# Design and media studies – assessment advice



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## Assessment

Design and media studies is a department approved elective course and is not eligible for credentialing on the Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

The scheduling of assessment activities and the weightings applied should reflect the school's organisation of the course. Students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their maximum level of achievement relative to the course performance descriptors.

Where activities or tasks are scheduled throughout a course, greater weight for grading purposes would generally be given to those activities or tasks undertaken towards the end of the course.

## General performance descriptors

Schools may choose to use general performance descriptors to describe performance at each of 5 grade levels.

Table 1 – performance descriptors for the A–E grade scale

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Performance descriptor |
| A | The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations. |
| B | The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations. |
| C | The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills. |
| D | The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills. |
| E | The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills. |

## Useful assessment strategies

Formative assessment strategies are used to gather evidence of student progress and provide self, peer and teacher feedback. Students maintain a process log throughout the course which documents the creative process through examples of their practice, including research, planning, development of ideas, experimenting, creating, reflecting, revising, refining and evaluation. Formative assessment and feedback are used by students to inform and refine the development of their skills, understanding and works. Formative assessment can also be used by teachers to evaluate teaching strategies, resources and activities. This evaluation may be used to inform future teaching, such as by adapting and updating resources, or reconsidering the sequencing of activities.

Summative assessment strategies are used to evaluate and report student achievement against Design and media studies outcomes and the general performance descriptors. Examples of works used for summative assessment may include completed projects, analysis tasks, process log tasks, portfolio entries and showreels.

In developing and selecting activities for the purpose of assessing and reporting, teachers will use a range of different approaches.

### Process log

Students maintain a process log throughout the Design and media studies course. The process log is used to reflect on the development of skills, knowledge and abilities in Design and media studies. Evidence recorded in the process log may include:

* research and planning
* evidence of explicit teaching (such as written responses, markup activities, presentations and other classroom activities)
* preliminary and experimental practical work
* annotations or other evidence of decision-making within the creative process
* teacher and peer feedback, and self-reflections and evaluation
* digital files (including video, sound, images, text and interactive content)
* analysis of design and media works
* any other evidence of learning and student practice.

The process log is a tool for students to capture and reflect on their processes and development of their practice. It provides a record of the problem-solving and planning involved in developing a design and media work. The process log may take the form of a physical sketchbook, journal or binder, a digital file or a combination of forms. The process log may be supported by an organised collection of additional physical material and/or digital files.

Assessment activities may include a review of the process log to evaluate and provide feedback on examples of research, planning, development of ideas, experimenting, reflecting, revising, refining and evaluation. The process log may also provide material for the development of a portfolio or showreel.

When the process log is used for assessment purposes, evidence of student achievement could be gathered that demonstrates a student’s ability to:

* research, gather and analyse information from a variety of forms
* communicate information in a variety of forms
* provide evidence of the development of practice, knowledge and understanding
* document, reflect on and evaluate processes.

### Portfolio

Students assemble a portfolio throughout the Design and media studies course, as a showcase of their best practice in the media forms they have explored. It may provide evidence of the student’s development, refinement and resolution of design and media works, and may highlight the student’s individual contributions to collaborative projects. Students should identify examples of at least one outstanding work per core unit and one outstanding work per option for inclusion in the portfolio, and this portfolio piece may be used for summative assessment of student projects. Post-school and industry opportunities and pathways may also be strengthened and targeted through a portfolio focus on specific industry or tertiary entry requirements.

Due to the diverse nature of practices and media forms explored through the Design and media studies course, the portfolio may take various forms, for example:

* a physical display of printed or hand-made works such as a binder, folder, or printed book
* a virtual display of digital files such as a presentation, or website
* a video showreel featuring excerpts from a range of works
* a multi-modal combination of physical and digital forms
* other appropriate display mediums that support and highlight outstanding aspects of the student’s work.

### Provocations

Provocations are an essential pedagogy in the Design and media studies course.

Provocations are used to present a stimulus, brief, problem or other project requirement that students respond to by making design and media works that demonstrate their understanding of course content, and their emerging practice in one or more mediums. Provocations may also set limits on the scope of creative activities (such as a size or duration limit), and may require the application of specific skills, techniques, concepts, or other features.

The provocation should establish the possibilities and limitations of the project or activity and feature a direct prompt to initiate student practice. This prompt may take the form of creative stimulus, real or hypothetical design briefs, exhibition or festival guidelines, literary sources, or other design situations determined by the teacher. Depending on the class context, teachers may consult or negotiate the conditions of provocations with students, particularly in relation to longer projects such as assessment tasks, portfolio projects and the Core 2 – Design and media production project.

A simple model for structuring provocations in Design and media studies is provided below, and this format may be adjusted, modified, or translated to suit the class context, or other activities in the Design and media studies course. This model features:

* a creative stimulus for students to respond to, such as a prompt, brief, direction, design situation or problem statement
* specific features, techniques, conventions, or practices for students to be included
* limitations specific to the media form (such as a size or runtime limit, or other creative restrictions that initiate student problem-solving).

Provocations may also be used to drive classroom activities, such as discussion questions where students respond from a variety of viewpoints.

### Collaborative activities

Collaborative learning activities occur as a result of productive and focused interaction between students co-creating a work or progressing towards achievement of a common goal. Collaboration is an essential pedagogy of the Design and media studies course and should be explicitly taught and reflected upon both during and after activities.

Opportunities should be given for individual and collaborative work that simulates professional practices relevant to each media form. For example, film production and game design studios rely on collaborative work between specialist practitioners within production teams. Collaborative tasks should be developed to provide students with opportunities to experience a range of roles, as well as opportunities to focus and specialise on a particular role. These decisions should be informed by the class context.

Assessment activities may include co-operative group work to develop and resolve design and media projects, including the allocation of specific roles and responsibilities.

When collaborative activities are used for assessment purposes, evidence can be gathered about students’ ability to:

* work collaboratively and cooperatively as a team
* use clear communication to solve problems and make informed decisions with others
* value and/or respect diverse perspectives and ideas
* take responsibility and ownership for individual and group learning
* think critically and creatively, and offer constructive criticism with a clear purpose to drive the work forward
* take risks, and demonstrate courage and trust to experiment with new ideas and learn through trial and error
* respect diverse ideas, ways of learning and approaches to creating
* demonstrate cognitive skills, such as the ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesise information
* understand the roles and responsibilities of individuals in groups, including the capacity to communicate effectively within a group
* demonstrate awareness of the whole group and/or project.

When assessing a collaborative activity, it is important to recognise the individual’s active engagement within the activity. Like any other assessment task, a collaborative activity allows individuals to achieve the outcomes with the support and empowerment of collaborative learning. For example, if students are collaborating on a group project or exhibition, they work towards a shared vision but may have individual roles. Therefore, the design of assessment tasks and rubrics must allow all students to be assessed individually when working collaboratively.

Further examples of collaborative assessment rubrics are given in [Appendix 2](#_Appendix_2_–). These have been divided into 3 sub-characteristics of collaboration which includes ‘I can co-construct’, ‘I can give and receive feedback’ and ‘I can make and express connections’.

## Peer assessment

Design and media studies encourages the active involvement of students in the learning process. Opportunities exist for individual and collaborative feedback as part of this process. Feedback should be differentiated for the individual learner and may be verbal, visual, written or digital and may provide an opportunity for students to develop their social, collaborative and reflective skills.

Activities involving peer assessment might include evaluating the contributions of individuals to a group task or peer evaluations of a completed project. It could also include providing suggestions and feedback on proposals, pitches and preliminary works, or aspects of a task that have been completed well but require further refinement. Teachers may refer to additional [peer feedback](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/549) learning activities to scaffold feedback sessions for students.

An example of a peer assessment rubric is given on the following page.

### Peer assessment rubric

Teachers may use or adapt this example for use in peer assessment activities.

**DM5-4** works independently and collaboratively to produce design and media works that respond to provocations, stimulus or creative briefs.

Table 2 – peer assessment rubric

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| **A** | I can tell that you can work independently or collaboratively to produce sophisticated design and media works that comprehensively respond to provocations, stimulus, or creative briefs. |
| **B** | I can tell that you can work independently or collaboratively to produce increasingly sophisticated design and media works that respond to provocations, stimulus, or creative briefs.I can tell that you may need to consider all possibilities that the provocations and stimulus offer to help you work independently or collaboratively to select, develop and produce sophisticated design and media works.  |
| **C** | I can tell that you can work independently or collaboratively to produce design and media works that respond to provocations, stimulus, or creative briefs.I can tell that you may need to consider further possibilities that the provocations and stimulus offer to independently or collaboratively develop design and media works. |
| **D** | I can tell that you are developing the skills to produce design and media works that respond to provocations, stimulus, or creative briefs.I can tell that you may need to ask questions about the provocations and/or stimulus to help you independently or collaboratively develop design and media works. |
| **E** | I can tell that you can work towards producing some design and media works that may respond to provocations, stimulus, or creative briefs.I can tell that you may need to ask questions about the provocations or stimulus to help you move forward. |

## Self-assessment

Design and media studies encourages students to become reflective and self-directed learners. Opportunities exist for students to develop greater agency as they reflect on their progress towards the achievement of the course outcomes. This reflection provides them with the basis for improving their learning. Developing self-assessment skills is an ongoing process that can become increasingly sophisticated and self-initiated as a student progresses. It may enhance the ways students interpret and respond to feedback.

Activities involving self-assessment may include reflection on progress towards achieving outcomes in a specific activity or task, individual and/or strategic goal setting. This could incorporate the use of the process log for documenting, analysing and reflecting on learning.

When peer assessment and self-assessment is used for assessment purposes, students could be assessed on their ability to:

* evaluate and critique their own work as well as the work of others
* develop learning strategies based on their evaluation.

An example of a self-assessment rubric is given on the following page.

### Self-assessment rubric

Teachers may use or adapt this example for use in self-assessment activities.

**DM5-9** acknowledges the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media.

Table 3 – self-assessment rubric

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| A | I can acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media in a sensitive and insightful way. |
| B | I can acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media in a thorough way.I need to consider increasingly sensitive ways to acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media. |
| C | I can acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media in an appropriate way.I need to consider all possibilities to acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media in a respectful way. |
| D | I can acknowledge some of the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media.I need to ask questions to help me understand the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media. |
| E | I can acknowledge some of the significance of Country, cultural protocols, or Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media in a limited way.I need to ask questions about the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in design and media. |

## Ongoing development of projects

Design and media studies provides opportunities for students to revisit, rework, refine and reinterpret projects completed throughout the course. In particular, the Core 2 – Design and media production project may expand on ideas, practices and projects initiated in Core 1 or options. Teachers should ensure that in situations where material that has been previously assessed recurs in later projects, updated rubrics are used to assess revised and redeveloped material.

The following examples outline circumstances where existing material could recur in later projects:

* a filmmaking project where an initial short scene, storyboard or idea is expanded into a short film
* an animation project where assets from a previous illustration topic are reworked to apply animation techniques and practices
* a game design project that integrates graphic design, illustration, animation and/or sound design assets produced in previous topics
* a Core 2 filmmaking project where discrete components have been developed throughout the production design, film and video production 1 and film and video production 2 topics. In this case, a Core 2 assessment should consider the final product, and the individual student’s contributions to the group production.

## Appendix 1 – learning tools for formative assessment

Teachers may refer to the department’s [Digital Learning Selector](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/), suggested [Teaching strategies](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/expectations/contemporary-learning-and-teaching-from-home/learning-from-home--teaching-strategies#landing), and [Aboriginal pedagogies](https://www.8ways.online/) when developing classroom activities in Design and media studies. A selection of suggested resources is provided.

* [Gallery walk](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/555) format could be used for presentation of experiences of student process and progress, or as an exhibition of completed works.
* [Fishbowl](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/expectations/contemporary-learning-and-teaching-from-home/learning-from-home--teaching-strategies#/asset8) activity protocol could be used to structure a production meeting or other collaborative planning session.
* [Peer discussion and conferencing](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/547) models could be used to support peer feedback protocols.
* [One pager](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/expectations/contemporary-learning-and-teaching-from-home/learning-from-home--teaching-strategies/one-pager) format could be used to present a summary of learning or a snapshot of progress.
* [Hexagonal thinking](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/579) strategies could be used to support individual or collaborative development of concepts.
* [Socratic seminar](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/expectations/contemporary-learning-and-teaching-from-home/learning-from-home--teaching-strategies#/asset2) could be used as a protocol for students to share ideas or preliminary work and exchange feedback.

## Appendix 2 – assessing collaboration

Collaboration between students is an essential aspect of practice in Design and media studies, as outlined in:

**DM5-4** works independently and collaboratively to produce design and media works that respond to provocations, stimulus, or creative briefs.

Collaborative work could involve students:

* working in pairs, small groups, or full production teams to co-create a design and media work
* engaging in peer feedback to guide development of individual or collaborative works.

One model for effective collaboration that may be used to develop collaboration protocols, as well as formative and summative assessment, outlines 4 components:

* **offering:** communicates and commits to sharing and influencing others with ideas, purpose and initiative
* **yielding:** actively engages with and elaborates on others’ offered ideas and purpose to support and shape the initiative
* **challenging, evaluating and extending:** contributes and activates the free flow of divergent and diverse ideas and reasoning to explore and co-construct more possibilities and understandings of the ideas, purpose and initiative
* **advancing co-constructions and connections:** jointly builds and owns the co-constructed ideas and purpose of the group, and advances the initiative by taking action as a shared endeavour.

Once students have been explicitly taught and/or immersed in the components and processes of collaboration they will have a clear understanding of what they need to do to succeed. Collaboration can be assessed formatively or summatively through multiple learning experiences. For example, observing a collaborative planning session will allow teachers to witness students offering, yielding, challenging, evaluating and extending to advance co-constructions and connections. They will do this via sharing their ideas, listening to one another, and using eye contact and appropriate body language to ensure the shared vision is achieved.

## Collaboration rubric examples

Teachers may use these rubric examples to develop formative assessment, and to develop protocols for collaborative work, including self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

### Collaboration rubric 1 – teacher review

**Core characteristic:** The student can work collaboratively.

**Sub-characteristic:** The student can co-construct.

Looks, feels and sounds like:

* recognising and encouraging the value of all team members’ skills to cultivate teamwork.
* responding to and considering the offers of others to influence and strengthen ideas.
* contributing to the building of a shared vision and purpose.

Table 4 – collaboration rubric 1: teacher review

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| A | * formulates the vision and purpose of the group’s learning in connection to the ‘big picture’, accounting for the individual strengths and interests of group members
* demonstrates ideas and modifications that complement the skills or ideas of others to improve the learning
* cultivates teamwork by actively involving and enabling all voices within the team
 |
| B | * contributes to forming the vision and purpose of the group’s learning and considers individual strengths and interests of group members to build learning
* adopts and integrates the offers of others to improve the learning
* engages in teamwork by enabling and listening to all voices within the team
 |
| C | * articulates the vision and purpose of the group’s learning
* offers ideas and modifications that complement the skills or ideas of others to improve the learning
* contributes to teamwork by considering all voices within the team
 |
| D | * identifies the vision or purpose of the group’s learning
* works to complement the skills or ideas of others
* attempts to consider the ideas of others
 |
| E | * identifies their own skills and ways of contributing
* contributes to teamwork through the offering of ideas.
 |

### Collaboration rubric 2 – self-assessment

**Core characteristic:** I am collaborative.

**Sub-characteristic:** I can give and receive feedback.

Looks, feels and sounds like:

* being an effective critical friend by contributing to the ideas of others and consider how my own ideas might be improved.
* recognising the process of applying feedback to improve a product, including being a critical friend.
* understanding and applying criteria to measure success.

Table 5 – collaboration rubric 2: self-assessment

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| A | I can model how to positively and effectively critique peers’ work related to the learning, by identifying and reinforcing strengths and offering alternatives.I actively use feedback for planning my next steps and implement it to improve my work.I support peers in developing and implementing their next steps based on the feedback I have provided. |
| B | I can be an active and effective critical friend by critiquing peers’ work related to the learning.I evaluate and reinforce strengths and offer alternatives.I use feedback for planning my next steps and implement that plan to improve my work. |
| C | I can be an effective critical friend by giving and receiving feedback appropriately and productively.I highlight strengths and areas to be improved by assessing the work against a success criteria.I effectively use feedback to inform my next steps and improve my work. |
| D | I can review peers’ work and give ideas on strengths and ways it may be improved.I can listen to ideas given to me by a peer and think about how my work could be improved. |
| E | I can use sentence starters such as ‘I like the way you…’ or ‘Even better if…’ to guide my feedback in response to my peers’ work.I can receive ideas from others about how my work could be improved. |

### Collaboration rubric 3 – peer assessment

**Core characteristic:** My peer can work collaboratively.

**Sub-characteristic:** My peer can make and express connections.

Looks, feels and sounds like:

* seeing links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners.
* connecting meaning between learning and ‘real-world’ examples or scenarios.
* conveying or presenting individual ideas to create a cohesive group product or result.

Table 6 – collaboration rubric 3: peer assessment

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| A | * actively enables individual (personal) and collective (group) relationships to form and build positive and productive dynamics
* connects meaning between learning and ‘real-world’ examples or scenarios and transfers this learning into a range of different scenarios
* identifies links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners as opportunities to extend knowledge and understanding
 |
| B | * proactively involves individual (personal) and collective (group) relationships to form and build meaningful collaboration
* connects meaning and relevancy between learning and ‘real-world’ examples or scenarios
* identifies links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners and can build on these to create a product
 |
| C | * encourages individual (personal) and collective (group) relationships to form and contribute to meaningful collaboration
* connects meaning between learning and ‘real-world’ examples or scenarios
* identifies links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners
 |
| D | * supports individual (personal) and collective (group) relationships
* identifies links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners
 |
| E | * identifies some links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners.
 |

## References

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