



Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board



CAMBRIDGE
International Education

**Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education
Advanced Level Higher 3 (2026)**

Art
(Syllabus 9818)

(First year of examination in 2026)

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INTRODUCTION

H3 Art is intended for students with the passion and ability in Art. It provides opportunities for students to explore epistemological issues about art, challenges students to think about the way art is perceived, defined, and practised, and promotes an appreciation of art by examining its value and role in society and culture.

The H3 Art syllabus is designed to offer intellectual challenge and rigour as it expects students to think independently and develop critical inquiry. It takes the form of a taught element and a Research Essay on a topic of the students' choice.

The H3 Art syllabus extends from, complements, and enhances learning in H2 Art by providing students who have exceptional interest and ability with opportunities to satisfy their academic curiosity in Art by setting and answering a research question that is personally engaging to them.

The H3 Art syllabus lays a foundation for those seeking academic engagement in Art at the tertiary level.

SYLLABUS FRAMEWORK

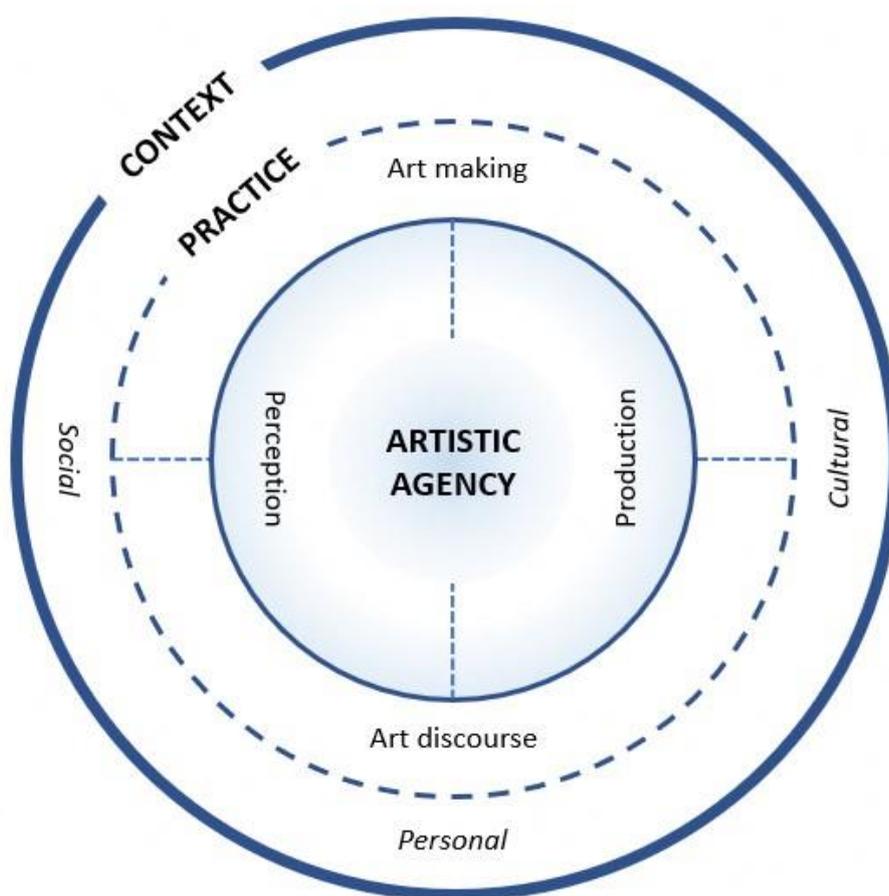


Figure 1: A Level Art Syllabus Framework

The A-Level Art syllabuses, illustrated by the A-Level Art Syllabus Framework (Figure 1), seeks to develop deep disciplinary understanding towards a sense of **artistic agency**¹ at its core. To achieve this, the learner must develop the interconnected domains of 'perception' and 'production' that occur by situating each learner within an artistic **practice** which considers and responds to **multiple contexts**. Consequently, learning not only occurs within and for the artistic self, but also extends beyond to involve and reflect other individuals, societies, and cultures.

Art Education for the Development of 21st Century Competencies and Character and Citizenship Education Learning Outcomes

Art education contributes to the development of 21st century knowledge, skills and dispositions. Specifically, the competencies that are developed include:

- **Critical, Adaptive and Inventive Thinking:** Critical, adaptive and inventive thinking are developed through art making and art discussion. In art making, students explore and experiment different ways to harness materials and techniques to express ideas. By imagining solutions and exploring alternative forms, students learn to take risks when making artistic decisions to solve problems. Beyond curiosity and creativity, students learn to reason effectively, consider different perspectives, reflect and apply critical evaluation when they engage in art discussions.
- **Communication, Collaboration, and Information Skills:** Art utilises a language and symbol system through which students interpret and communicate their ideas. The activities which students engage in while learning Art enable them to practise communication and collaboration skills, be it working individually or in groups. As a discipline that thrives on the building and exchange of ideas, students enlarge their understanding when they share their ideas and creations with others. Through their engagement in artistic processes, students learn to be open and responsive to diverse perspectives, work respectfully with their peers, make necessary compromises, and share and accept responsibility.
- **Civic, Global and Cross-Cultural Literacy:** Art invites and leads students to inquire and reflect on issues of identities, cultures, and traditions. Students' awareness and understanding of their cultural heritage are fostered through their exposure to artworks across different cultures and histories. By making and weighing connections between art and contemporary lives, students activate their personal voice and imagination to explore expression and to create. In the process, students deepen their appreciation of local and global communities, cultures and contexts to build a sense of agency and belonging.

¹ Agency is commonly defined as the will and capacity to act autonomously with discernment and responsibility, which in turn endows one with a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy. In art learning within the pre-university context, learners with artistic agency act upon their interests, ideas, and beliefs, and display a desire to participate in and contribute to community, nation, and the world at large. In this regard, the art curriculum strongly identifies with the intent of CCE 2021 to seek growth in pre-university students' personal leadership in contributing to self, community and society based on their values, skills, interests and talents.

AIMS

The syllabus aims to develop in each student:

- an inquiring mind and the confidence to express artistic intent through visual language
- visual literacy and critical thinking skills
- an active imagination and a spirit of experimentation and adaptation to discover creative possibilities
- artistic agency and capacity for reflective and collaborative practice and
- an understanding of and readiness to embrace diverse perspectives in art from a range of local and global contexts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of H3 Art course, students can achieve the following 3 Learning Outcomes (LOs).

LO1	Understand Art through a range of issues and perspectives surrounding artistic production and reception.
LO2	Analyse and evaluate multiple perspectives and interpretations critically to articulate independent thought that is substantiated by research.
LO3	Be sensitive to how personal, social and cultural contexts shape thinking and value systems in Art.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The assessment objectives will assess the Knowledge and Skills that correspond with the Learning Outcomes. Candidates should be able to:

A01	Demonstrate an informed understanding of Art theories and their implications and processes to acquire, select and synthesise knowledge.
A02	Demonstrate a critical awareness of diverse perspectives in art by establishing connections, making comparisons, and interpreting them from a range of local and global contexts.
A03	Critically analyse Art practice in the light of its social and cultural contexts and demonstrate critical thinking and consistent inquiry into issues, themes, and problems.
A04	Express personal opinions, beliefs and critical responses towards issues discussed.

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

Candidates taking the H3 Level Art Examinations are required to complete Paper 1: Research Essay.

Paper	Description	Marks	Weighting (%)	Duration
1 Research Essay	Submit a Research Essay of between 3000 to 3500 words.	100	100	Should commence in November of first academic year and be submitted for examination in September of the second academic year.

DESCRIPTION OF PAPER

Paper 1: Research Essay [100 marks, 100%]

Candidates will submit a Research Essay of 3000 to 3500 words based on a topic of their choice which has been approved in advance by Cambridge International Education. The candidate will conduct an individual investigation in an area of artistic interest, examine a variety of evidence, and interpret and evaluate the evidence to reach informed conclusions. The Research Essay should commence in November of the first academic year and be ready for submission to Cambridge by September of the second academic year.

Types of Art Inquiry

Candidates should begin by formulating an inquiry before identifying a research question. Candidates could embark on an art inquiry based on primary and/or secondary sources. They could draw inspiration from:

- their engagement in H2 Art
- current affairs and news in the art world
- review of visual materials (e.g. artworks, photo essays, film sequence, designed products, art exhibitions and events)
- review of Art-related literature (e.g. journal article, artist monograph, exhibition review)
- their lived experiences with Art (e.g. artist interviews, studio visits).

Achievement Levels for Paper 1 Research Essay [100 marks]

Level 5	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
<p>The essay critically builds from a range of relevant readings to assess the existing state of knowledge about the research question, and explains how these readings contribute to the definition and understanding of the research question. Relevant evidence from sources is acquired and used critically throughout to support arguments that accommodate a range of possible interpretations.</p> <p>Demonstrates sensitivity and deep understanding of the art concepts and context. Analysis is insightful, coherent, and well supported by effective choice of artists and artworks or intention. Specific and purposeful in the use of subject-specific language and descriptions to convey an advanced understanding of the arguments.</p> <p>Communication of arguments are coherent, and persuasive with clear and logical progression. Conclusions are sound, relevant, well-substantiated and make an independent and potentially original contribution to the research question.</p>	<p>The essay uses a range of relevant readings to present the existing state of knowledge about the research question, and to indicate how these readings help to explore the research question. Relevant evidence from sources is acquired and used effectively to support arguments that consider alternative interpretations.</p> <p>Demonstrates good depth of understanding of the art concepts and context. Analysis is mostly clear with relevant examples of artists and artworks or intention. Detailed and coherent in the use of subject-specific language to demonstrate understanding of the arguments.</p> <p>Clear communication of arguments, which are mostly coherent and persuasive. Conclusions reached are sound, relevant, and well-substantiated. The research question is directly and satisfactorily addressed.</p>	<p>The essay uses a range of relevant readings to summarise the existing state of knowledge about the research question. Relevant evidence from sources is acquired and used to support arguments but there is little consideration of alternative interpretations.</p> <p>Demonstrates a reasonable depth of understanding of the art concepts and context. Analysis uses the most obvious examples of artists and artworks or intention, but there are few connections made. Description and use of subject-specific language is present but may be confused at times and reveal incoherence.</p> <p>Attempts to communicate arguments clearly, some of which are coherent and persuasive. Conclusions are generally sound but not well-substantiated in parts. The research question is addressed partially.</p>	<p>The essay shows awareness of relevant readings about the research question. Some information is acquired and used from relevant sources to support arguments, but there is little to no awareness of alternative interpretations.</p> <p>Demonstrates limited knowledge of some art concepts and context. Some arguments presented reveal a lack of clarity, coherence and persuasiveness. Attempts to use artists and artworks or intention to support argument are incoherent or result in generalisations. Description and use of subject-specific language is mostly lacking, without purpose, and reveal significant incoherence.</p> <p>Limited and mostly incoherent communication of arguments. Some conclusions are somewhat relevant to the research question, but without substantiation. The research question is not addressed meaningfully.</p>	<p>No creditable evidence.</p>

Planning and Writing the Research Proposal

1 Identifying a Research Question

Candidates are encouraged to consider two to three possible areas of research. They should do some basic reading on the proposed research topics to establish their viability. Candidates should finally select one research topic which is focused and will contribute to existing art knowledge. The selected research topic should be set in the form of a question to be answered.

2 Approval Process for the Research Proposal

2.1 Candidates must submit the soft copy of their Research Essay Proposal Form (provided by SEAB) by a specified date in Term 1 of the second year of study. Deadlines for submissions will be specified by SEAB in a circular to schools each year.

2.2 The proposal must include the following details:

- Research Question
- Rationale for the choice of research question
- Title of the Research Essay
- Synopsis which states the following clearly:
 - the objectives of the research;
 - how the scope of the research area enables candidates to demonstrate an understanding of broader art issues (e.g. art as a construct and its value and role in society and culture.); and
 - an indication of any potential problems or limitations of the research
- Literature scan giving an overview of the current state of research and knowledge in this area of study
- If applicable, a description of the qualitative or quantitative methodology to be used in gathering data.

The proposal should **not exceed 500 words**.

2.3 The hard copy of the proposal must be dated and signed by both the candidate and the Coursework Supervisor supervising the study. The hard copy should be retained by the school and submitted with the completed Research Essay by the date specified by SEAB.

2.4 Proposal submissions will be sent electronically to Cambridge for approval by the examiner who will advise on the research proposals based on the following considerations:

- Is the title of the research paper expressed as an art research question?
- Are suitable resources available to answer the question?
- Will the research question lend itself to be tested against the assessment objectives?

2.5 If a proposal is acceptable as it stands, the examiner will approve it without further feedback.

2.6 If the examiner rejects a proposal, or indicates that a proposal needs to be revised, the examiner will then send feedback accordingly. This feedback must be retained and submitted with the completed Research Essay, along with the hard copy of the original research proposal. (See paragraph 2.3.)

2.7 If a candidate has been advised by the examiner that s/he must make a resubmission of the amended proposal for approval, or submit a second proposal, the candidate must do so by the date specified by SEAB.

3 Notes for Coursework Supervisor on Research Essay

The Research Essay submitted for assessment must be the candidates' own work and should represent their ability to work independently; nevertheless, all candidates will need support from their Centres in the form of monitoring the work in progress and giving some degree of guidance. The extent of guidance is outlined below.

3.1 During Proposal Stage

- 3.1.1 At the Proposal Stage of the Research Essay, Coursework Supervisors are expected to:
- guide candidates on the selection of an appropriate research question
 - guide candidates in the formulation of their research proposal. This guidance includes discussion, with the candidates, of feedback given by the examiner on the proposal, as well as the formulation of a second proposal, if required.
 - advise candidates on work schedule
 - advise candidates on research ethics
 - guide candidates on research skills and techniques
 - advise candidates on the suitability of resources/references selected
 - draw candidates' attention to the importance of the declaration they will be required to make in the Declaration and Submission Form (provided by SEAB).

3.2 During Writing Stage

- 3.2.1 At the Writing Stage, the Coursework Supervisor should continually monitor the progress of the candidate to ensure that the candidate's work is on schedule.
- 3.2.2 The Coursework Supervisor may provide feedback on the Research Essay only during the scheduled conference sessions. The Coursework Supervisor must ensure that the candidate does his/her own independent thinking and is fully responsible for developing the arguments and essay structure, and sourcing of information.
- 3.2.3 The Coursework Supervisor may have up to three face-to-face conferences with the candidate. The first and second conferences are compulsory while the third conference is optional.
- a First conference (compulsory) – this must be conducted as soon as the candidate is ready with the first draft, at the latest by mid-May. The Coursework Supervisor will not be required to complete the Record of Guidance (provided by SEAB).
 - b Second conference (compulsory) – this must be conducted at the latest by mid-July. The Coursework Supervisor will be required to complete the Record of Guidance, giving details of key points of guidance provided during the conference. This will aid examiners in evaluating the candidate's work.
 - c Third conference (optional) – if needed, must be conducted latest by mid-August. The Coursework Supervisor will be required to complete the Record of Guidance, giving details of key points of guidance provided during the conference.

The third conference can be conducted:

- at the request of a candidate, or

- should the Coursework Supervisor feel that a candidate would benefit from a third conference, s/he may suggest it to the candidate. However, it should be the candidate's decision whether to take up the suggestion.

The Coursework Supervisor should make it known to the candidate that the nature and extent of additional guidance given at the second and third conferences will be recorded in the Record of Guidance and may be taken into consideration by the examiner during the marking of the candidate's work.

- 3.2.4 The Coursework Supervisor may provide feedback on the Research Essay only during scheduled conference sessions. There is no time limit on the duration of the conferences, as the length of time required will depend on each candidate's needs. However, each conference should take place over a single session within one day.
- 3.2.5 The Coursework Supervisor may accept a draft of a candidate's work in advance of the conferences, for discussion during the session, but the Coursework Supervisor should not give any written feedback on the work submitted.
- 3.2.6 The Coursework Supervisor should encourage the candidate to take notes during the conferences so that s/he can refer to these notes subsequently, when working independently.
- 3.2.7 It should be noted that the nature and extent of guidance given during the conferences may be taken into consideration during the marking of the candidate's work.
- 3.2.8 All completed Record of Guidance forms must carry the Coursework Supervisor's signature and date. The candidate should be given the opportunity to see what has been noted down on the forms and should sign his/her acknowledgement of the guidance given.
- 3.2.9 All completed Record of Guidance forms must be submitted with the candidate's essay.

3.3 Acknowledgement of External Guidance

- 3.3.1 Candidates are permitted to seek advice or information from people outside of the school environment who has expertise that is relevant to their research. However, as part of their guidance on the ethics of carrying out independent research, Coursework Supervisors should advise candidates that it is not acceptable for them to either seek or accept help from any outside agency, including family and friends, in the actual writing of their Research Essay. The responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is also permitted. Content produced by AI (e.g. ChatGPT) is not considered as candidates' own work, and therefore candidates are required to acknowledge sources used in their work.
- 3.3.2 Candidates must acknowledge guidance or information provided by people or generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI) other than their Coursework Supervisor. They may do this through the use of in-text citations, footnotes, or endnotes, or in their bibliography.

3.4 Submission of Work and Suspicion of Plagiarism

- 3.4.1 When candidates submit their Research Essay for assessment, Coursework Supervisors are expected to ensure that candidates have completed the Declaration and Submission Form and attach it to the front of the work, along with the Record of Guidance.

- 3.4.2 Coursework Supervisors should also attach the hard copy of the proposal(s).
- 3.4.3 While Coursework Supervisors do not need to assess the work that is submitted or check that requirements for the Research Essay have been fulfilled, nevertheless, they will need to read the work to satisfy themselves that it is authentic.
- 3.4.4 If the Coursework Supervisor is satisfied that, to the best of his/her knowledge of the candidate and the progress of the Research Essay, the work is authentic, s/he should sign and date the declaration on authenticity on the Declaration and Submission Form. It is understood that the declaration is made in good faith by the Coursework Supervisor and that ultimately, the authenticity of the work is the candidate's responsibility.
- 3.4.5 If the Coursework Supervisor has cause for suspicion of plagiarism in the work submitted, s/he should circle 'reason' [to believe that the candidate has plagiarised work in this Research Essay] and give details in an Irregularity Report (to be issued by SEAB) which should be submitted to SEAB, along with the work in question, including the candidate's approved proposal.
- 3.4.6 All documentation regarding cases of suspected plagiarism, proven or otherwise, must be submitted to SEAB. The examining authority will take disciplinary action against any candidate found to have committed or aided the offence of plagiarism.
- 3.4.7 If there are no irregularity cases, a 'Nil Return' for the subject must be submitted by the school.

4 Notes on the submission of the Research Essay

The Research Essay must be submitted to Cambridge by mid-September of the second academic year. It must be type-written on A4 size paper using Arial 12 font, double-spaced, and appropriately referenced where necessary. All pages except the cover page must be paginated at the lower righthand corner. It is essential that all direct quotations or ideas borrowed from authors, which are paraphrased in the candidate's own words, be acknowledged when referencing. All images, diagrams or maps should be scaled to fit to A4 size. A complete bibliography of all resources used/referred to must be attached to the work. Candidates are reminded to adhere strictly to the word limit and must **not exceed 3500 words** for the Research Essay. They should be informed that the following do not constitute part of the word count:

- Titles and content of diagrams (e.g. images, charts, tables, maps)
- Footnotes
- Bibliography
- Appendices
- Acknowledgement
- Page numbers

5 The Research Essay must be accompanied by:

- Research Essay Proposal Form
- Declaration and Submission Form
- Record of Guidance
- Appendices (where necessary)

Appendices are supplementary reference materials that may assist the examiner in assessing the Research Essay. Examples of these materials include images of artworks, charts and questionnaires. Materials that are

not relevant to the Research Essay and are used solely for the purpose of interest and decoration should not be appended.

Framework of the Research Essay

The table below provides a suggested framework for the Research Essay.

Structure of the Research Paper	Description
Research Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the research question. Explain the rationale for the choice of the research question. Explain the rationale of the approach/method of inquiry adopted to conduct the research.
Literature Scan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show evidence of a range of relevant readings. Assess critically existing state of knowledge. Explain how the literature scan contributes to the understanding of the research question.
Analysis, Interpretation and Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use relevant evidence in the discussion with proper citation. Demonstrate skills of academic analysis through the critical evaluation of sources used to answer the research question. Show an understanding of change and continuity, cause, and consequence in an academic explanation. Show cogency and coherence in argument. Where appropriate, demonstrate originality in terms of interpretation and judgement.
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively summarises the main arguments of the research essay in relation to the research questions. Highlight contributions and limitations of the research.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

Areas of Study

Students will examine the following concepts and theories in connection with H2 Art:

- Perspectives on the Definition of Art Across History and Cultures
- Value of Art, Role of the Patron, and Status of the Artist
- Relationship between Art and Culture

Inquiry & Research Skills

Students will apply the following skills in their research:

- Process of Independent Research
- Formulating an Inquiry in H3 Art
- Crafting a Research Proposal
- Applying Basic Research Methods and Ethics

Coursework Supervisors should refer to the H3 Art Teaching and Learning Syllabus, and 2025 Pre-University Art Teaching and Learning Guide for further guidance on the suggested reading list and teaching of skills for H3 Art.

USE OF PERSONAL LEARNING DEVICE

Candidates may use a Personal Learning Device (PLD) to research.

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

Refer to 2025 Higher 3 Art Teaching and Learning Syllabus.