



New Zealand Qualifications Authority
Mana Tohu Matauranga O Aotearoa

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Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Art History 2016

Standard 93301

Part A: Commentary

Students had clear preferences regarding questions in each section of the paper – Questions 1 and 2 in Section A, and Question 6 in Section B. However, this did not mean that these were necessarily the best options for the students. Question 8, for example, was the least popular choice but it worked well for most who attempted it.

Candidates should be encouraged to read all the questions closely and to think carefully about each one before making their choices.

Similar diligence is needed in the selection of art works as examples to support an argument. Trying to squeeze a pre-prepared essay into a vaguely related question does not lead to success in a Scholarship examination. Engaging with the question asked and then deciding what art works would best support the argument would be more successful than trying to force a narrow range of prepared works into the response. Practice at writing their own questions and assessing what works would best support a response, could be beneficial for Scholarship candidates.

Once again, a common problem is the failure to analyse, in depth, the art works used as evidence. Visual analysis is a key aspect of art history and students would be well served by plenty of practice at this. Students need to analyse art works rather than describe them. This is a core skill and this point cannot be over-emphasised.

It needs to be noted that focusing on how and why art works reflect their contexts is as important as having a confident knowledge of context.

Part B: Report on performance standard

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship with Outstanding Performance** commonly:

- engaged with the question and responded to all aspects of it

- supported their argument with highly developed visual analysis of the art works referenced and provided evidence for their critical response to contexts and ideas
- demonstrated an excellent understanding of the discipline and comprehensive breadth and depth of knowledge that was relevant to the question
- demonstrated independent reflection on the art works / evidence offered
- demonstrated clarity, maturity and confidence in their writing and sustained this over both essays. · engaged with the question and responded to all aspects of it
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Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- analysed and understood the requirements of the question
- established a clear point of view or argument and maintained that focus
- analysed art works closely to provide the supporting evidence for their argument
- demonstrated extensive knowledge of context and content relevant to the question
- selected art works that enabled them to demonstrate their knowledge in terms of the question
- demonstrated skills of clarity, logical development, and cohesiveness in their communication.

Other candidates commonly:

- demonstrated little evidence of visual analysis
- did not clearly understand what the question was asking and/or did not address all parts of the question
- used generalised statements that were not supported by detailed evidence
- showed little depth of understanding of context
- incorporated irrelevant material
- attempted to fit pre-prepared answers to questions rather than responding to the actual question selected
- referred to only two art works
- failed to answer two questions.

Further comments

Section A of the 2016 Scholarship Art History paper focused on analysis of the elements of the subject while Section B offered a broader approach to the discipline. This is in line with previous Art History Scholarship exam papers.

In Section A, questions 1 and 2 were the most popular. In Section B, question 6 was strongly favoured.

Question 1. A popular question but it did attract some candidates who wrote on subject matter rather than themes. The best answers identified a theme or themes, and discussed them over a range of art works from different chronological periods or geographical regions.

Question 2. The most popular question in Section A. Students approached this from the perspective of either artist or viewer – or both. Some tried (usually unsuccessfully) to adapt a learnt essay on ‘Beauty is in the eye of the beholder’.

Question 3. A straightforward question that resulted in some very good responses.

Question 4. Some students struggled to write a coherent essay on this question and needed to plan the detail of their response with greater precision.

Question 5. The key words of this question clearly appealed to students. It was a popular question but some students needed to have planned their essay in greater depth before embarking on an essay. In many answers a candidate’s enthusiasm for the idea was not backed up with substantial detail.

Question 6. This was the most popular question in this year’s exam. It attracted a range of responses and examples across a variety of chronological periods and geographic regions.

Question 7. This was a popular question. However, a significant number of students wrote about history or historical context rather than art history. Some answers bordered on the descriptive rather than being analytical.

Question 8. This was the least popular question in the exam paper this year, but this did not impact on the quality of the responses from those who attempted it. The wording of the question offered candidates guidance on approaches they might take. This may have made it appear more difficult than other, more succinct, questions in the paper.

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