

## What is a curatorial rationale?

IB Visual Arts students should develop a curatorial rationale which accompanies their original artworks (**400 words maximum SL, 700 words maximum HL**). This rationale explains the intentions of the student and how they have considered the presentation of work using curatorial methodologies. HL students should also consider the potential relationship between the artworks and the viewer.

The curatorial rationale is an artist statement providing a general introduction to the work of student as an artist. The **what, how, and why** of your work, from your own point of view that should also **motivate your choices regarding the exhibition** you have curated.

Here is a possible layout for your curatorial statement. Keep your sentences authentic and direct, **Avoid jargon-filled, pretentious language!**

### First Paragraph

Begin with an **overview paragraph** that makes a clear and concise statement about your work. Support that statement, telling the reader more about your goals and aspirations. This paragraph should be broad in scope. Specifics will come next.

### Second Paragraph

Point out **themes** in your work or discuss **experiences that have influenced your work**. Discuss **research** and **influential artists** that you reference in your artwork. How do you make decisions in the course of your work? Why you use the **materials/techniques** and **tools** that you do? Do the materials have an impact on the meaning of the work? Go into **detail** (offer a specific example). Tell the reader a little more about your **current work**. How it grew out of **prior work** or **life experiences**. What are you exploring, attempting, challenging by doing this work.

### Third Paragraph

Justify your **selection, arrangement** and the **exhibition** of artworks “within a designated space”. Address the relationship with the audience and how the curatorial decisions you made may contribute to the viewers response. Reflect on how your exhibition conveys an understanding of the **relationship between the artworks and the viewer**.

**Finally, sum up the most important points made throughout previous paragraphs.**

## Having trouble writing? Here are some suggestions

1. Take five minutes and think about why you do what you do.
2. Make a list of words and phrases that communicate your feelings about your work and your values. Include words you like, words that make you feel good, words that communicate your values or fascinations.
3. Answer these questions as simply as you can. Let them be raw and uncut for now.
  - What is your favorite tool? Why?
  - What is your favorite material? Why?
  - What do you like best about what you do?
  - What do you mean when you say that a piece has turned out really well?
  - What patterns emerge in your work? Is there a pattern in the way you select materials? In the way you use color, texture or light?
  - What do you do differently from the way you were taught? Why?
4. Look at your word list. Add new words suggested by your answers to the questions above.
5. Choose two key words from your word list. They can be related or entirely different. Look them up in a dictionary. Read all the definitions listed for your words. Copy the definitions, thinking about what notions they have in common. Look your words up in a Thesaurus. Read the entries related to your words. Are there any new words that should be added to your word list?
6. Write five sentences that tell the truth about your connection to your work. If you are stuck, start by filling in the blanks below:
  - When I work with \_\_\_\_\_ I am reminded that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - I begin a piece by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - I know a piece is done when \_\_\_\_\_.
  - When my work is going well, I am filled with a sense of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - When people see my work, I'd like them to \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Ask yourself questions about your work:
  - Why you have created the work and what is its history?
  - Your overall vision-- what are you trying to say in the work?
  - How does your current work relate to your previous work?
  - What influences your work?
  - What is your inspiration for your images?
  - How does this work fit into a series or larger body of work?

Create a list of words and phrases that describe your chosen themes, your artistic values, creation process, and influences (i.e. experiences, dreams). Edit down your list of words and begin creating sentences using those words.