



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Contemporary Art Practice: Conceptual Processes

Unit code: F1E9 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to develop knowledge and understanding of conceptual processes in a contemporary art context. It will enable candidates to explore, develop and produce conceptual ideas.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Research the work of conceptual artists.
- 2 Explore and develop ideas for a conceptual artwork.
- 3 Produce a conceptual artwork.

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Access to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. It may be beneficial if candidates had some prior knowledge of creative processes. This may be demonstrated by the achievement of Intermediate 2 or Higher level Art & Design or by a practical portfolio of art and design work.

Core Skills: There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of Communication and Information Technology at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

Assessment: This Unit is assessed by:

Outcome 1 is assessed by a research project.

Outcome 2 is assessed by the production of ideas/concepts for a conceptual artwork.

Outcome 3 is assessed by the production of conceptual artwork.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Research the work of conceptual artists

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Research processes and methods
- ◆ Practice of conceptual artists
- ◆ Analysis

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ use a variety of sources to research the work of conceptual artists
- ◆ analyse examples of conceptual artists' work and their practice, process and methods

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed on its own or as part of a holistic assessment for the whole Unit.

Research should cover a wide range of conceptual artists and their art practice that could include, for example, installation, digital, video, film, performance, two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. Candidates should record information about the artists, the media and the processes used in their work and also show an understanding of the conceptual content of the artwork.

Outcome 2

Explore and develop ideas for a conceptual artwork

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Exploration of ideas
- ◆ Development of ideas
- ◆ Experimentation with materials and techniques
- ◆ Experimental use of media

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Contemporary Art Practice: Conceptual Processes

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explore and experiment with potential ideas
- ◆ produce development of ideas
- ◆ explore the creative potential of media

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome could be assessed on its own or as part of a holistic assessment for the whole Unit.

There is an opportunity for candidates to respond to a brief with an imaginative response. The production of solutions can take the form of visual thinking using an approach independent from the physical object or form. A reflective, analytical, approach should be encouraged.

Outcome 3

Produce a conceptual artwork

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Selection of concepts
- ◆ Materials and media
- ◆ Reflective practice

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can, with reference to a given brief:

- ◆ select a concept and identify materials, media and techniques that are suitable for the production of the artwork
- ◆ produce artwork which demonstrates visual and conceptual coherence
- ◆ analyse artwork and justify creative solutions

Evidence should be presented as an artwork in any form that meets the requirements of the set brief.

Evidence of analysis and critical evaluation should be presented in a form that contains referenced, annotated visual material or as an oral presentation/commentary with accompanying visual material.

Assessment guidelines

The final piece of artwork could take any form, for example: an installation, digital artwork, lens-based media, performance, paper based work, painting, construction, artists' book or sculpture.

Consideration should be given to the scale and complexity of final artwork. If, for example, the work is on a very small scale and/or simplistic in technique candidates could be asked to produce alternative finished concepts or a greater number of exploratory pieces.

This Outcome could be assessed on its own or as part of a holistic assessment for the whole Unit.

Administrative Information

Unit code: Contemporary Art Practice: Conceptual Processes

Unit title: F1E9 34

Superclass category: JB

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History of Changes:

| Version | Description of change | Date |
|---------|--|----------|
| 02 | Wording added to Outcome 1 Evidence Requirements — first bullet point. | 28/02/08 |
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Contemporary Art Practice: Conceptual Processes

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is an introduction conceptual artform and current practice. Having researched the work of contemporary conceptual artists, candidates will then explore their own ideas and produce a piece of conceptual artwork.

The Unit is intended to enable candidates to develop knowledge and understanding of the processes involved with conceptual and ideas based art. Candidates will have the opportunity to gain skills in some of the processes.

In **Outcome 1** candidates should research the work of a range of conceptual artists. Information and illustrations relating to the artists should be gathered with descriptions of the theories underpinning their work.

It would be beneficial if the candidates could investigate one artist in depth to establish an understanding of the process involved.

It would be advisable to stimulate research and understanding with an exposition of established artists' work, covering a variety of concepts and media use. Tutor led discussions and debates relating to the process used from conception to production should be included in the delivery of this Unit.

In **Outcome 2** candidates at this stage should produce initial ideas for the possible production of an artwork. Ideas could be produced in any format but should be supported by sketchbook/workbooks, with accompanying annotation or oral explanations.

Conceptual art may be new territory for candidates. Time should be taken exploring the processes with candidates and explaining that these are very different from conventional art production and that it is acceptable to produce work that does not necessarily have a beginning or an end. Candidates should be encouraged to expand their own limits of understanding of what constitutes a piece of art and no barrier or limit should be imposed on the creative process.

An explorative, experimental, analytical approach should be employed. The candidates should also be encouraged to become self-motivated and self-directed in their approach to producing work.

In **Outcome 3** candidates should work on the consolidation of ideas and work towards the production of a piece of artwork. Concepts can be produced using various formats, eg lens-based, digital, two or three-dimensional, or a combination of these. Coherence of ideas within a chosen format should be explored. Candidates should be encouraged to use digital media and unexplored contexts. Analysis and reflection should be encouraged. A small written or oral piece should be produced analysing thought processes and justifying choices.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Contemporary Art Practice: Conceptual Processes

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit has been developed as part of the HNC/D Contemporary Art Practice Group Award. It is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes. Opportunities may be taken to link or integrate with other aspects of the course and a thematic approach adopted for both delivery and assessment.

This Unit is essentially an introduction to conceptual art. The delivery will be enhanced through tutor based lectures stimulating learning through exposition of conceptual artists' work. Lecturers should create a non-judgemental atmosphere conducive to debate that should be encouraged and observed. Gallery and site visits should be encouraged.

Candidates could focus their hours of study on intense research, development and refinement of ideas for a piece. If this was the case, it would be expected that candidates would have a very substantial body of evidence for Outcomes 1 and 2. In such circumstances, evidence of a high level of conceptual/contextual thinking could be accepted as sufficient achievement, if supported by a simple well-resolved solution.

Candidates should be encouraged to work independently, to be self-directed and self-motivated.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

Formative input should encourage candidates to define objectives and strategies for managing the practical aspects of research activity. Instruction and demonstration should support them as they analyse a range of complex information. Skills in accessing and evaluating electronic sources which provide complex information, ideas and examples will be developed. The need to develop efficient systems of recording, coding and storing outline information for ease of reference, such as work books and folders should be emphasised.

Although skills in communication are not formally assessed, candidates could be provided with checklists detailing criteria for evaluation of information accessed, which could include checks on currency, authority and accuracy. Written work produced should express essential ideas and information accurately and coherently, use industry terminology and check spelling for accuracy. Using up to date software packages for word processing and editing where practical will support the development of writing skills to a professional standard. If evidence is presented orally, candidates could be provided with checklists to remind them of the need to:

- ◆ adapt language and style to the needs of their audience
- ◆ use appropriate pace and tone
- ◆ use effective non-verbal communication
- ◆ use audio visual support confidently
- ◆ respond to in depth questioning confidently and accurately

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Contemporary Art Practice: Conceptual Processes

Open learning

The practical nature of parts of this Unit would make it difficult to deliver via open learning. Although parts of this Unit could be delivered by distance learning, it would require a considerable degree of planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

For further information and advice please refer to the SQA document *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Contemporary Art Practice: Conceptual Processes

This Unit will introduce you to conceptual art and the processes involved. You will be expected to generate research, to initiate ideas and produce an artwork.

For **Outcome 1** you will:

- ◆ Develop an awareness of conceptual art practice by researching conceptual artists' work

For **Outcome 2** you will:

- ◆ Explore and develop your own ideas for an artwork

For **Outcome 3** you will:

- ◆ Produce a finished piece of conceptual artwork

Conceptual art may be new territory for you. You should take time to explore the processes used by conceptual artists as they are very different from conventional art production. You should try to expand your limits of understanding of conceptual art and no barrier or limit should be imposed on the creative process.

You will be encouraged to become self-motivated, become an independent thinker and to become familiar with creative processes outwith normal boundaries.