NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
MAY 2025

VISUAL ARTS: PAPER I

MARKING GUIDELINES

Time: 3 hours 100 marks

These marking guidelines are prepared for use by examiners and sub-examiners, all of whom are required to attend a standardisation meeting to ensure that the guidelines are consistently interpreted and applied in the marking of learners' scripts.

The IEB will not enter into any discussions or correspondence about any marking guidelines. It is acknowledged that there may be different views about some matters of emphasis or detail in the guidelines. It is also recognised that, without the benefit of attendance at a standardisation meeting, there may be different interpretations of the application of the marking guidelines.

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QUESTION 1 VISUAL LITERACY

1.1 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 4: apply – 1 mark describing the gaze and 1 mark for each image articulating a reason.**

- In Image A there are no eyes shown.
- There is a directionality to the heads of the people in the work that shows they are looking in a particular direction.
- The people are not looking at the viewer.
- In Image B the gaze on the face is away from the viewer.

1.2 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 2: identify, remember – 1 mark per work identifying tone and texture.**
Level 4: apply – 1 mark per work linking both elements with principles.

- In Image A the texture of the work is entirely smooth, flat paint.
- The effect of this is to create unity in the image.
- In Image A there is no tonal gradation but there is tonal contrast between the distinct colours.
- The effect of this tonal contrast is to create emphasis on the white figures while the direction of light lines creates movement.
- In Image B there is some tonal gradation in both photos in the collage.
- This gradation is almost negated by the contrast of the pink hands and the dark face floating on a white background.
- Tone functions to create visual interest and movement between the two elements.
- In Image B, texture is the texture of old photographs which appear grainy and unclear.
- There is a contrast of the more textured older photo and the smoother pink hands and both are pierced by pins.

Any other valid description linked to a function of tone and texture in the composition of the work.

1.3 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 2: identify – 1 mark per work identifying materials.**
Level 5: analyse, argue – 1 mark per work analysing the effect of the materials.

- In Image A the paint is flat and no brushmarks are visible.
- The oil paint that Niki Nkosi uses creates a uniformity that simplifies the image and creates the focus and absences that are central to her work.
- Orupabo uses found images from colonial archives.
- She is reclaiming images from colonial archives by using them in her art.
- She is acknowledging the presence of the people whose images she uses.

Any relevant discussion of materials linked to meaning.

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1.4 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 4: apply – 1 mark for recognising something that is omitted in each work.**
Level 5: analyse.
Level 6: evaluate – 1 mark per work for analysing evaluating a reason why the artist has omitted each thing.

- In Image A, the artist has left out the focus of the people in the image.
- They are looking at someone we can't see.
- It is perhaps a questioning of the viewer to recognise what and who we see and who we don't see.
- In Image B the rest of the Caucasian body, the rest of the black body and context or background are left out.
- Orupabo is asking us to create the context, she is driving home the point of the contrast of the two images in the collage.

Any valid response that notes what is absent and the possible intention of the artist.

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QUESTION 2 TWENTIETH CENTURY ART FROM DADA UP TO BUT EXCLUDING THE CONCEPTUAL ART OF THE 1970s

Guidelines that were implemented in last year's marking session for this question.

- *Award 1 mark for mode/medium.*
- *Full marks cannot be awarded if the question is incorrectly numbered. If a candidate numbers their responses incorrectly, they lose one mark for the entirety of Question 2.*
- *Marks cannot be awarded if incorrect/irrelevant examples of the artist and titles of artworks are mentioned/discussed. In such cases marks can be awarded to the argument related to the question.*
- *Marks can only be awarded for the correct titles of artworks that are accompanied by a clear, concise description of the artwork.*

2.1 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 6: evaluate – 3 marks for a description of the work and an evaluation of how it is both normal and surreal.**

- Image C is a photograph of a single boot and a string of bullets.
- Given the date and the text, these are parts of war imagery.
- Miller has juxtaposed the boot and bullets, so it looks like a spine and anthropomorphises the objects, making them seem human.

Any valid exploration of how normal is redefined.

2.2 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 2: remember.**
Level 4: apply.

Duchamp is probably an obvious choice with his work ***Fountain 1917***. This was a men's urinal, removed from its function and displayed as art signed R. Mutt.

- Another work that might question our ideas of normal could be Willem de Koning's ***Woman 1***. This is a painting and collage showing a large, frightening woman whose body takes up most of the canvas.

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2.3 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 4: apply, examine, discuss.**
Level 5: analyse.
Level 6: argue – 4 marks per artwork to collectively apply, analyse and argue.

- In choosing a 'normal' everyday object and exhibiting it as art, Duchamp has transformed the 'normal' and created something that ironically was to become a new norm or into a new-normal.
- The subject matter is protest of the society that in seeing itself as normal allowed the First World War to happen.
- Duchamp was rejecting all the characteristics associated with art by this society. In his anti-art piece he removes the hand of the artist as he did not create the work; he just found it.
- He used an object that was common and does not fulfil the criterion of being original – it can be repeated indefinitely.
- His randomly found object is not aesthetically pleasing, nor can it be analysed according to traditional criteria.
- Any other direct ways in which normalcy is questioned in the work.
- Willem De Kooning, in ***Woman 1***, gives us a painting of a woman that defines new-normal.
- This could be considered normal except for the way that he has painted it.
- The work is gestural and expressively painted showing clear influence from the German Expressionist artists who moved to the USA.
- The subject matter of a woman is distorted almost beyond recognition and brings in a Surrealist influence as it shows De Kooning's unconscious relationship with women. The way that paint is applied also reflects the violence of his feelings.
- It is almost abstract, the woman does not have clear edges or outlines, she is broken into her space as if humanity were broken.
- She does not embody the stereotype of women at the time but is rather an archetypal strong, fierce woman with a wash of menstrual red across her lap as if the war had stripped away pretension and artifice.

Any other direct ways in which normalcy is questioned in the work.

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QUESTION 3 CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL ART

Guidelines that were implemented in last year's marking session for this question.

- *Award 1 mark for correct mode/medium.*
- *Full marks cannot be awarded if the question is incorrectly numbered. If a candidate numbers their responses incorrectly, they lose one mark for the entirety of Question 3.*
- *Marks cannot be awarded if incorrect/irrelevant examples of the artist and titles of artworks are mentioned/discussed. In such cases marks can be awarded to the argument related to the question.*
- *Marks can only be awarded for the correct titles of artworks that are accompanied by a clear, concise description of the artwork.*
- *If a candidate writes about a South African contemporary example in this question and marks have been awarded for the argument relating to the question, please check that the candidate hasn't written about the same artist/example in Question 5.*

3.1 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 2: remember.**
Level 4: apply.

- ***Spiral Jetty*** by Robert Smithson is poetic. It is a piece of Land art that still exists and consists of a spiral of land in one of the Salt Lake in Utah. It is wide enough for a vehicle.
- ***Sunflower Seeds*** by Ai Wei Wei is a work of protest. It is an installation of hundreds of thousands of porcelain sunflower seeds piled on the gallery floor.

3.2 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 4: apply.**
Level 5: analyse, compare, contrast.
Level 6: evaluate.

- In ***Spiral Jetty***, Smithson has created something poetic in the sheer scale of creating a huge spiral of land stretching into water.
- It has no function and exists simply as it is. This changes with seasons and algal tides.
- As land Art the spiral creates a focus on the elements and interactions of nature.
- The spiral of the land and the spiral of the water interlock.
- The sky is reflected in the water and becomes an intrinsic part of the piece.
- This has an effect on colour and light.
- The spiral is a symbol of infinity and has been used since ancient times.
- Any relevant poetic aspects of the work.
- In ***Sunflower Seeds***, Ai Wei Wei is advocating for a recognition of Chinese art and history.

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- He has deliberately conceived of a piece in which the components are mass produced. In this case the sunflower seeds were hand made by artisans in China.
- This mass production questions our assumption of Chinese mass production being cheap, bad quality stuff.
- Here the sunflower seeds are hand crafted and painted to appear absolutely realistic.
- They are a pointed reminder of the history of Chinese porcelain and the huge value attached to it.
- Beyond this is a reminder that in vast seas of sunflower seeds, each is an individual as are the people of China who may be dehumanised and diminished by Western attitudes to such an enormous population in the country.

Any other valid protests inherent in the work.
6 marks per artwork discussed

3.3 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 6: evaluate.**
Level 7: create.

- ***Spiral Jetty*** contains strong poetic elements as noted in 3.2 but it also acts as a marker for environmental concerns.
- The location was chosen to highlight the pinks waters that were present at times due to building and effluent around the lake.
- Smithson was aware of this even back in the 1970's when the problems were less than now.
- Apparently in recent droughts, years after Smithson's death, the jetty was left high and dry as the waters dried up and all the elements were no longer present.
- Although Ai Wei Wei had a protest in mind, the sheer overwhelming craftsmanship is poetic.
- The repetition of the same shape in a myriad of different patterns and the sense of the individual within the whole could all be seen as poetic.
- There is poetry in the voice of a huge country being expressed as this powerful little seed.

Any valid response that recognises the duality of the work.
2 marks per work.

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QUESTION 4 RESISTANCE ART IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE APARTHEID ERA INCLUDING ARTISTS WHO EMERGED FROM FORMAL AND INFORMAL ART CENTRES (Circa. 1950–1994 CE)

Guidelines that were implemented in last year's marking session for this question.

- *Award 1 mark for mode/medium.*
- *Full marks cannot be awarded if the question is incorrectly numbered. If a candidate numbers their responses incorrectly, they lose one mark for the entirety of Question 4.*
- *Marks cannot be awarded if incorrect/irrelevant examples of the artist and titles of artworks are mentioned/discussed. In such cases marks can be awarded to the argument related to the question.*
- *Marks can only be awarded for the correct titles of artworks that are accompanied by a clear, concise description of the artwork.*
- *If the candidate discusses the wrong example, they lose a mark for the artist and a mark for the title of the work. They may be awarded marks for the argument if it applies to the question.*
- *If a candidate writes about a South African contemporary example in this question and you decide to award marks for argument, please check that they haven't written about the same artist in Question 5.*
- Patience on a Monument: A History Painting – *is the correct title of Penny Siopis's painting. Incomplete versions of this title were not accepted last year.*

4.1 **Bloom's Taxonomy Level 4: apply.**

- In Image F a beer pot with raised decoration is a traditional vessel.
- It is a work in the style of many generations.
- The skills and form of the pot would have been passed down through generations of women.
- It has a function that is clearly recognised in Zulu society.

Any other valid discussion of the work related to Indigenous tradition.

4.2 **Bloom's Taxonomy Level 2: remember.**
Level 4: apply.

- Penny Siopis, ***Patience on a Monument – A History Painting,*** is a painting of a black woman sitting on a pile of rubbish, in a seemingly infinite landscape, peeling a lemon. The work reflects western tradition.
- Helen Sebidi, ***The Child's Mother Holds the Sharp Side of the Knife***, a mixed media piece of drawing and collaged elements that is crowded with fragmented figures and animals. This work reflects indigenous knowledge.

Any examples which contain everyday imagery.

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4.3 **Bloom's Taxonomy** **Level 3: understand.**
Level 4: apply.
Level 5: analyse.

- Siopis shows an everyday scene of a woman peeling a fruit.
- The pile on which she is sitting is made up of historical objects: a collection of art and books that were part of the apartheid society. They are Western objects of value.
- She simply presents them to us but the pile makes them look like rubbish although they would have been valued at the time.
- The landscape can be identified as made up of images from apartheid textbooks, totally normal and acceptable at the time. These scraps diminish in size into the background creating a perspective that is a convincing portrayal of space.
- The yellow colour integrates the images and appears to create an endless landscape of history.
- Patience is shown in a painterly style and she looms above the landscape as the biggest object and central focal point in the work.

Any valid formal and/or conceptual analysis including the western tradition.

- Sebidi uses people and animals as her subject matter but fragments them by literally tearing them up.
- This fragmentation relates to the fragmentation of communities and families under apartheid.
- The lack of space and the claustrophobia embody the restricted spaces of the Group Areas Act as well as the strength within these close communities.
- The literal tearing reflects the desire of the government at the time to weaken and destroy the culture of people of colour in order to maintain white supremacy.
- The chaotic colour and gestural mark-making express deep anguish and dislocation. The idea of cultural tradition being fragmented by the apartheid laws is embodied in these dislocated bodies.
- The fragmented forms move our eyes across the surface of the work, not allowing them to rest anywhere; this reflects the tension felt by people who were not allowed to rest due to pass laws and constant restrictions as well as the tension between tradition and the lives many people lived in the cities.

Any valid formal and/or conceptual discussion of everyday subject matter having a more subversive message.
5 marks per artwork.

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4.4 **Bloom's Taxonomy Level 5: compare, contrast.**
Level 6: evaluate, critique, justify.

- Either artist can be chosen as long as the effectiveness of the Resistance impact of the work is argued.
- Sebidi is an artist whose artistic inspiration comes from the ancestors.
- Although she had several teachers who had the weight of western tradition behind them, her works are conceived in her way and followed the instructions of her grandmother to create images that embody resistance.
- These works are unsettling and hard to entirely analyse but this is their power which endures and continues to make the viewer uncomfortable.
- This discomfort may embody the meeting of the western and the indigenous in both subject matter and the fragmentary construction of the image.
- Or on the other hand:
- Siopis constructs a convincing space and landscape using western rules of perspective and makes a bold political statement.
- She then powerfully undermines the apartheid regime by constructing the space out of images that show evidence of injustices.
- We are lulled into recognitions of a traditional landscape and figure of a woman because of their familiarity before realising what underlies this.
- Siopis uses both subject matter and her elements of art to unsettle the viewer.

Any other valid points.

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QUESTION 5 CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN ART (POST-1994)

Guidelines that were implemented in last year's marking session for this question.

- *Marks cannot be awarded if incorrect/irrelevant examples of the artist and titles of artworks are mentioned/discussed. In such cases marks can be awarded to the argument related to the question.*
- *Marks can only be awarded for the correct titles of artworks that are accompanied by a clear, concise description of the artwork.*
- *If a candidate writes about a South African Resistance artist or International Contemporary artwork in this question and you decide to award marks for argument, please check that they have not written about the same artist/s in Question 5 or Question 3.*
- *Please award a mark for the mode/medium.*
- *If a description is extensive, in other words it exceeds 3 lines, you may award marks for relevant facts.*

Thoughts on possible responses that we might encounter:

Write an essay of approximately FOUR pages in which you examine the extent to which mixtures of cultural influences and social history in contemporary South African art creates something entirely new.

- There could be and identification of what cultural influences and social history, are and mean in the context of art making.
- There could be arguments for the parts remaining separate and important in their own right.
- There could be arguments for the hybrid being greater than the sum of its parts.

Although it may be true that the factors of social connection, cultural history and location create a sophisticated hybrid, for many artists these factors of context root others in a unique sense of space and time and the idea of a successful hybrid are less successful.

Argument FOR cultural connection, social history and location becoming successful and accessible hybrid greater than the sum of the parts:

In ***Bester 1 Mayotte***, ✓ ***(W)*** by Zanele Muholi ✓ ***(A)*** we see a self-portrait photograph ✓ ***(F)*** in black and white. Muholi stares at the viewer with a direct gaze. The figure has pegs in their hair and a striped bathmat or rug around their shoulders ***(DES)***. The piece references culture society and locations strongly but the work is a powerful direct portrait that becomes a hybrid that transcends its roots. ***(I)***

Muholi is a black artist from KZN and has found their artistic voice in the early years of democracy in a country that does not offer the same levels of education and services to all its citizens ✓ ***(F)***. In this self-portrait, which is part of an ongoing series, they emphasise race ✓ ***(F)*** by using black and white photography as their medium. Further to this, their emphasise their own blackness by darkening their skin and defining some features in bright white ✓ ***(F)***. This emphasises their identity as a black person and celebrates it through this emphasis ***(DA)***. The format of the photo and the directness of the gaze remind the viewer of the photos in the passes that black people had to carry during the apartheid years ✓ ***(F)***.

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Aspects of social history are included in the pegs, a symbol of domestic servitude which are repurposed into a crown ✓ ***(F)***. This reflects Muholi's past as her mother and grandmother had been domestic workers ✓ ***(F)***. This transformation of the banal objects of service creates a hybrid image with immense power and accessibility ***(DA)***.

The location of South Africa as a catalyst with its history of apartheid is of central importance but this too becomes more significant given that Muholi continues this series, shooting self-portraits all over the world but using symbols with clear resonance that are repurposed to embrace power ***(DA)***.

Argument **AGAINST** cultural connection, social history and location becoming a successful and accessible hybrid greater than the sum of the parts:

The South African artist Wim Botha ✓ ***(A)*** has included aspects of culture connection and location in his exhibition, entitled ***Still Life with Flowers***, ✓ ***(W)*** he has created an installation of oil paintings and walnut sculptures that seem to speak to one another. The paintings are abstract dabs of colour on unprimed canvasses while the sculptures are busts reminiscent of Classical Western sculpture. (***DES***) The work reflects aspects that may be obscure to the viewer although Botha's intention seems to have been to consciously create a hybrid. ✓ ***(I)***

The work clearly reminds the viewer of Western history and Classical ideas of beauty. The paintings are abstract brush marks in predominantly warm colours and remind the viewer of flowers ✓ ***(F)***. The oil from the paint seeps into the unprimed canvas giving a sense of something unfinished or interrupted ✓ ***(F)***. The materials in the paintings are unapologetically pure materials of Western art ✓ ***(F)***. The materials are representing themselves – they are the work and hold faint echoes of tradition ✓ ***(F)***.

Alone, each of the canvasses seems incomplete but in the exhibition space a narrative is created as well as a sense of movement from one to another ✓ ***(F)***. There is also clear dialogue between the sculptural elements and the paintings. The busts are sculpted from dark brown walnut which creates an anomaly for viewers seeking to recognise the white marble of the classical or Neo-Classical bust. Together they are like fragments and echoes of Western Art History; an incomplete and partially destroyed history ✓ ***(F)***. It is a clever use of hybridisation to create a new dialogue ✓ ***(F)***.

It could be argued that the hybridisation is largely inaccessible to the general public ***(DA)***. There is a sense that materials are part of a Western tradition and are used to embody beauty ***(DA)*** and that the aspects of the work marking place, cultural history and social connection are too firmly rooted in the western ideal ***(South Africa)***. ***(DA)***. The work relies too heavily on a tradition of the Global North and may be unrecognisable as ever having been hybridised. ***(DA)***.

Any arguments that evaluate the extent to which artists successfully and accessibly create a hybrid in their work.

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Mark allocation for Question 5</th><th>Marking Symbol</th></tr>
<tr><td>Bloom's Taxonomy Level 3 Apply, Execute, Implement, Solve.</td><td>3 artists</td><td rowspan="2">6 marks</td><td>A</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bloom's Taxonomy Level 3 Apply, Execute, Implement, Solve.</td><td>3 titles with brief descriptions of works</td><td>W
Bracket description and write DES after brackets</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bloom's Taxonomy Level 4 Analyse, Differentiate, Examine, Relate.</td><td>Relevant facts

6 or more facts = 4 marks
4 or 5 facts = 3 marks
2 or 3 facts = 2 marks
1 fact = 1 mark</td><td>12 marks</td><td>F
Please indicate MAX next to the sixth relevant fact to alert examination assistants that the candidate has achieved the maximum mark.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bloom's Taxonomy Level 5–7 Evaluate. Appraise, argue, defend, assemble, construct, conjecture.</td><td>Development of argument

This aspect of the essay is marked using the rubric below.</td><td>12 marks</td><td>DA
Do not tick for the development of argument.
However, you must indicate exactly where you see the development of argument.</td></tr>
</table>

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SUMMARY OF MARK ALLOCATION: DEVELOPMENT OF ARGUMENT (Level 5–7)

- **THE ARGUMENT SHOULD BE ASSESSED BY JUDGING IT THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE ESSAY.**
- **THE LEVEL 5 DESCRIPTOR IS FOR THE AVERAGE LEARNER OR AVERAGE ESSAY.**
- **WHEN ASSESSING AN ESSAY CHOOSE DESCRIPTORS THAT BEST/MOSTLY DESCRIBE THE ESSAY**
- **Symbol for marking protocol: DA (Development of argument)**

LEVELS	SKILLS	MARKS
7 +	**The excellent response:** • Opening statements are erudite and show a clear understanding of the topic. • The argument is complete and detailed, making unusual connections to more than one argument point about each of the selected artworks. • It is **well-structured**, addressing all aspects of the question and drawing them together accurately and with insight. • The candidate makes insightful links between facts and argument. • The candidate addresses all the complexities of the question weighing up, constructing, juxtaposing, hypothesising, etc.	**12–11 (100–92%)**
7	**The very good response:** • Opening statements show insight and a clear understanding of the topic. • The candidate is able to make reference to more than one argument point about each of the selected artworks. • The answer is well-structured and complete, addressing all aspects of the question and drawing them together accurately. • The candidate makes informed links between facts and argument. • The candidate grapples with the complexities of the question but may not be fully eloquent.	**10 (83%)**
6	**The good response:** • Opening statements show an understanding of the topic. • The candidate puts across valid arguments, making specific reference to more than one argument point about each of the selected artwork. • The candidate makes clear links between facts and arguments in the body of the essay in most instances. • The argument is well-structured.	**9 (75%)**
5	**The average response:** • The candidate shows a general understanding of the theme in the opening statements. • The candidate puts across the argument in a valid, but general way without addressing all aspects. • Inconsistent arguments/the argument is not sustained across 3 artworks. • Interesting arguments could be present but could be without supporting facts. • The essay relates to aspects of the topic, but the argument is not developed. • There is a good attempt at structuring the essay.	**8* (67%)**
4	**The struggling response:** • Shows a limited understanding of the question topic and responds to it in a one-dimensional way in the opening statements. • Attempts to put across the argument but in a vague way without addressing all aspects. • Makes simple, underdeveloped links between fact and argument. • Is muddled, arguments could be present, and usually without supporting facts. • Shows an attempt to structure the essay but not entirely successful.	**7–6 (58–50%)**

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3	**The weak response:** • Shows flawed and very incomplete responses to the topic. • Opening statements are vague and unfocussed or non-existent. • The argument is sustained for only one artwork. • Presents opening statements that may be reworded from the given text. • Unfocused with many sweeping statements and generalisations. • Muddled arguments could be present, but without supporting facts. • Omits or misunderstands key concepts of content that are important in building the argument. • No structure to support the argument.	**5–4** **(42–33%)**
2	**The very weak response:** • Presents opening statements that may be reworded from the given text or unfocused. • Is inaccurate or simplistic. • Not enough artworks discussed to build an argument. • No attempt at an argument. • Argument unrelated to the topic. • No structure to support the argument.	**3–2** **(25–17%)**
1	**The poor response:** • Presents opening statements that may be reworded from the given text or are non-existent. • The issues are not addressed because of a lack of understanding. • Attempts to address aspects of the question but indicates only partial understanding. • Not enough artworks discussed to build an argument. • No structure to support the argument. • No argument present.	**1–0** **(8–0%)**

Total: 100 marks

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