

2017 VCE Visual Communication Design examination report

The 2017 VCE Visual Communication Design examination assessed a range of key knowledge and key skills across Units 3 and 4.

Students generally handled the examination well and demonstrated creativity in the design tasks. Overall, the majority of students attempted all the questions. Only a few students did not complete the examination.

Students with high-scoring responses:

- used correct and relevant terminology from the study design
- referred back to the specific points in the visual communication provided
- attempted all questions and considered their use of time appropriately
- read questions carefully, were able to interpret what each question was asking and addressed every aspect of the question in their answers
- had a good understanding of the design process, and client needs and design constraints
- demonstrated a clear understanding of the design elements and principles and were able to emphasise them visually.

The following should be noted:

- Some students discussed colour when none was evident in the visual communication. This was particularly evident in Questions 3aiii. and 5c. It was important for students to discuss the elements, principles, methods and media that were evident in the visual communication, rather than discuss what the designers did not use. Students are also reminded that, for the purposes of VCE Visual Communication Design, black and white are not considered colours.
- Students confused the elements and principles of design, and some used incorrect terminology in their responses. A number of students used the terms 'letterform', 'text' or 'typography' instead of 'type'. It is important that students use the correct terminology when discussing the design elements and principles.
- Many students did not apply the correct terminology when identifying the three fields of design, as outlined in the VCE Visual Communication Design study design. In Question 3ai, for example, some students used the term 'graphic design' instead of 'communication design', while others identified the field of design as 'product design' instead of 'industrial design'.
- Students who brought the correct equipment to the examination, such as a range of coloured pencils and set squares, were best prepared for the practical questions.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Question 1

Many students did not answer these four questions well. Most mistakes were made by students who selected an answer that was appropriate to the visual communication but not to the question.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	53	47	0.5

Type

It is important for students to read the question carefully. This question asked students to identify an element. Only two elements were listed: type, and colour, which wasn't applicable.

Many students provided an incorrect response, with figure-ground being the most common incorrect answer selected. Students need to read questions carefully as this question asked them to identify an element. Only two options given were elements.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	30	70	0.7

Two-point perspective

In identifying two-point perspective as the correct answer, students would have had to identify that the receding lines of the building were not parallel, and therefore it could not be an example of a paraline drawing system. As the lines recede in more than one direction, this indicates two-point perspective.

Many students provided an incorrect response, selecting one-point perspective or isometric. A simple way of identifying the correct answer would have been to identify that the receding lines of the building were not parallel, and therefore it could not be an example of a paraline drawing system. As the lines recede in more than one direction this indicates two-point perspective.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	7	93	1

Pattern

Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	35	65	0.7

Tracking

It is important that students learn typographic conventions.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	2	1	4	13	28	33	9	7	3	4.5

The answers to this question were generally creative with their use of figure-ground, and students came up with interesting solutions on how to combine the fish and the pelican. The majority of students used black, white and one colour and were able to depict a pelican and fish. Most students addressed the requirement to emphasise the design principle figure-ground, which was

generally achieved by adding a colour or black to the ground. Leaving the ground white did not indicate that the student had considered the ground. Some students showed evidence of a creative consideration of the figure-ground by allowing both to interact or achieve a level of ambiguity between which area was 'figure' and which was 'ground'. In this case a white ground was acceptable.

A number of students were able to mimic the style and concepts evident in the examples of Noma Bar's designs. The lowest-scoring responses did not acknowledge the examples of Noma Bar's work, did not attempt any interaction between the fish and the pelican and did not recognise figure and ground as integral components in the design.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.



Question 3ai

Marks	0	1	Average
%	17	83	0.9

The majority of students identified communication design as the correct design field.

Question 3aii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	49	29	22	0.8

Students needed to provide a typographic convention such as kerning, tracking or cap height and respond with a description of the type. Some students provided conventions that were irrelevant, such as x-height, or if they named a correct convention the discussion of how it contributed to the aesthetics of the design was not done well. Aesthetics is concerned with the appreciation of beauty and only a few students discussed how the convention contributed to this. When proportion was identified the student often discussed scale. Students need to be able to distinguish between scale and proportion.

Those students who demonstrated knowledge of typographic conventions responded to the question with great clarity on how the nominated convention contributed to the aesthetics.

The following are examples of student responses. The first is an example of a high-scoring response while the second is a mid-range response.

Example 1

The use of extended tracking in this poster enables the font used to extend nearly across the whole width of the poster, emphasising the title and creating a bold and defined sequence of words that dominates the space.

Example 2

The all-caps type gives the design a simple solid edge, increasing the legibility of the title and drawing the audience's attention.

Question 3aiii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	12	22	44	17	5	1.8

Students generally demonstrated a good understanding of the elements and principles of design; however, at least two of each needed to be discussed. Many students only discussed one element and one principle. Some students used incorrect terminology for type, referring to it as text, typography or font. Other students discussed colour in relation to this visual communication, which was not relevant. In the discussions, some students confused elements and principles by nominating a principle used and discussing it as an element. Most students did not discuss how the selected elements or principles were used effectively, often describing only its use and not evaluating it.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The form of the type in the design appears to be disappearing into the paper, relating to the book's message of disappearing. This is further enhanced by the use of tone, as the gradient from light to dark gives the audience the visual message of disappearing into darkness. Proportion and balance have also been used, the type is proportionally bigger to the figure, attracting the audience's attention, and is asymmetrically balanced by the much smaller but darker figure, creating a pleasing composition.

Question 3bi.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	19	81	0.8

The majority of students were able to correctly identify environmental design as the design field.

Question 3bii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	5	17	22	25	13	13	3.5

This question was generally handled well. A majority of students were able to clearly explain how a safe and interactive environment was achieved. Most students also touched upon the engaging aspects of the environment, but some explanations lacked depth or clarity and did not relate to the target audience. In general, students discussed all three areas of consideration. The ways students identified and discussed the consideration of safety were generally much more comprehensive than the ways engagement and interaction were discussed. Students' answers scored more highly if each consideration was explained separately, as this allowed them to answer the question succinctly.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

Figure 7 depicts a safe design as the small blocks are not too small for young children that they would be a choking hazard. The design in figure 8 shows limited objects & designs on the floor so that the children would be safe from falling over. The imagery in Figure 7 depicts simple illustration that would engage children and the blocks that are to be placed in the mouths allow the children to interact with the design. The use of bright, vibrant colours, simple shapes & form

makes the design very engaging for young children. The design on the floor of figure 8 also invites interaction for children to jump and play on the imagery as the young boy would suggest.

The use of the softer material on most of the surfaces in figure 8 allows for safety; there is no danger for infants in running into walls or falling. The use of bright green, yellow, red and blue colours allows for a fun, dynamic and excited experience. Familiar shapes of circles, triangles and squares have been used as holes or gaps, persuading children to either stick blocks through shapes – as shown in figure 7 – or crawl through them – as shown in figure 8.

Question 3ci.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	13	87	0.9

The majority of students were able to correctly identify industrial design as the design field.

Question 3cii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	29	32	21	12	6	1.4

In this question, most students described what they saw, rather than the practical decisions made by the designer in relation to the materials needed to make the particular form. The students who did address the choices of materials made by the designer in relation to the form often only discussed one material, where the question used the plural – materials. Many students struggled to link the material to the form, particularly when discussing metal. Students also confused shape and form and discussed the appearance of the chair rather than the form the designer created. Many discussions were not relevant to the question, discussing things like target audience.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The designer's curvy – chair was made using plastic and metal. Plastic is cheap and durable, also very easy to manipulate into such a smooth and curved chair. Metal was chosen for the legs as it is strong and can be molded to fit the chair's inner structure and also hold it up for safe use.

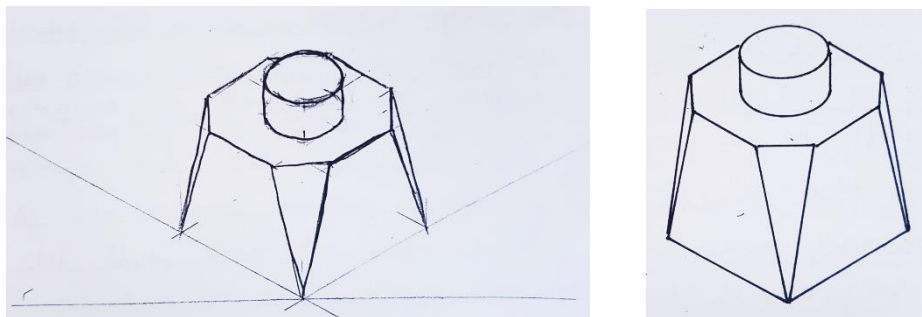
The organic, rounded form of the seat and the back of the chair may have led the designers to select materials which can be easily moulded to that form, such as plastic or rubber. The legs of the chair have a straight, cylindrical form which may have influenced the use of sturdy cylinder like materials such as metal rods.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	16	8	13	10	15	13	13	7	5	3.6

Most students read the orthogonal conventions correctly and drew a cube that had the corners removed, leaving triangular faces. However, a significant number of students read the conventions incorrectly and drew a regular cube. Students must be aware that lines on a third-angle orthogonal drawing will never refer to surface decorations; therefore, the corners of the top square should have been erased. Some students may have been aware of this, but after constructing the object using the crating method, they may have neglected to erase the construction lines or clearly differentiate between construction lines and the lines of the object. Many students struggled to use the correct method to draw ellipses and the cylinder in isometric. Students who crated their ellipses handled this part of the question well. Some students used circle or ellipse templates. Some students incorrectly drew the cylinder as hollow or did not work accurately to scale.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

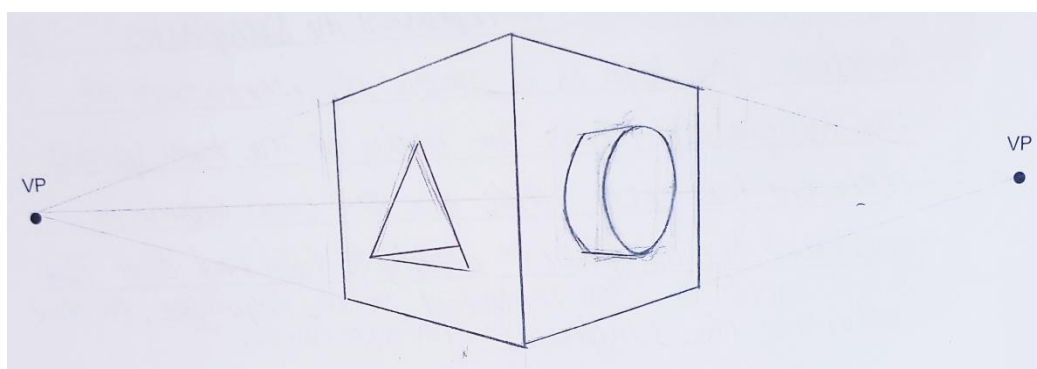


Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	16	10	15	15	14	12	9	5	2	3.2

Students who used the crating method tended to perform well on this question. In two-point perspective the centre of a square is not the mathematical centre but rather the centre of the square in perspective. The horizon line is a fixed line of sight and many students ignored the position of the horizon line indicated in the orthogonal projection or did not understand how to place the object in relation to the viewpoint. Most answers displayed a limited understanding of proportion in perspective. A large number of students made the cube appear rectangular in their perspective drawing. Ellipses in perspective were generally poorly handled and most students did not have the lines for the cylinder going back to the vanishing point or had them going to the incorrect vanishing point. Some students drew the cylinder as hollow or not projecting out from the cube, while others did not create the hole in the triangle. It is important that students are able to read the orthogonal conventions.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.



Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	11	27	39	23	1.8

Students generally handled this question well. High-scoring answers provided discussions with specific references to the characteristics of the glasses and clear descriptions of how they were incorporated into the logo. Low-scoring answers made little reference to the incorporation of the glasses into the logo.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

The type used across the collateral is a sans serif, block style font. This reflects the sunglasses depicted in figure 13, as the frames/slaps share a similar straight, block look. The characteristics are also reflected in the two 'e's in 'see' which is revealed across the collateral, as they depict what the glasses look like when the slaps have been rolled up. The aspect is accentuated in figure 17 where it maintains the high hierarchy.

The logo's choice of font, which also relies heavily on line and shape, is designed to emulate the blocky yet curvy aesthetic of the glasses. Whilst the thick font emulates the snapable bands of the glasses, the inverted 'e' of 'see' alludes to both sunglasses lenses, mimicking their shape and the ability of the band to 'fold' and 'slap' around the wrist for example, thus communicating the product's versatile nature to the viewer.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	11	7	14	21	20	15	12	3.3

Most students were able to identify the item and its function for each of the 3 packages. Some students provided clear explanations of decisions that were made about the design or materials of the packaging that were directly related to the stated function. Most students provided discussions of the design decisions that did not relate back to the stated function.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

Figure 15

The cloth bag in figure 15 would function to store the sunglasses so that they would not get damaged between uses. Designs would be made regarding its material so that it would be soft enough not to damage the glasses and so that it would allow the printed logo to adhere.

Figure 16

This is a cardboard box in which the bag with the sunnies would be stored. This would be sturdy enough to prevent the glasses from becoming damaged whilst also allowing the designer to stick to his/her budget as cardboard is relatively inexpensive.

OR

The box packaging would be used to store the sunglasses for their sale as a product. The form of the box, as a packaging net, would have considered as they must fit the glasses in using the least amount of material to save costs & be more sustainable. How various boxes would stack or fit together would also have been considered.

Figure 17

The paper bag would function to hold the sunglasses box so that the audience/customer can easily hold the product after purchase. Decisions would have been made regarding its form and net so that it may fit the box inside. The choice of material would also be considered so that it can easily withstand the weight of the box and sunglasses inside.

OR

The function of the bag is to transport the sunglasses, probably whilst in its box packaging. The design simplistic, minimal whereby showcasing its logo in negative space and contrasting, bold black shade helps draw it to attention, providing an advertisal function as well.

Question 5c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	12	15	16	19	21	17	2.7

Most students identified an appropriate purpose using terminology as stated in the study design. A few students used incorrect terminology such as to ‘instruct’ or ‘educate’ rather than ‘guide’, ‘teach’, ‘depict’ or ‘inform’. Students needed to explain the extended part of the question with evidence of how the elements were used to effectively address the stated purpose. Some discussed principles or irrelevant elements such as colour, texture and point. High-scoring responses discussed two relevant elements and how they addressed the stated purpose.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The purpose is to teach the user of the Slapsee Sunglasses how to fold and unfold the glasses. The use of type in the communication addresses this due to the capitalized words drawing the eye to the main action required at each step, and clarifying the steps depicted in the imagery. Line is also used in the form of arrows, which clarify the direction of the folding or unfolding, and line dividers which clearly separate each step to make the instructions easy to follow.

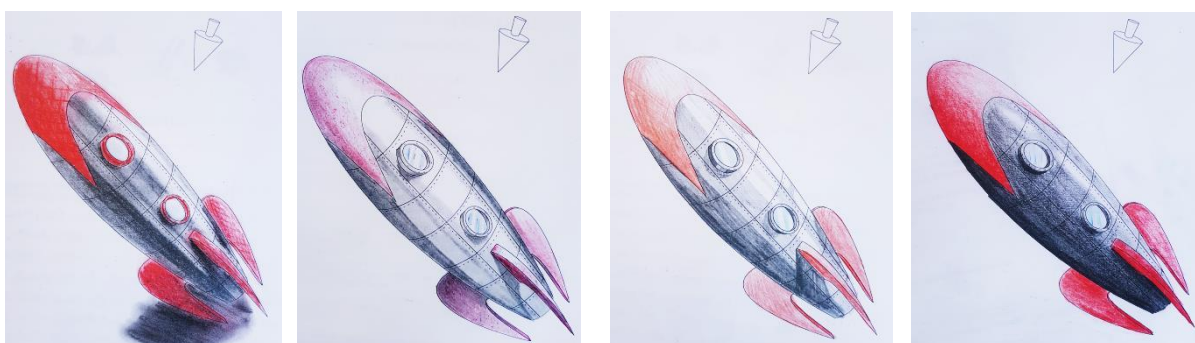
Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	2	2	4	7	13	18	20	17	11	6	2	5.7

Rendering of materials was generally handled well and most students used the reference material provided in the resource book. Students were required to demonstrate an understanding of how to correctly indicate the light source. The shadows cast on the body of the rocket by the front fin and the window frames that protrude from the body were to be included. Contrast in the rendering to emphasise the form of the rocket was required.

Students were required to provide tonal variation for the coloured rubber of the nose and fins, resulting in flattening of the form. Some students used high contrast to render the satin metal, rather than a more subtle tone to demonstrate surface qualities. Many students used blue to indicate glass and should have attempted to show the reflective and transparent characteristic of this material by including contrast.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

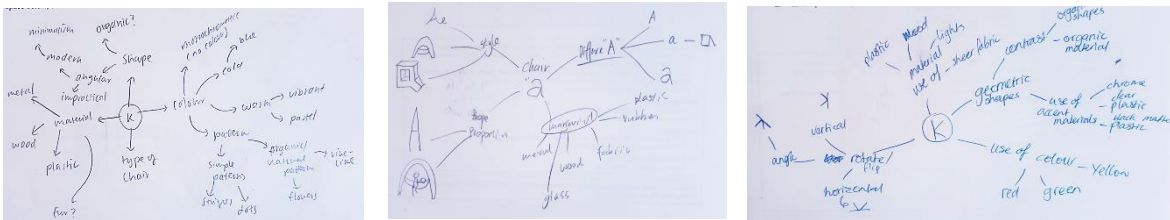


Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	46	31	24	0.8

Many students correctly provided brainstorm ideas for a chair based on a letter, as required. A few students demonstrated this through writing down a wide range of ideas. However, some students responded with visualisation drawings as though they had been asked to generate ideas. Drawings are not required in a brainstorm.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

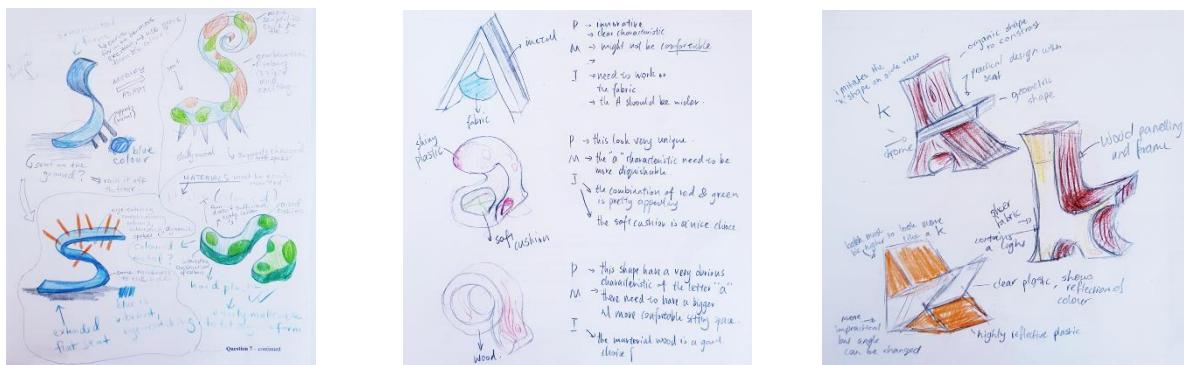


Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	5	7	24	28	22	10	4	3.1

Students were required to use three-dimensional drawings to generate a range of ideas for a chair concept based on the brainstorm in Question 7a. Most students responded with three-dimensional drawings and identified both colour and materials in their concepts through annotations or application in the drawings of the chairs. Some students did not explore different ideas but rather the same concept repeatedly from different views, or presented drawings showing details of one concept. Students should allow sufficient time to expand on and produce a range of ideas (more than two). Some chair designs were only elaborate letters, with little consideration for function or an exploration of creative ideas. Many students labelled their drawings rather than annotated them. Annotations provide critical evaluations of the designs and insight into design decisions rather than labelling drawings. Some students used critical thinking strategies such as PMI (plus, minus, interesting) to evaluate their ideas and to communicate design thinking.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.



Question 7c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Average
%	8	0	1	5	9	13	17	18	15	8	5	2	6

This question allowed students to demonstrate their creativity and a wide range of solutions were presented. Most students used drawing and rendering to effectively create three-dimensional representations of their designs and addressed most of the criteria successfully. High-scoring responses demonstrated creative solutions to the task, clearly refining their idea from Question 7b., using three-dimensional drawings and paying attention to the use of tone to describe form. Several students did not refine their ideas from Question 7b. but copied exactly what they had done in the previous question. Some students wrote the letter on top of a standard chair design and did not incorporate the letter into the form of the chair.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses.

