

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Design and Visual Communication 2017

Standard 93602

Part B: Report on performance standard

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

- engaged deeply in a design context in an invested and meaningful way that suited their own interests, expertise and approaches to design
- demonstrated iterative and purposeful design strategies, that were thorough in their details and engaging in its conceptualisation
- synthesised design ideas; pushed the boundaries; revisited design thoughts with intention
- produced ideas with a personal perspective to the brief, resulting in a unique design outcome with a clear and distinctive designer voice that expressed fresh thinking with layers of meaning or purpose
- demonstrated design thinking that was inspired, stemming from meaningful and perceptive ideation
- used visual communication techniques with fluency and sophistication to convey a compelling design narrative in a captivating manner
- employed outstanding visual presentation techniques, working to their own personal strengths with a visual impact that was convincing and left a lasting impression that evoked the spirit of the design.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- used purposeful ideation to generate and discover ideas that were then pursued further informing part of a design practice
- used research material in an informed manner that integrated with design ideas and thinking
- demonstrated the exploration and evolution of ideas that were purposeful, blending ideation influences and design brief considerations
- applied a cohesive design process which allowed the creative exploration and evolution of ideas
- considered the design details and alternatives within a whole idea, interrogating these as design possibilities in a connected manner
- articulated the clear communication of ideas and design thinking using visual techniques (sketching, model-making and / or formal drawing - digital and / or manual) as suitable to the strengths of the candidate
- used visuals that showed a variety of viewpoints, explaining function or intention, referencing the human element
- used increasingly complex and detailed visuals to communicate an increasing understanding and refining of the design ideas as the project progressed.

Other candidates

Candidates who were **not** awarded Scholarship commonly:

- did not take on ideation ideas to inform the development phase, lost opportunities by having not recognised interesting starting points that therefore did not connect further with the design thinking that followed
- lacked the demonstration of in-depth design thinking, with candidates disadvantaged by either; the substantial scale of the design brief undertaken; a lack of design ideation intention; or a lack of brief context understanding
- did not show the purposeful engagement required with their design context – the work was not well considered or responsive to human needs
- did not evolve ideas purposefully – lacked idea refinement that draws on design considerations and effective decision making
- generated a range of ideas using set creative exercises or techniques but did not develop their own perspective or point of view as a designer - using inspiration material directly rather than using it to stimulate one's own thinking
- showed minimal or no reference to the human interface or use in design ideas
- showed details of the design explored independently without considering how they may affect the overall design
- used development to explain how the design idea functioned rather than exploring the idea further for the purposes of improving and refining the outcome
- lacked skills in visual communication to competently describe design ideas, to show a clear design narrative, or in the presentation of a refined outcome
- submitted incomplete or unresolved work, lacking the completion of a finished outcome, often this was due to an over emphasis on ideation and initial idea generation.

Standard specific comments

For Scholarship DVC, the assessment conditions remain relatively consistent with the requirement of a portfolio submission and an assessment schedule that has a relatively consistent in its application each year. There is no examination paper for this subject – rather students submit a portfolio based around a single major design project which is assessed externally.

For the top-ranking submissions, especially the ones that gained Outstanding Scholarships, their varied approaches and strengths again showed that there is no single approach in attaining outstanding success.

The very top submissions demonstrated an unequivocal commitment and deep interest to the design context, with a full investment and engagement with the design situation and its relevant design considerations. The candidates engaged their own design perspectives that were responsive to the needs of the brief and this typically led to convincing and considered design ideas and thinking.

The effective use of ideation strategies used for the generation of diverse and creative ideas can aid opportunities for success, though there are still many approaches to initiating ideas that were generic activities which did not allow students to engage with the design context with purpose, or encourage the expression of their own personal design perspective.

The successful submissions not only used ideation strategies effectively in the initial stages, but also connected these initiating influences and creative approaches through the continuing exploration and refinement of design ideas. Recognising the opportunities to revisit ideation outcomes at any point of design practice (and not just at the start) gives currency to the purpose of this early work.

One of the keys to success is the candidate's ability to discern and make effective design decisions that show that they are recognising their best ideas. Often candidates kept exploring and ideating at the expense of moving forward purposefully in refining and resolving their design. The most successful submissions had candidates recognising their best moments and taking advantage of these opportunities in their design practice.

Candidates need to be aware that drawing (whether digital or analogue) is not just for the purposes of explaining their ideas, but is also a design thinking tool. Hence, the visual narrative of evolving and resolving of design ideas is just as important as the effective communicating of this evidence of design thinking.

The key principles of visual communication ensuring design ideas and narratives are succinct, clearly communicated, informative and engaging, remains key to success, irrespective of the visual mode or media being used. Having depth and detail in the visual communication of ideas is paramount to effective evidence. The comprehensive use of design drawings (whether done by hand or digitally) can best express the design intent of the candidate.

The use of digitally-based evidence continues to be significant as access to software becomes more prevalent. While still digital images remain predominate, there is the growing emergence of moving image and digital animation. For such formats, it is essential that purposeful editing, composition (cinematic sequencing) and digital rendering is effectively utilised that clarifies and explains the design idea. There are many instances where the context of the surroundings has been communicated more effectively at the expense of the design idea itself, or the sequences of fly-throughs have been disorienting to the viewer and not promoting the journey through the design as well as potentially could have been.

When students are generating their digital models, they need to ensure that they utilise their full potential of these through showing various view points and close-ups in a connected and coherent manner. The comprehensive communication of design features in detail and with refinement remains key whether the mode involves still or moving images.

While there is an increasing predomination of digital media being submitted, many of the most successful portfolios are mixing both digital and analogue modes of visual communication to maximum effect. The merits of freehand sketching, physical mock-ups and models, along with digital media all have their advantages. Students who are competent across the different modes and are discretionary in their application, are often best served in their opportunities for success.

It is also positive to see many candidates continuing to appropriately communicate their own thinking in a predominantly visual manner rather than depend on an excess of written annotation.

There were instances of candidates who produced high quality presentations in a physical gallery set-up to only evidence these through small photographs. If exhibitions are done, the clear and effective recording of this evidence is beneficial to communicate high quality visual communication principles and skills. High quality photographing of three-dimensional work is important.

Where possible, any large format presentation panels should also be re-printed up to a suitable size within the given assessment specifications for Scholarship DVC to allow suitable reward of the presentation skills shown.

Exemplar and assessment resources can be found on the NZQA website.

Any candidate achieving well should be exceptionally pleased with their efforts and the evidence of work they have produced. This stands them well in terms of the pursuit of further career pathways in the creative industries and any such related fields.

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Previous years' reports

[2016 \(PDF, 193KB\)](#)