

Assessment Report

Level 2 Visual Arts 2017

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Part A: Commentary

Portfolio based assessments such as the Visual Arts Level 2 external examinations are valued for the creative, inquiry-based approaches often evident in programmes. Candidates often experience a great degree of freedom in creating individualised propositions as a foundation for their studies leading to higher levels of engagement. The extended time-frame provided for portfolio assessments also often leads to authentic, in-depth skills acquisition in a given field.

These freedoms rely on sufficient guidance and structure to be provided by the teacher about the explicit and implicit requirements of the standard for achievement at all grades. It is essential that the 'proposition' or 'framework' for the drawing inquiry provides a sufficient level of difficulty to be commensurate with the associated curriculum level expectations. Candidates also need the requirements to use a range of established conventions and to show the progressive development and clarification of ideas to be explained and exemplified in class.

The submissions presented in 2017 indicated that where the assessor judgements and verified result differed it was due to either a lack of understanding of the criteria and explanatory notes by assessors or a disregard for this guidance on the part of the students.

It is essential that from the outset teachers ensure that the proposition, the foundation for each individual's submission, has sufficient breadth and depth to allow candidates to succeed across the grade range. Typically, good practice involves class exercises such as mock-marking, critiques and re-editing exemplar folios. This improves students' understanding of what constitutes development, extension and regeneration, before attempting to do the same in their own portfolio.

Presenting a range of imagery loosely related through subject matter does not fulfil the intention of these standards. For portfolios to achieve these standards a systematic approach within a drawing study to fulfil an overall artistic intention is necessary. At this level, candidates need to present a body of work that begins with a proposition, idea or theme from which artwork is generated and then progressively adapted and clarified towards more successful/resolved outcomes. Candidates who presented individual works with little developmental links, despite clear technical control and in some instances facility with media, did not provide sufficient evidence of a systematic development of ideas to achieve the standard. In these cases, the portfolios appeared more as a collection, presentation or exhibition of related imagery rather than the required drawing study; visually demonstrating progressive decision-making about ideas, techniques and composition.

Many submissions in the Not Achieved to Low Achieved range displayed a lack of candidate engagement and effort. It seemed apparent that some of these candidates, with additional guidance to 'de-

mystify' the development and extension of ideas, had sufficient practical knowledge with materials and techniques to have aimed higher. Often the lack of engagement, coupled with limited structure or guidance about how to meet the criteria, resulted in a substantial number of credits for these individuals not being attained.

A growing number of submissions in the Not Achieved or Low-Achieved range appeared to have been mostly driven by an attempt to engage students in learning. Student interests and popular cultural imagery were prioritised with little consideration or supporting guidance for students on how to address the criteria for the standard. Disappointingly a sound proposition related to the criteria may have enabled these candidates to Achieve.

A small but significant number of folios included unnecessary profanity and surprisingly explicit imagery. Teachers are advised to take into account school policy and the local community's cultural values when providing guidance to students. It is helpful to have department guidelines for parents and students to combat any pressure to allow students and sometimes parents to dictate the parameters of examination propositions. In most of these folios the gratuitous nudity and profane text did not add to the overall achievement of the submission. It appeared to be more of a desperate attempt to be edgy, often distracting the candidate from the actual systematic development of visual art-making ideas.

Appropriation seems to be an ever-increasing trend and typifies the current culture where artistic creation often relies heavily on referring to other artistic creations in order to pursue an idea. It is clear that candidates need to have sufficient background knowledge of the origins, history and current contemporary contexts of meaningful appropriation. Many students attempt to incorporate imagery from popular culture but with little understanding of how to re-contextualise or integrate it into their own work to create a new, original work or social commentary.

Candidates exploration of options from multiple fields is to be endorsed as it is in keeping with contemporary art practices. However, candidates need to be mindful that the actual field they have selected to be assessed in retains primacy. A key example of this is photography folios that incorporate text resulting in 'bad poster design' rather than referencing a range of photographic practices that more appropriately incorporate text.

In 2017 an increasing number of administration issues arose at the assessment venue which included empty boards being sent for verification, folio boards not being clearly labelled with the school number and a good deal of painting boards where glazes and varnishes had adhered the two panels together. The issue of candidate NSNs being added as a 'flap' or affixed directly to- candidate work does a disservice to students and their families who value the work. Considering the long-standing assessment specifications for this examination the issue is baffling. Teachers and candidates could easily plan in advance to leave space at the top right of their portfolio for their candidate number. These can be printed off student management systems or directly off the NZQA website for affixing to folios.

Schools need to carefully consider NZQA policy and their own procedures in regard to sending empty boards with a Not Achieved result. There seems to be disparities amongst providers as to whether to assess non-submissions as a Not Achieved or an Absent result.

Digital Moving Image submissions were notable due to the paucity of samples sent this year, despite being in evidence at Level 3. It is possible that teachers are being more discerning about which propositions are best suited for this alternative assessment mode and that the 'whole class' DMI approach has diminished.

Part B: Report on standards

91320: Produce a systematic body of work that shows understanding of art making conventions and ideas within design

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- engaged in the design process by generating and developing ideas
- made some decisions in relation to their design brief
- filled the two-panel folio submission with series and sequences of works
- produced work at the appropriate curriculum level.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- showed evidence of 'creative play' with a lack of ideas and decisions
- placed imagery onto design formats without consideration of design methodology
- showed a low level of technical skill and facility with their chosen media
- did not generate enough imagery in order to support the proposal.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- selected appropriate briefs which allowed them to explore a range of design conventions and extend ideas in new directions
- had some understanding of the characteristics and constraints of their chosen design formats
- explored relevant options such as thematic colour and font choice to develop a look or style.
- showed some understanding of having looked at and used established practice.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- demonstrated consistently fluent technical skill
- showed critical thinking by reflecting on previous works to move their project forward
- produced original work that synthesised a range of appropriate established practice
- established an investigation which had the potential to develop in a range of possible directions with a rich selection of initial material.

Standard specific comments

Design programmes reflected a diverse range of contemporary issues as well as a breadth and depth of student-centred experience and interests. Themes included: environmental issues, New Zealand fauna and flora, character design in a graphic novel context, food industry and produce branding, coffee culture, off-world / galactic accommodation, services and fashion.

Design outcomes were predominantly 2D print based, although some 3D projects did extend in interesting ways beyond the box, or were an interesting treatment of a box format. When dealing with a 3D proposition, candidates are encouraged to produce mock-ups during the development phase of making so that properties of the product and applied designs can be fully evaluated. Presenting filled-in nets of the design shape limits opportunities for further options to be explored in this regard. Other popular formats included t-shirts, hoodies, posters, business cards, tickets, double page spreads and logos.

Candidates who achieved at Merit and Excellence typically understood the characteristics and constraints of particular design formats. They identified options for development of ideas and applied the design process with understanding.

Candidates need to work with the conventions of particular formats. For example, appropriately sized business cards, tickets, swing tags which 'hang' and therefore are oriented a certain way to fulfil their functions. Consideration should be given to t-shirt design and its characteristics as a worn garment. Graphic novel themed briefs should still show evidence of the design process and the need to present generative and developmental evidence of ideas in order to meet the criteria of the standard. Storyboards and narrative sequencing were often presented as singular, final artworks and

original drawings had merely been 'inked in'. Candidates using this brief should explore options for variation in size, placement, layering and content of image cells/ frames that make up a graphic novel page.

Promotional/ branding briefs were generally well-handled by candidates who understood the necessity of establishing and sustaining a stylistic relationship between brief outcomes. Logo design was often treated as a discrete brief. At lower levels of achievement candidates did not show evidence of how they might apply their design to other briefs and contexts in distinct, new or diverse ways.

Some whole school programmes were characterised by identical presentations of a fixed number and size of works. This was seen as problematic at the higher end of achievement, as it limits candidates' options for regeneration and the production of work in new and unexpected ways in response to their individual briefs. Similarly, some candidates exhibited mostly 'finals' rather than evidence of investigative drawing processes. In such cases achievement levels could be enhanced if the two-panel folio space is used to present series and sequences of work showing progressive clarification and regeneration in a systematic manner.

91321: Produce a systematic body of work that shows understanding of art making conventions and ideas within painting

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- began with a limited proposition or subject matter that offered possibilities for generation and development but could not be sustained to show extension
- engaged with paint conventions
- worked systematically to produce a body of work
- selected techniques or media that limited their opportunity to show understanding of paint conventions
- relied on a narrative approach to the detriment of picture-making concerns.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- presented individual unrelated works without any systematic developmental links
- showed limited understanding of paint processes, materials and techniques
- had insufficient technical control in the application of paint at the expected curriculum level
- used found or appropriated imagery and lacked sufficient resource material or subject matter to extend from.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- began with a strong proposition that could be sustained across two panels
- identified traditional and/or contemporary artists, referencing them in their work
- used multiple models or established practices to develop and extend the ideas
- provided evidence of generation, development and extension of ideas in a systematic body of work
- demonstrated technical skill, control and understanding of paint conventions
- showed a systematic and purposeful decision-making process in the extension of the ideas and in the understanding of painting conventions selected.

Candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:

- demonstrated clear intentions from the beginning of the folio and used drawing as the central means to explore a range and depth of ideas
- refined their proposition, working with comprehensive understanding of how paint conventions can be used with fluency to clarify and regenerate ideas
- provided convincing evidence of further exploration of their proposition by introducing new artistic references that facilitated the clarification and regeneration of additional work
- edited and ordered the work through critical decision-making to demonstrate progression, clarification, regeneration and resolution within the proposition.

Standard specific comments

Thematic trends in 2017 included the influence of graphic novels, gaming, environmental and political concerns alongside portraiture, Vanitas, vampires, dragons and themes inspired by Asian cultural influences. Topics related to culture, identity and social issues were more evident in this year's portfolios

An increase in portfolios sourcing subject matter from film and television characters was a concern where the candidate used the visual information to make individual unrelated images. Copying already established characters and colouring them in does not meet the requirements for a systematic body of work. It also shows limited understanding of art making conventions and ideas within painting.

Teachers are showing greater understanding of the differences between the levels of achievement, with a tendency to undervalue rather than overvalue the work of their candidates. Fine-tuning of assessment decisions also took place as more teachers sent in portfolios close to grade boundaries for clarification.

There continues to be a range of interpretations and practices related to the use of 'artist models'. Artists are, in this context, models of best practice and established conventions, not models to copy. Using the term artist references may be more appropriate, because it is by looking at the work of a whole gallery of artists and their work that candidates begin to see some of the links forward, back and across time, genres and cultures.

The artist model concept of 'learning by example' has evolved over time and has not been without controversy. There is some validity in 'technical studies' or 'emulations' but only when they are part of learning the conventions of a field and certainly not as a starting point for the generative stage of a portfolio.

Understanding of appropriation in the context of this standard also needs to be addressed. Candidates need to be clear when they use explicit images from another artist that they understand the conventions of appropriation.

Pinterest continues to be a major source for ideas and images for candidates. Guidelines need to be provided and monitored by schools to ensure candidates are meeting the authenticity requirements of this standard. This is the responsibility of the school and once a portfolio is sent for verification, clear or blatant evidence of plagiarism can lead to serious repercussions for a candidate.

Developing practices across a range of different conventions are utilised intelligently by some candidates and less well by others. Collage, particularly the use of found, handmade and reassembled materials, when combined with painterly approaches can be a very effective medium to layer an image or advance a proposition. However, cut and paste techniques used superficially can lead to the creation of random images that say little about established painting conventions. There was more evidence of experimentation with wet media across submissions, including expressive and gestural mark making, layering, scumbling, glazing and washes. Digital painting was also used in an appropriate way on some portfolios, beginning with prior investigations using traditional paint techniques.

Whole school programmes that are prescriptive in subject matter, order, size, scale and placement of work are less frequent. However, these are of concern when the verifiers cannot find much to differentiate candidates apart from the technical facility. Individualised programmes allowed for more personal, creative freedom and a greater involvement in decision making by candidates. At the top

end of the Excellence grade range there was considerable diversity in the choice of subject matter, themes and conceptual ideas. These were, without exception painted with outstanding facility and understanding of the selected conventions from established painting practices.

91322: Produce a systematic body of work that shows understanding of art making conventions and ideas within photography

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- presented a systematic body of work which had a narrow proposition or starting point
- considered the organisation, sequencing and layout of the individual works to demonstrate a development of ideas
- showed some understanding and evidence of photography conventions such as light, focus, camera controls and framing/viewpoint
- made inconsistent decisions in the layout without editing out repetitive ideas.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- presented work from a singular idea or narrow proposition, which limited the candidate's ability to develop ideas
- showed limited understanding or inconsistent control of photographic conventions or techniques
- presented large sized works, which hindered idea development and did not produce sufficient work to meet the 12 credit weighting of this external standard
- provided no evidence of decisions regarding the sizing and sequencing of the individual works in the layout or a systematic approach through the exploration of ideas.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- demonstrated evidence of purposeful decision-making through the editing, sizing, sequencing and organisation of the individual works
- demonstrated the candidate had made clear choices in ideas and understood the hierarchy of images
- demonstrated sound, consistent technical control of photography processes, materials and techniques across the submission
- clearly extended ideas, with a sense that work had been 'selected' from more than what was evident on the board allowing them to demonstrate clear extension of ideas connected to the earlier investigations.

Candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:

- showed an in-depth understanding of photographic conventions
- confidently and fluently investigated ideas through the chosen subject matter, which were connected conceptually and pictorially
- identified the best ideas and options in the work and then investigated further
- demonstrated clear evidence of revisiting and regenerating ideas whilst also exploring plenty of options within the proposition to regenerate ideas in new and interesting ways
- investigated a breadth of ideas that expanded on pictorial intent evident in preceding work, with a strong understanding of digital photography processes, procedures, materials and techniques.
- made critical decisions around the layout, sizing and sequencing of the individual works.

Standard specific comments

The majority of candidates explored subject matter based around their personal interests. Popular themes continued to include social and youth issues such as mental health, beauty and body image, the effects of social media and the sugar debate.

Other candidates continued to explore photographing family members through a documentary approach in investigations about family histories, their own cultural identity or personal identity issues. Formal pictorial investigations such as still life or architectural forms through abstraction or optical explorations with mirrors and reflection were also common. Architectural and night time street photography investigations, which explored camera settings in low light with long exposures were more popular. Documentary approaches continued to be explored in a successful manner where candidates had a good understanding of the genre and appropriately used photography conventions to investigate and explore ideas. Narrative and Surrealist explorations were less evident but there was an increase in candidates investigating ideas through Dada and photo-montage techniques.

School-directed programmes were less common than previous years. Candidates were often limited by working within this approach, as it restricted potential idea exploration and the candidate's ability to produce authentic work. There was also a marked decrease in the number of candidates utilising traditional analog photography techniques as schools have felt the need to eliminate facilities for this. Of note was a better balance of gender represented in the models photographed, with an increase in male figures used as models.

The majority of candidates had a good understanding of the achievement criteria. Successful candidates established the folio proposition at the start of the submission by setting the scene with smaller series of works that clearly introduced the theme or topic. They also explored subject matter that could be regularly reshot and revisited. This provided them with the opportunity to explore a breadth of ideas and thoroughly investigate their conceptual ideas.

Candidates used a range of photographic conventions to help them investigate and explore ideas. The camera was used effectively as drawing tool to investigate light and subject matter. Competent camera skills were demonstrated in candidates' use of camera functions, settings to control exposure, depth of field and to freeze or blur movement. By tightly composing and framing subject matter the majority of candidates demonstrated good compositional skills. Digital photography techniques were used successfully and appropriately with understanding of photography conventions and established photography practice. Many candidates knew how to successfully extend ideas and demonstrated an understanding of established and contemporary photography practices.

The number of candidates who used text with low conceptual or compositional consideration, was concerning. This practice impinged on the pictorial investigation of the photographic works produced. In some instances, the language some candidates chose to express themselves was more to shock and be offensive. This is to be cautioned as subject matter and content that candidates are exploring or investigating needs to be appropriate to the age/year level and school context.

Some submissions continued to rely heavily on established practices from other fields with varying degrees of success. This approach can be successful but only when building on a good understanding of established photographic practices. Some candidates chose to explore digital image making across the submission, which tended to be more design-specific than photographic. It is essential that photography submissions demonstrate and show a study of light.

Some candidates explored subject matter easily found in and around the Art department such as paint-brushes and paint tubes. Others attempted to explore ideas towards more sculptural subject matter. If candidates set out to explore ideas this way it is crucial to their overall success that they investigate ideas in a manner that also explores processes, media and techniques within a photographic context.

Highly successful candidates referenced a range of artist models implicitly to develop, extend and regenerate their ideas. Weaker submissions relied on artist models explicitly in a less authentic manner, attempting to explore and extend ideas but only tenuously linked to the preceding work. For example; attempting to extend ideas through arbitrary digital collages created without a purpose linked to a proposition.

Overall, candidates used colour effectively to explore conceptual, thematic or symbolic concerns, whether it was saturated colour, black and white, a limited colour palette or selective colouring. Lower achieving candidates who chose to submit in black and white often lacked a sufficient tonal range in the photographs due to limited understanding of light, camera settings and post production editing.

There was less reliance on arbitrary filters and tessellations to extend ideas, instead candidates used appropriate manipulation of photographs, physical collage and re-photographing of photographs instead to push and explore ideas in a more authentic manner. Weaker submissions had technical issues such as pixilation, poor resolution, unintentional blurring and poorly executed image transformations. This affected the intended reading of the work and their ability to demonstrate consistent control of the photography techniques used.

The majority of candidates were aware that careful consideration of the layout (sizing, sequencing and ordering of the work) is of crucial importance in photography submissions, as it helps show the reading and exploration of a range of options and ideas. Less successful submissions demonstrated poor decision making in the layout, which limited readability of idea investigation and often appeared narrow and linear.

Candidates need to ensure they present their work for verification with images well secured to the boards. It is highly recommended that candidates do not use Blu Tack or spray glue to adhere photographs onto their portfolio. Overlapping photographs when candidates are sticking down the work due to incorrect printing or sizing was problematic as it made it difficult to ascertain where the individual works started or finished. Many candidates printed their photographs on high quality matte photographic paper, which was advantageous for the reading of the work. Some candidates submitted their work on black A1 cardboard. Using this thinner card weight runs the risk of being damaged from falls during the verification process as they don't stand up on their own as well.

Candidates printing whole-panel A1 digital files are reminded of the importance of giving individual photographs adequate spacing between the works. They are encouraged to cut up the photographs to enhance the readability of the individual works. Some submissions printed low resolution photographs that were out of focus and pixelated next to high resolution images in the submission. This hindered their ability to demonstrate consistent control of photographic media and techniques.

Candidate numbers were attached on portfolios in a variety of ways despite clear specifications for these. NSN numbers printed on photocopy paper as a 'flap' were popular but problematic as they were not durable enough to withstand the verification process.

91323: Produce a systematic body of work that shows understanding of art making conventions and ideas within printmaking

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- demonstrated a systematic approach through a short journey of exploration across both panels
- established a starting point (subject matter and pictorial possibilities) early in the portfolio sufficient to carry out a systematic printmaking investigation
- made implied reference to artist models/conventions without demonstrating a clear link in their own work.
- relied on imagery directly sourced from social media, the use of the narrative or collage techniques to make decisions, advance ideas, or to explore elements of print
- worked within a limited range of print processes (often one printmaking technique) sufficiently to generate and develop ideas at the expected level

- worked with conventional board layout, where ideas were edited, selected and ordered throughout the submission.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- began the portfolio with a limited idea or insufficient pictorial information to sustain ideas over two panels
- provided insufficient evidence of a systematic development of ideas and/or use of print processes consistent with expectations of learners studying at level 7 of the curriculum
- relied on drawing rather than printmaking for the investigation of ideas
- placed work on either panel without little regard to sequencing, selection and ordering of work from panel one to panel two
- repeated block/plate imagery without any clear purpose within the investigation due to an inability to identify pathways for the development of ideas
- used print techniques/processes with limited control or understanding of simple print conventions such as; surface, colour, ground and/or mark.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- established a sound initial starting point, sufficient to sustain a purposeful printmaking investigation across both panels of the submission
- developed ideas that did not rely on a pre-constructed narrative with a wide range of options, allowing for subsequent exploration
- referenced established printmaking practices, using one or more artists, with consistent control of printmaking conventions throughout the submission
- selected and ordered related works showing the ability to edit and make decisions in developing a sequence or series of works
- demonstrated purposeful links early in the submission between drawing and the subsequent prints.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- developed ideas early in the submission through investigation and considered thematic exploration
- demonstrated good decision making through a progression of ideas, evident in the ordering and sequencing of work
- exhibited clarity in the use of several compositional devices and printmaking techniques when developing both sequences and series of works across the entire submission
- presented clear links between; drawings, developments, extension, regeneration of ideas as well as conventions with printmaking media and techniques prior to attempting the standard
- used a range of media and techniques with a high degree of facility, sometimes pushing traditional printmaking techniques into new directions.

Standard specific comments

For a portfolio to meet the requirements of this achievement standard the work must show evidence of planning and ordering within the body of work. Portfolios assessed at the Not Achieved level typically provided insufficient evidence of both the planning and ordering of work. At Achievement level candidates often relied on single pictorial ideas that were either minimal, or not able to be sustained in a series or a sequence throughout the submission.

Submissions at the Excellence level demonstrated sound knowledge of a range of print processes. In all cases candidates could work competently within print. Identifying their proposition and then selecting appropriate print processes subsequently produced work that clearly demonstrated extension and regeneration appropriate to specific phases of their investigation. This process of regeneration often occurred early within the submission, allowing for options to be explored either at the end of board one or at the beginning of board two.

At the Excellence level the practice of combining traditional and contemporary print practices is continuing to produce exemplary submissions. Where the candidates could successfully match print

processes with their intention for images, they could demonstrate a clarification and extension of their work. This way of working often allowed for either a series or a sequence of work to be successfully developed.

In 2017 several printmaking submissions tended to rely on the use of collage in both traditional and digital forms to make prints and to develop ideas. When used primarily as a tool for investigation then the use of collage helped to both frame and advance ideas. When collage was used solely as a printmaking device the folio tended to lack in development and direction. The use of digital collage has raised several interesting issues. The use of filters and software programmes to generate a print series can distance the submission from any actual printmaking. This process will generally disadvantage the candidate's submission.

As in previous years there were several submissions with well-cut wood print blocks, in a range of genres, both figurative and pattern based. It is encouraging to see a growing confidence in the use of a range of processes in various programmes. Candidates are encouraged to develop higher degrees of skill in the techniques characteristic to each of these processes, to enable higher levels of achievement. The use of dry-point engraving and woodcut were again dominant choices for print exploration across all submissions as well as reduced colour palettes across several submissions.

Candidates are encouraged to consider placement and sizing of works to allow clear reading of individual works and sequences, allowing space between works that are not intended to be read as continuous images. At times the frame associated with traditional print practice allows for a clearer reading of works. The removal of the 'print gutter' may be problematic with the reading of individual works within the submission.

There are several encouraging signs in the 2017 printmaking submissions. The use of digital print processes was evident, where blocks were both laser cut in vector format and engraved as rastered print blocks. In these instances, the ideas and imagery supported the use of digital printmaking. There was a noticeable trend in 2017 in the use of in less prescriptive programmes. This creates more open-ended opportunities for candidates to achieve in the higher-grade ranges, as it allows for more individualised thematic developments and levels of thinking. Candidates were therefore more likely to explore ideas in more diverse directions and use processes and techniques appropriate to the investigation.

91324: Produce a systematic body of work that shows understanding of art making conventions and ideas within sculpture

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- generated ideas in a systematic way but often within a limited proposition
- presented a sufficient, though minimal number of sculptural outcomes which limited opportunities to extend ideas
- used appropriate sculptural conventions with the level of control and practical knowledge expected at the lower end of Level 7 of the New Zealand Curriculum.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- presented an insufficient number of sculptural outcomes for the 12 credit weighting of the standard
- demonstrated insufficient use of sculpture making conventions throughout the submission
- used processes, procedures, materials and techniques at a level that was below the practical knowledge requirements of Level 7 of the New Zealand Curriculum.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- used materials and processes with intent to extend ideas
- worked with a range of materials or the same materials in a range of ways
- demonstrated the extension of ideas but with inconsistent control of media and techniques
- presented a limited range of sculptural outcomes which did not allow for regeneration.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- identified a clear proposition that thoroughly explored a range of appropriate established sculptural conventions
- used highly appropriate sculptural drawing techniques to effectively transition between series throughout the submission
- demonstrated fluent use of media and processes
- identified hierarchy of images through strong editing and layout of panels
- used fluent photographic documentation, or video documentation in the case of digital submissions, to support the clarification and regeneration of ideas.

Standard specific comments

Sculpture submissions for 2017 saw fewer class programmes and more of a focus on the exploration of a range of conventions within sculptural propositions. This approach allowed for authentic and refreshing directions in which candidates extended and regenerated ideas. The ambitious nature of works undertaken by some candidates resulted in a number of larger scale works that pushed ideas outside the boundaries of object-based practice.

Competent and fluent handling of media and techniques were frequently seen in submissions in 2017. Candidates spent time developing and building on their skills resulting in finished works that demonstrated significant patience and reflected an understanding of the nature and limitations of their chosen materials. It is significant to note that there were submissions which focused on an adornment / wearable art approach, where the conventions of jewellery crafting were at the forefront of decision-making, rather than the art/sculptural context. These submissions may have been better assessed in a technology or design context. Making work in three-dimensions does not automatically support appropriate idea development, extension or regeneration within the realm of sculptural art-making conventions.

Whilst many submissions presented significant bodies of work, a number of portfolios were held within grade boundaries due to a set number of works being presented across the panels. This strategy can be helpful to ensure sufficient evidence is presented to generate, develop and often to extend ideas. For highly motivated candidates, however, specifying numbers of works can limit opportunities to further regenerate ideas and move work forward in new and diverse directions. It can also encourage students to 'work to order' rather than conduct a meaningful, open-ended sculptural investigation.

The photographic documentation of sculptural outcomes was generally of a high standard. Successful submissions demonstrated clear sequencing choices, opting to present multiple images of sculptures only when these presented additional information about the work. Large numbers of photographs of individual works with little variation, tended to take up valuable space on some folios that could have been used to further extend and regenerate ideas. A series of approximately 2-3 supporting photographs can be helpful if documenting an object from several angles where this adds to the understanding of the work in space. It is recommended that candidates signal the most successful photograph of a work by printing it at a slightly larger scale than others and present images of works in their entirety, rather than focusing simply on close-up or cropped imagery. Less successful submissions shifted the focus of the documentation to the investigation of photographic conventions at the expense of sculptural ones.

Although less performance practice was apparent in 2017, teachers and candidates are reminded that identifying site, duration, and media alongside documentation of performance is required in both physical and digital moving image submissions. If performance practice is to be undertaken, appropriate

artist models are critical to support candidates to accurately position the work and select conventions appropriate to their propositions.

A number of examples of collaborative classroom practices were employed in submissions. Whilst sculpture offers many opportunities for candidates to work alongside each other on large-scale projects, portfolios must clearly identify when a work has been made collaboratively and which elements can be attributed to specific candidates. Although collaborative works may be included in more than one portfolio, each portfolio must demonstrate sufficient evidence of an individual candidate producing work that meets the requirements and the 12-credit weighting of the standard.

Strategies enabling individual contributions to be identified for assessment purposes recommended by the National Moderator include: individual sections of project allocated to each student and developing individual maquettes/plans of test pieces for assessment purposes

Sculpture teachers are encouraged to send sculpture submissions for verification, as numbers of submissions in this field are relatively low. Receiving feedback in relationship to the standard is particularly valuable in smaller fields such as sculpture, where there are fewer samples from which to select exemplars.

[Visual Arts subject page](#)

Previous years' reports

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