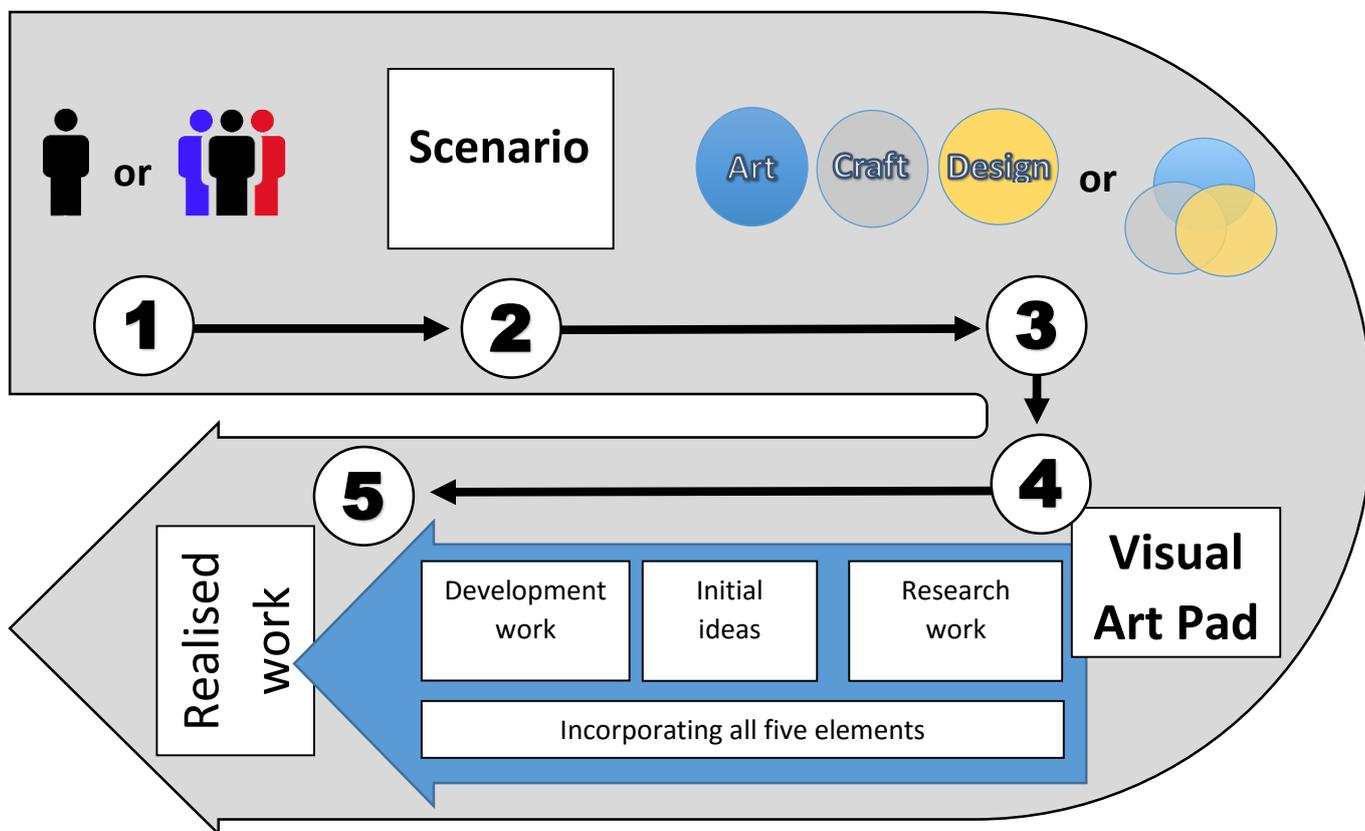
Both Classroom-Based Assessments are centred on scenarios. These scenarios may be adapted to suit current or ongoing work or learning experiences in the art class or can be used as a starting point for new work. The scenarios will be designed in an open and accessible manner so that they are flexible and can be aligned with the school's curriculum context as well as the learning needs of the students. It is important that the scenarios are discussed by the teacher and the students as well as between the students themselves. The approach to constructing a response to the chosen scenario/s can be planned through collaboration between the teacher and student or between student and student. Group work or individual work is allowed for in Classroom-Based Assessment 1, "From Process to Realisation".

By the time students engage with the first Classroom-Based Assessment they will have gained knowledge and understanding and developed skills in the processes involved across all three strands of *Visual Art*. As students engage with the learning in art, craft and design they will also develop their own personal attitudes towards the range and depth of *Visual Art* and develop a sense of identity around their own particular style.

Through their experiences of learning in *Visual Art*, students develop skills which help them to approach problems in creative ways. Problem identification is part of the creative process that allows the student to frame their inquiry. In this way they experience and relate more directly to the visual art processes and work on a more personal level. It is important that the student has ownership and takes part in deciding the starting point for their own work. Although the problems they seek to address may be based on personal experience, in their approach students will be able to respond using the knowledge, understanding and skills they have developed during junior cycle in order to realise them fully through finished work.

## Classroom-Based Assessment 1: From Process to Realisation

Figure 4 Diagram of From Process to Realisation



### Classroom-Based Assessment 1: From Process to Realisation

1. Can be approached individually or in groups by students
2. Students choose one scenario from a list
3. Students are required to realise an artwork primarily through one of the visual art strands but may also incorporate aspects of the other two strands
4. Students use their visual art pad to research initial ideas and develop their work while incorporating the five elements of Junior Cycle *Visual Art*
5. Students complete their realised work

Individually or in groups, students are required to realise an artwork primarily through one of the *Visual Art* strands but may also incorporate aspects of the other two strands. This work can be teacher-led, student-led or may be based on a collaboration between teacher and student or student and student.

## **Sample scenarios**

Each student, or group of students, will base their approach on scenarios which may be similar to those listed here:

- working in a community art project
  - students could collaborate in a local community art project or develop an original project in conjunction with their local Arts Office
- designing to improve your life
  - students look at an aspect of their environment, a product or a building with an eye to redesigning it
- using craft to enhance the built/natural environment
  - students look at traditional or contemporary craftwork and how it can be developed and utilised in order to enhance a space in either the built or natural environment around them
- working with an artist/craftsperson/designer/architect
  - students, in collaboration with an artist/craftsperson/designer/architect, create a response to a stimulus
- Working from a primary source
  - students choose a primary source or sources on which to base their work
- Working from literature
  - students choose a piece of literature that they feel inspires them and on which they can base their work

## **Guidelines for the chosen scenario**

Students may choose a scenario either individually or as part of a small group. When students in a group, have chosen a scenario they should agree their separate roles and task/s so that each group member is aware of their individual contribution from the outset. Any changes to these roles or task/s should be noted as the work progresses. Students should then:

- record their initial ideas and approach to constructing a response to their chosen scenario

- research possible solutions or previous or similar approaches by other artists, craftspeople, designers or architects. This can be either 2-D, 3-D or digital in nature
- use primary sources to record ideas and decisions, through observation, in their own visual art pad. If working as part of a group, each student's individual role and contribution to the work will be the focus of the assessment. It is important that each student involved in the group notes accurately at all times their own part in the process and their contribution to the group work. They should include their own, personal responses (through appropriate visuals and notes) to the work as well as the decisions that were made and agreed along the way
- decide on an approach using their knowledge and skills in one or more of the *Visual Art* strands. The approach should support the use of primary source stimuli
- develop the ideas in the visual art pad using the knowledge and skills of one strand or a combination of strands. It is expected that all five elements of the *Visual Art* specification will be incorporated. This development work will show the students' use of critical and visual language. It should also illustrate their understanding of the art elements and design principles through their own work. Students should show that they have located this work in the context of visual culture as well as in their decisions around their choices of experimentation with traditional or contemporary technology, or new media
- all work will be captured in or recorded by students in a visual art pad
- show the realisation of their chosen scenario through the final work. This can be either 2-D, 3-D or digital in nature

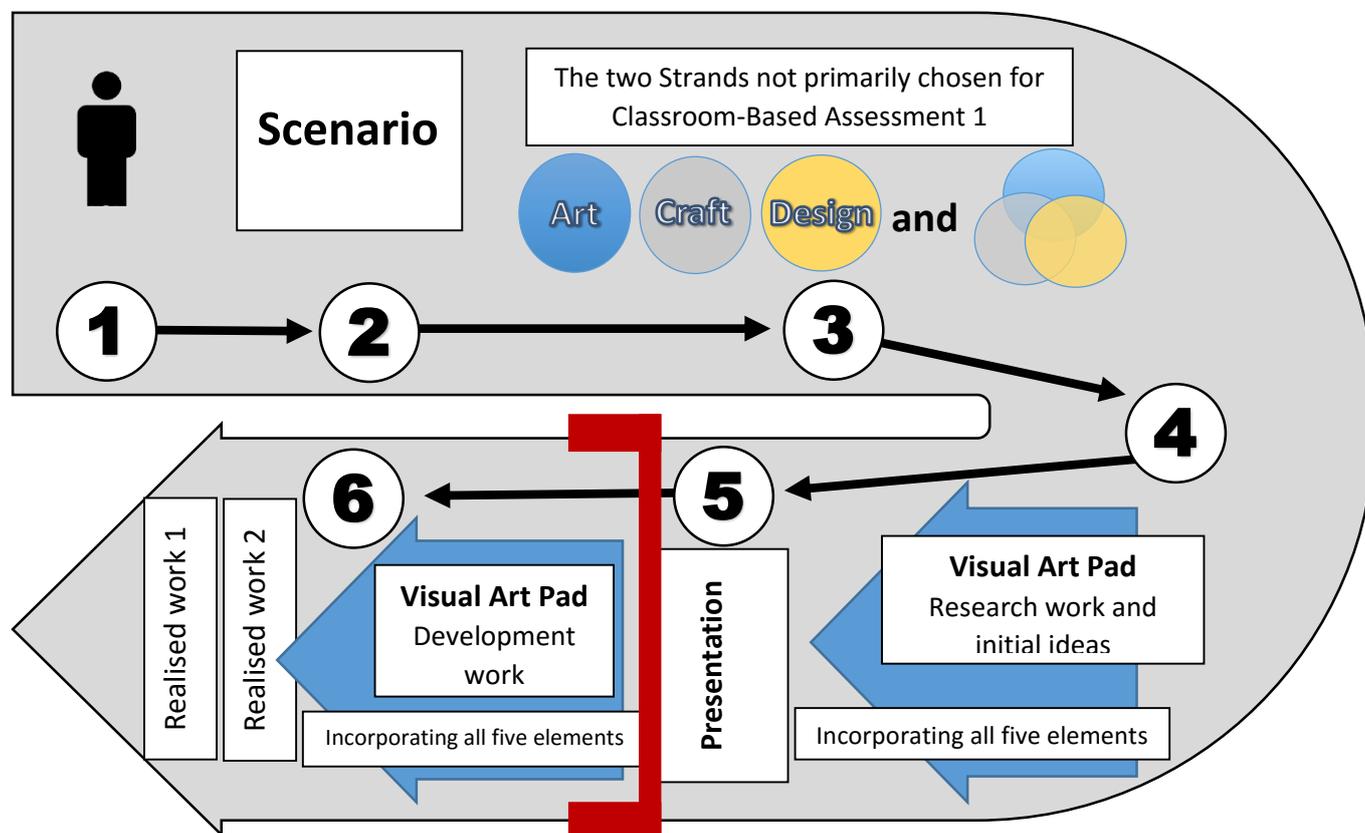
The body of work that students submits will include a record of their

- research
- initial ideas
- development process

as well as the realised work, which should recognise appropriate cultural and historical contexts as evidenced by the student in their visual art pad.

## Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Reflect and Communicate

Figure 5 Diagram of Reflect and Communicate



### Classroom-Based Assessment 2: Reflect and Communicate

1. Is approached individually by students
2. Students choose one scenario from a list
3. Students are required to realise two artworks through the other two strands not primarily chosen for the first Classroom-Based Assessment which they completed in second year. Students may also incorporate aspects of the other strands as appropriate.
4. Students use their visual art pad to research initial ideas and develop their work while incorporating the five elements of junior cycle *Visual Art*
5. Students will use the material from their visual art pad to share, through a presentation or discussion, what their initial thoughts, ideas and experiments are and how they might shape their work for the Classroom-Based Assessment
6. Students further develop their ideas and complete their realised work for the SEC assessment

For the second Classroom-Based Assessment, "Reflect and Communicate ", the students will research and create two artworks in response to one or more given scenario/s. The student's two artworks should be based on the two strands not primarily chosen for the first Classroom-Based Assessment they completed in second year. Students may, however, also incorporate aspects of the other strands as appropriate.

Students will complete this individually and support their ideas and realised work through use of a visual art pad.

### **Sample scenarios**

Students research and create two artworks using one scenario for both responses or a different scenario for each response. Examples of such scenarios might include:

- A contemporary issue
  - students base their work on an issue that is currently in the news such as a world or local news item
- Product design
  - students investigate a product and through their research redesign it
- Functional or decorative craftwork
  - students review both functional and decorative works of craft, which can be traditional or contemporary in order to design and create their own responses
- My own scenario is \_\_\_\_\_, based on \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - students can outline their own, personal direction that they see their work going in and set a scenario for themselves

### **Guidelines for the chosen scenario**

Students will, individually, consider their chosen scenario so that they and their teacher are aware of their clearly defined starting point for the task ahead. This task-setting work can be teacher-led, student-led or through collaboration between teacher and student or student and student. Students will:

- research, and develop their ideas and produce two realised works, each reflected through the two strands not primarily chosen for the first Classroom-Based Assessment which they completed in second year. Students may, however, also incorporate aspects of the other strands as appropriate.
- students must complete the developmental and final realised works individually
- a different strand or combination of strands from that chosen for the first Classroom-Based Assessment should be reflected in each of the two pieces of realised work. It is expected that all five elements of the *Visual Art* specification will be incorporated throughout the student's work.

All work will be recorded by students in a visual art pad.

The work involved in the second Classroom-Based Assessment will be assessed at two very distinct and separate stages of work in the third year of junior cycle. During this period the students will record in their visual art pad all relevant research activities and ideas as well as accounts of experimental uses of media and other early, preparatory ideas but not the development work or the two realised pieces of work. During the first stage and in collaboration with their teacher and peers, students will use the material from their visual art pad to share, through a presentation or discussion, what their initial thoughts, ideas and experiments are and how they might shape their next steps. It is important this work recognises the cultural and historical contexts appropriate to the chosen response. Feedback from the teacher and other students is acceptable in this stage. This stage is assessed by the teacher.

When the presentation has been assessed and the SLAR meeting has taken place this first stage of the second Classroom-Based Assessment will have concluded. Students then move into the second stage of this Classroom-Based Assessment and begin to work on more developed ideas and work as well as their two pieces of realised work.

### **Artefacts for assessment by the SEC**

On completion of the second stage of this second Classroom-Based Assessment the students will submit their two realised works as well as selected material from their visual art pad. This work will be marked by the State Examinations Commission.

## Features of Quality

The Features of Quality support student and teacher judgement of the Classroom-Based Assessments and are the criteria that will be used by teachers to assess the student work. The Features of Quality will be available in the Assessment Guidelines for *Visual Art*. All students will complete both Classroom-Based Assessments.

## Assessing the Classroom-Based Assessments

More detailed material on assessment for reporting in Junior Cycle *Visual Art*, setting out details of the practical arrangements related to assessment of the Classroom-Based Assessments, will be available in separate assessment guidelines. This will include, for example, the suggested length and formats for student work and support in using 'on-balance' judgement in relation to the features of quality. The NCCA's Assessment Toolkit will also include substantial resource material for use in ongoing classroom assessment of Junior Cycle *Visual Art*, as well as providing a detailed account of the Subject Learning and Assessment Review process.

## Inclusive Assessment Practices

This specification allows for inclusive assessment practices whether as part of ongoing assessment or Classroom-Based Assessments. Where a school judges that a student has a specific physical or learning difficulty, reasonable accommodations may be put in place to remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the student's performance in Classroom-Based Assessments. The accommodations e.g., the support provided by a Special Needs Assistant or the support of assistive technologies should be in line with the arrangements the school has put in place to support the student's learning throughout the year.

## Appendix 1: *Visual Art Pad*

A visual art pad can be a physical and/or digital collection of ideas, processes and work or a combination of these. While it is essentially the student's own personal record of the creative journey, the format (digital or physical) of the visual art pad will be decided by the student in collaboration with their teacher.

A student's visual art pad will be used by the student to

- record their approaches to all of the work they will undertake as part of their Junior Cycle *Visual Art* course
- capture their ideas, creativity, experiments and explorations and even realised work
- hold relevant information they will collect to help contextualise work they are doing, whether it is through researching the work of artists, craftspeople and designers or through photographs, sketches and notes
- document their journey through ongoing classroom artwork, finished artworks as well as the Classroom-Based Assessments
- act as personal and professional collection of their thoughts, ideas, research and work
- develop a sense of ownership of their own learning.

The inside cover (or start of a relevant section) should contain a short description of what that section of the visual art pad will contain. It is important that the student date this with the starting date of their work, but also that they include the target date for completion.

Students should appreciate that drawing is the fundamental language to all of their work as they learn through the three strands of art, craft and design. It is essential for enquiry, expression and communicating visual information. The students' visual art pad should contain drawing from observation, including primary sources and life drawing and the imagination. Ideas developed through 2-D, 3-D or digital methods should also be captured and recorded in it. Students will develop their drawing skills over the three years of junior cycle and their visual art pad will be useful for recording this development during this time.

Visual art pads should contain the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

**Student ideas including**

- charting idea development
- examples of work by known artists/craftspeople/designers
- photographs, sketches
- drawings from observation, the imagination, from primary sources and life drawing
- digital collections of imagery
- annotations and other written notes

**Student experiments including**

- various materials, media and mixed media, annotated samples, notes on quality of results, photographs, sketches and notes recording methods, tools and technology (traditional and contemporary) or new media used
- explanations of known and new skills acquired and trial work showing these
- colour studies, line work, tonal studies, experiments with shape, position, proportion, space, depth
- working models, trial runs at designs and compositions and notes on processes
- photographic and digital records documenting process

**Research and personal and lived experiences including**

- artists/craftspeople/designers and cultures used for inspiration, influential work practices of artists/craftspeople/designers, examples of art/craft/design styles
- analysis of art/craft/design works created by working artists/craftspeople/designers
- notes and annotations on judgements about art/craft/design examples included
- notes, sketches, drawings, photographs, catalogues from exhibitions attended or from talks or presentations by artist/craftspeople/designers

- visits to the studio/s of an artist/craftsperson/designer or to galleries and museums
- interviews with artists/craftspeople/designers or other relevant or interesting people
- newspaper/magazine articles and cuttings, screenshots and collections of relevant websites

**Process and learning summary including:**

- photographs or electronic recordings of realised work
- student self-assessment of their process and finished product
- teacher comments
- annotations or notes on possible future directions for other work

## Appendix 2: Glossary of *Visual Art* terms

This glossary has been added to explain the meaning of *Visual Art* terms as they appear in this specification to help with understanding when reading.

Term	Interpretation
Art	the expression of creative skill in a visual form such as painting or sculpture emphasising ideas, feelings and visual qualities through imaginative and/or technical skill. It also encompasses the criticism and study of art
Craft	the application of a range of particular artistic skills and knowledge to produce artefacts of aesthetic worth and/or usefulness with an emphasis on the safe and right use of tools and materials. The artefacts can represent either traditional crafts or a more individual approach
Design	the direct creation of an object or the production of drawings in order to show the appearance and workings of it before it is made with an emphasis on planning, problem solving and completion
Visual art pad	a physical and/or digital collection of ideas, processes and work or a combination of these
Explorations	the capturing or recording of the active processes that are involved in the inquiry, experimentation, creation and realisation of a work
<i>Visual Art</i>	includes the disciplines and three strands of art, craft and design. These can be further expanded to also include particular disciplines which could also be used across two or more strands, such as drawing, painting, photography, pottery, sculpture, printing, architecture, film, video, product and fashion design (this list is not exhaustive)
Art elements	are the building blocks of any work and include, for example, the dot, colour, line, shape, tone, texture and pattern

<b>Term</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Design principles	are the building blocks of any work and include, for example, balance, tension, harmony, light, space, scale and contrast
Visual literacy	is the ability of students to use their knowledge, skills and values to understand a range of visual stimuli
Drawing	can be expressive or analytical but is the fundamental language integral to all of the activities undertaken by students in the three strands of art, craft and design
Visual culture	is concerned with the historical and/or contemporary visual culture that gives an artefact its context
Technology	as used by students can be either traditional or contemporary or digital when used in creating visual artworks
New media	is essentially always digital and through its ability to be interactive, can involve the creation of connections and communication with a wider audience
Process	incorporates the initial ideas, experimentation and developmental work a student becomes involved with as they create a realised artwork
Scenario	provides a broad outline that students can use and adapt for inspiration when deciding and planning the direction their work may take
Visual language	is used by students to discuss, understand and assess an artistic work allowing them to explore the imagery in a more thoughtful way
Artist	for the purpose of the specification the term “artist” can also be taken to mean artist/craftsperson/designer
Artwork	Work produced by an artist/craftsperson/designer
Problem identification	students, whether working on a scenario or task, identify the issue/s they wish to pursue in their work

Term	Interpretation
Problem-solving	The approach students decide to use, whether working on a scenario or task, to both develop their initial ideas and complete a realised work
Critical language	uses language in which students can critique and assess their own or another's work
Primary source	Primary sources are sources, physical or conceptual, that are viewed in their original state and are not filtered through another person's interpretation of them

## Appendix 3: Glossary of action verbs

This glossary is designed to clarify the learning outcomes. Each action verb is described in terms of what the learner should be able to do once they have achieved the learning outcome. This glossary will be aligned with the command words used in the assessment.

Action verbs	Students should be able to
Analyse	study or examine something in detail, break down in order to bring out the essential elements or structure; identify parts and relationships, and to interpret information to reach conclusions
Annotate	add brief notes or sketches of explanation to a diagram or graph
Apply	select and use information and/or knowledge and understanding to explain a given situation or real circumstances
Appraise	evaluate, judge or consider a piece of work
Appreciate	recognise the meaning of, have a practical understanding of
Brief description/ explanation	a short statement of only the main points
Argue	challenge or debate an issue or idea with the purpose of persuading or committing someone else to a particular stance or action
Calculate	obtain a numerical answer showing the relevant stages in the working
Classify	group things based on common characteristics
Comment	give an opinion based on a given statement or the result of a calculation
Compare	give an account of the similarities between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout
Consider	describe patterns in artefacts; use knowledge and understanding to interpret patterns

Action verbs	Students should be able to
Construct	develop information in a diagrammatic or logical form; not by factual recall but by analogy or by using and putting together information
Contrast	Detect correspondences between two ideas or artworks
Convert	change to another form, for example, use a drawing from which to create a three-dimensional structure
Critique	state, giving reasons the positive and negative aspects of, for example, an idea, artefact or artistic process
Deduce	reach a conclusion from the information given
Define	give the precise meaning of a word, phrase, concept
Demonstrate	prove or make clear by reasoning or evidence, illustrating with examples or practical application
Derive	arrive at a final statement through a process of logical deduction
Describe	develop a detailed picture or image of, for example a structure or process, using drawing, sketches or diagrams; produce a plan, simulation or model
Determine	obtain the only possible answer by calculation, substituting measured or known values of other quantities into a standard formula
Discuss	offer a considered, balanced review that includes a range of arguments, factors or hypotheses; opinions or conclusions should be presented clearly and supported by appropriate evidence
Distinguish	make the differences between two or more concepts or items clear
Estimate	give a reasoned order of magnitude statement or calculation of a quantity
Evaluate (information)	collect and examine information to make judgments and appraisals; describe how evidence supports or does not support a conclusion in an inquiry or investigation; identify the limitations of information in conclusions; make judgments about the ideas, solutions or methods

Action verbs	Students should be able to
Evaluate (ethical judgement)	collect and examine evidence to make judgments and appraisals; describe how evidence supports or does not support a judgement; identify the limitations of evidence in conclusions; make judgments about the ideas, solutions or methods
Explain	give a detailed account including reasons or causes
Examine	consider an argument or concept in a way that uncovers the assumptions and interrelationships of the issue
Find	general term that may variously be interpreted as calculate, measure, determine etc.
Formulate	Express the relevant concept(s) or argument(s) precisely and systematically
Group	identify objects according to characteristics
Identify	recognise patterns, facts, or details; provide an answer from a number of possibilities; recognize and state briefly a distinguishing fact or feature
Illustrate	use drawings or examples to describe something
Infer	use the results of an investigation based on a premise; read beyond what has been literally expressed
Investigate	analyse, observe, study, or make a detailed and systematic examination, in order to establish facts or information and reach new conclusions
Interpret	use knowledge and understanding to recognise trends and draw conclusions from given information
Justify	give valid reasons or evidence to support an answer or conclusion
List	provide a number of points, with no elaboration
Measure	quantify changes in systems by reading a measuring tool

Action verbs	Students should be able to
Model	generate a representation or scale replica of an artwork as a plan for a real world creation
Outline	give the main points; restrict to essentials
Predict	give an expected result of an event; explain a new event based on observations or information using logical connections between pieces of information
Prove	use a sequence of logical steps to obtain the required result in a formal way
Provide evidence	provide data, work and documentation that support inferences or conclusions
Recognise	identify facts, characteristics or concepts that are critical (relevant/appropriate) to the understanding of a situation, event, process or phenomenon
Recall	remember or recognize from prior learning experiences
Relate	associate, giving reasons
Sketch	represent by means of a diagram or graph (labelled as appropriate); the sketch should give a general idea of the required shape or relationship, and should include relevant features
Solve	find an answer through reasoning
State	provide a concise statement with little or no supporting argument
Suggest	propose a solution, hypothesis or other possible answer
Synthesise	combine different ideas in order to create new understanding
Understand	have and apply a well-organized body of knowledge
Use	apply knowledge, skills or rules to put them into practice
Verify	give evidence to support the truth of a statement

