

# Visual Art 2019 v1.1

## Supporting resource: Artist's statements

### Artist's statements in the Visual Art syllabus

Artist's statements are required for Summative internal assessment 2 (IA2): Project — inquiry phase 2 and Summative internal assessment 3 (IA3): Project — inquiry phase 3. Students may be given opportunities to write artist's statements in Units 1 and 2.

Syllabus conditions:

- artist's statement/s that assist/s audience understanding of body of work focus and critical thinking
  - one statement for a single artwork or a collection of artworks, or multiple statements for individual artworks in a collection, as determined by the student focus
  - maximum 150 words per statement (name, title, media and size are not included in word count)

### Artist's statement guide

Artist's statement information includes:	
not included in word count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name of the artist</li><li>• Title of the work</li><li>• Year of creation</li><li>• Media</li><li>• Dimensions</li></ul>
maximum 150 words	a block of didactic (interpretive) text
didactic (interpretive) text	<p>Students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consider how the text will assist their audience to engage with their artwork</li><li>• use active rather than passive voice</li><li>• use present tense</li><li>• use verbs and adjectives that are specific to their purpose and intention; use language that matches the mood and qualities of the work that will both excite and inform the audience</li><li>• use a variety of sentence lengths, easy to read sentences are 15–20 words long</li><li>• avoid an explanation of what they did — this is obvious when the audience looks at the artwork — use the artist's statement to share philosophy, intentions, ideas, but not reveal everything (leave something for the audience to discover on their own)</li><li>• consider the relationship between artist and audience: Do they want to share personal feelings, challenge assumptions, provoke a response?</li><li>• ask questions or provide clues that encourage the audience to look closer at the artwork and construct their own meaning, whether aesthetic, intellectual or personal; avoid questions with obvious answers — these risk patronising the audience</li><li>• consider the word length. Students only have 150 words to capture everything they need to say; avoid opening with 'My work is...'; 'In my work...'</li><li>• use a hierarchy of information — concept, focus, message.</li></ul>

## Artist's statement samples

### IA2 Student sample — one statement for a collection of artworks:



Student name

*Dweller on the threshold*

Year

Acrylic on canvas

3 panels, each 120cm x 90 cm

Change is unavoidable in life. Yet, like everything unknown, it is inherently intertwined with fear and deeply ingrained within the psychological sphere of human culture and spirituality. The transition from childhood to adulthood is one of the most dramatic changes a human will experience and is riddled with fear. My paintings explore the sheltered world of adolescence and the anxiety of inevitably growing up. Each painting portrays candid scenes of my 19-year-old brother Adam in his bedroom. His thick beard serves as a jarring clash with the parental comfort of floral patterning and childish interests reflected in his surroundings. Beyond the security of the bedroom, silhouetted spectral figures pass by an open door — a metaphor for the undiscovered world beyond adolescence. The obscure background bestows an eerie ambiguity through its juxtaposition with the familiar, the limbo and fear between the known and unknown in both a physical and psychological context.

IA3 Student sample — one statement for a collection of artworks:



Student name

*Riverbed*

Year

Acrylic on canvas

6 panels, each

52 x 76 cm

*Riverbed* explores the Jungian notion of water as the fundamental element in the alternative reality of the spiritual realm. Jung, a Swiss psychotherapist, held that all cultures share a collective spiritual experience and metaphorical language which lies within the subconscious and surfaces through dreams. The external and internal realities posed by this concept are embodied in the contrast between the personal safety and domesticity of a bed and a turbulent river landscape. The river symbolises the flow of life: the 'teleology', as Jungian therapy says, and embodies the powerful direction of that flow as one is cast into adulthood.

The six panels of *Riverbed* form a hybridization of bedsheets and landscape. The brush marks and patterns encroach on each other, like dreams and fears. This melding of formalistic characteristics expresses the idea that, while external and internal reality are inherently opposing, they are also, ironically, inseparably intertwined.

IA2 Student sample — multiple statements for individual artworks in a collection:



Student name

*Becoming form*

Year

Charcoal in encaustic on handmade paper

Series of 5 x low relief drawings each 30 x 20 cm

*Becoming form* is inspired by the Japanese Gutai art movement and their philosophy to allow material to expose its own innate characteristics. External input by the artist upon the materials was only done as a catalyst to allow the materials to find their form. I challenged myself in these works to suppress my instinct to control or force the materials into a pre-determined form. Through constant repetition of a singular action performed hundreds of times, the action takes shape and a form is created. The works are both drawing and sculpture with the material ultimately determining what the form becomes.

## IA2 Student sample — multiple statements for individual artworks in a collection:



Student name

*Concrete*

Year

Charcoal, ink, wax, turpentine, polyvinyl acetate adhesive

Installation, various sizes

“Gutai Art does not alter matter. Gutai Art imparts life to matter.”

The Japanese Gutai Art movement allowed their materials to tell their own story. The artist was only a catalyst that exposed the nature and form of the materials. Inspired by this philosophy, I restricted myself to repeating the same brush strokes and suppressed human instinct to create representational forms. As I worked, I found myself falling into a meditative state where nothing mattered besides allowing the materials to flourish. The drawings are installed with the implements and evidence of the process to celebrate the distinct qualities of the materials.

### Online examples

Artists entering the Queensland Regional Art Awards must submit an artist’s statement describing how their work addresses the competition theme — 150 words maximum.

- *Flying Arts*, ‘Queensland regional art awards’, [www.flyingarts.org.au/events-and-projects/queensland-regional-art-awards/](http://www.flyingarts.org.au/events-and-projects/queensland-regional-art-awards/)