

No part of the candidate's evidence in this exemplar material may be presented in an external assessment for the purpose of gaining an NZQA qualification or award.



Level 3 Visual Arts 2025

91457 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within photography practice

EXEMPLAR

Excellence

TOTAL E

Excellence

Subject: Visual Arts – Photography

Standard: 91457

Marker commentary

This portfolio demonstrates a clearly articulated and coherent proposition to document a music venue, its performers, and the surrounding social environment. The intention is established early, offering viewers insight into a specific community. The portfolio is structured to guide the audience through this environment, with Panel 1 introducing the location and technical set-up, Panel 2 focusing on the people who occupy the space, and Panel 3 capturing the energy and atmosphere of the live performances.

Panel 1 sets the scene through images of the venue, instruments, and behind-the-scenes preparation, establishing a visual foundation for the narrative that follows. The candidate then shifts their focus to portraits and interactions among band members, attendees, and groups within the venue. These images reveal aspects of the social dynamics of the space and develop the candidate's interest in documenting identity, relationships, and community. Panel 3 moves into the intensity of the event itself, with photographs of performers mid-action, stage lighting, and immersive crowd moments. The use of slow shutter speeds generates expressive images that emphasise movement and atmosphere.

The candidate has selected art-making conventions that align strongly with the subject matter. Low-light photography, flash, high ISO, and visible grain reinforce the grunge aesthetic and reflect the conditions typical of live music environments. These technical decisions heighten the authenticity of the imagery and support the conceptual direction. The established practice of artists such as Nan Goldin, Ann Shelton, Larry Clark, and Richard Kern offers relevant reference points for the mix of informal, documentary-style capture and more intentional posed imagery.

The sequencing of the portfolio is logical and demonstrates critical decision-making. The development of portraits on Panel 2, moving from awareness of the photographer to closer attention to clothing, gesture, and group interactions, deepens the viewer's understanding of how individuals perform identity within this subculture. The candidate's use of both black-and-white and colour imagery is strategic, with monochrome creating a timeless quality and directing attention to form, while selective use of colour highlights artificial lighting and contributes to the constructed ambience of the venue.

Overall, this submission is cohesive and in-depth. The candidate demonstrates strong understanding and familiarity with their subject and employs technical and conceptual strategies that support a compelling, well-developed documentary outcome.