

# **National Certificate of Educational Achievement**

## **2011 Assessment Report**

### **Visual Arts Level 2**

- 90235 Produce a body of work within design to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**
- 90479 Produce a body of work within painting to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**
- 90480 Produce a body of work within photography to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**
- 90481 Produce a body of work within printmaking to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**
- 90482 Produce a body of work within sculpture to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**

## **COMMENTARY**

This was the final year for examinations to assess these achievement standards.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This report should be used in conjunction with the NZQA Visual Arts level 2 exemplars to clarify the submission requirements. They can be used by students as a focus for discussion and critique during the development of their portfolios.

Overall results indicated that accurate assessment decisions are being affirmed through the verification process. It is likely that this is an outcome of schools maintaining a range of benchmarks through rotating fields submitted for verification and using these alongside exemplars when assessing portfolios.

Many schools did not send portfolios on the cusp of Achievement. It is important to send in the lowest complete submission available to provide the fullest range of samples for the verification process.

Where digital drawing processes were seamlessly integrated into propositions, performance was enhanced. In cases where it was used to replace or to represent traditional modes of drawing, candidates were sometimes disadvantaged.

Candidates who selected artist models from other fields needed to do so clearly in the context of their proposition and show how this understanding was regenerated into the assessed field. Those who did this were more successfully able to meet all three criteria within the field entered.

Candidates were greatly advantaged when they had a very clear understanding of how the portfolio layout functioned to contribute evidence towards the achievement criteria.

The culture of individualised subject matter for candidates is highly regarded, but those who reached their potential also appeared to have examined layout as a crucial element for success. Understanding how to create series of generative works, using sequence/size to show pictorial options and signal decision-making through layout, greatly supported achievement. Unsuccessful candidates often did not progressively advance identified pictorial, technical, or conceptual propositions. Systematic layout is a central concern for achievement of these level 2 standards.

Candidates commonly restrained themselves to smaller-scale works across most fields, which disadvantaged those whose propositions demanded that large-scale works be explored. Well-documented photographs of larger works labelled with dimensions and media allowed candidates the experience of working appropriately – for example, when painting in a gestural manner.

School and candidate codes should appear correctly on portfolios, and work should be securely affixed.

## **STANDARD REPORTS**

**90235 Produce a body of work within design to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**

## **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They commonly:**

- produced a number of draft concepts in line drawings only, followed by a single 'finished' outcome in a more sophisticated medium
- expended too much panel space, generating work, in some cases for a small-scale brief such as a logo
- used a limited range of visual and typographic elements repetitively
- considered text-image relationships in a superficial way, with little understanding of layout conventions and related artist models.

**NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They commonly:**

- generated work without development and a reliance on repetition of a single image
- were limited by a very narrow range of generation or insufficient research and resource material
- unsuccessfully attempted to meet the technical and/or conceptual understanding requirements of Level 7 of the New Zealand Curriculum.

**ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit commonly:**

- showed deliberation in selection of works to demonstrate understanding of design processes
- recognised successful ideas and developed them further
- included personalised, original resources from photo-shoots, mood boards and montages which helped to show understanding of a clearly defined aesthetic
- used established practice and design conventions such as layout, text/ image relationships with a higher level of understanding appropriate to purpose
- provided evidence of having investigated a range of artist models' approaches
- understood the conventions of the genre they were working within but lacked evidence of regeneration.

**ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:**

- used media appropriate to purpose with a consistently high level of facility
- demonstrated clear purpose and intent throughout the submission
- included a wide range of options, and revisited and built upon successful ideas
- understood the chosen artists' intent
- demonstrated potential for further development through ideas that were not exhausted.

**OTHER COMMENTS**

Candidates presented a range of engaging approaches and took ownership of the presentation of their ideas with better use of contemporary models this year. An increase in Illustration submissions and an absence of Fashion, Architectural, and Environmental

design was noted. The majority of submissions dealt with promotional campaigns such as tickets, logos, DPS, posters, brochures, websites and t-shirts.

Candidates were often disadvantaged in the absence of a written Brief as the proposition was usually unclear. Some candidates attempted an insufficient range of briefs (e.g. two) which limited achievement while others addressed too many briefs inhibiting a critical approach and deep engagement with the proposition. Successful candidates considered the conventions of each brief in relation to functionality, size and scale. Those who applied the same final outcomes to varied formats without change had difficulty meeting the criteria for development. Often the functionality and conventions related to logo were not understood as outcomes often appeared more like a 'visual identity'.

Double-Page-Spread (DPS) Briefs were successfully handled overall and provided candidates of all abilities with clearly defined design conventions. Three dimensional briefs such as; carrier bags, fold-out and die-cut brochures, and packaging also yielded successful outcomes with reference to relevant design conventions and creative exploration of the potential of these formats.

Character illustration outcomes were successful when, development beyond basic additions of colour and changes in scale were considered. Aspects such as costume, appearance, lighting, textures, details and viewpoint were used as a means to develop more sophisticated outcomes, sometimes including historical references.

Candidates were sometimes disadvantaged when; large type labels overpowered the work or left less room for additional work, candidate numbers affixed over artworks obscured the work, moving image sequences were not labeled to provide a sense of sequencing, the reading of the work was compromised by poor printing (scale/quality) or by protective coverings. Work generated for internally assessed standards that was irrelevant to the advancement of the design proposition on the portfolio also hampered candidates' achievement in some cases.

Successful candidates; often considered stock photographs as a starting point only for original work, generated their own images or placed designs in context e.g. photographs of final mock-ups and displayed a discerning use of digital brushes to advance ideas. The choice of a neutral colour for the background enhanced the viewing and reading of the work in the majority of portfolios.

## **90479 Produce a body of work within painting to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They commonly:**

- used digital drawing methods, returning to painting materials to demonstrate consistent control of a range of skills
- developed ideas in series of related works using simple scale changes or colour shifts
- reduced subject matter into pattern or shifted to abstraction on the second panel
- linked ideas between panels to demonstrate development
- relied on the repetition of elements and/or completed large works on the second panel
- used a limited range of ideas based on established practice as a primary source for development.

## **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They commonly:**

- provided evidence of work mostly considered to be operating below the expected curriculum level
- used a random approach to the generation and development of ideas
- demonstrated insufficient evidence of engagement within painting practices
- used a linear narrative with little relationship to established practice
- submitted work that transposable with other fields tenuously linked to painting practice
- used the problematic practice of colouring in photocopies, sometimes with paint, over the majority of the submission with insufficient evidence of control of media.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit commonly:**

- used painting processes in the production of their work with consistent control across both panels
- provided several pictorial ideas within the first panel to explore and extend ideas onto the second panel
- created distinct pictorial developments on panel two from ideas on the first panel
- made clear links to established practice and were able to integrate more than one artist model to enable the extension of their ideas
- ordered and sequenced their work to show the development and extension of ideas in a systematic manner
- began to engage with and explore pictorial ideas in conjunction with subject matter showing a sense of purpose.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:**

- combined the skilled crafting of paint and facility with a depth of ideas
- regenerated ideas systematically through extending successful ideas
- introduced a variety of ideas and models from established painting practice throughout the body of work
- were able to critically analyse ideas such as using colour with purpose and understanding and clearly signal this on the portfolio
- considered the appropriate use of influences from artist models paired with the constraints and context of their work.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

A wide variety of responses to this standard continued to evolve and expand to incorporate contemporary established practices. A trait of more successful submissions was portfolio evidence where candidates had developed a range of skills and ideas.

A significant number of portfolios barely met the requirements of the standard or failed to provide sufficient evidence of candidates working at the appropriate curriculum level

(particularly for the practical knowledge strand). The issue of quantifying and qualifying performance levels in terms of expectations at Level 7 of the Visual Arts Curriculum requires examination of available exemplars and benchmarks alongside continual collective professional reflection.

Digitally generated images formed the basis of some candidates' initial investigations which is a valid emergent drawing practice. This approach was successful when accompanied with traditional understanding of mark-making and control of media within the field of painting. Numerous submissions relied almost entirely on the application of colour to photocopies, which raised questions regarding the interpretation of the curriculum strands and the desired learning outcomes.

It was clear that those candidates who used painting processes, procedures, materials and techniques as the primary media to generate evidence for each criterion, had more successful outcomes overall.

Candidates awarded achievement at higher levels worked within their capabilities and interests. Numerous figurative submissions demonstrated that candidates had most likely been supported with sound drawing programmes established in the junior school. It was apparent that technically difficult subject matter required an increased level of media skills in order to produce convincing work and extend ideas. Traditional practices focusing on formal compositional understanding and techniques also enabled candidates to achieve their potential.

## **90480 Produce a body of work within photography to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They commonly:**

- explored simple, linear ideas with explicit reference to often a single artist model inhibiting extension
- exhibited a limited use of drawing as decision-making through extended sequences of works with small, superficial shifts such as; zooming in, colour variations, and arbitrary use of effects
- used techniques with sometimes inconsistent control
- lacked consideration for the portfolio layout and editing of repetitive or weak imagery.

### **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They commonly:**

- appeared to lack knowledge or understanding of the assessment criteria
- generated an idea but needed a clearer proposition to guide subsequent development of ideas
- presented interchangeable boards where the layout of the photographs failed to show systematic development
- lacked the expected technical control
- presented evidence of insufficient generation (photographic shoots) of ideas to enable development.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit commonly:**

- referenced a wide range of related models to inform their work with consistent understanding/control of processes and techniques
- completed a narrow, predictable development from an initial proposition
- lacked initial range of ideas resulting in repetitive picture-making
- relied on digital effects, synthetic processes, or collage to superficially extend ideas
- displayed a systematic layout to show extension of ideas but lacked a critical approach to identify most successful works to regenerate from.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:**

- provided a range of options at the start of the portfolio offering multiple pathways
- integrated methods and ideas from a range of contemporary models implicitly
- made purposeful decisions about which pictorial options to pursue or abandon
- created varied pictorial shifts that were refreshing without resorting to new subject matter
- refined concepts in an intelligent, experimental, and critical way e.g. the use of colour to set the tone or atmosphere
- possessed a clear understanding of the function of the portfolio layout related to the criteria.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

A broad range of subject matter was represented. Still life, animals, and digital processes were more evident and used to explore topical issues, imaginary happenings, and Surrealist themes. Analogue processes were less prevalent but often used with sound control of techniques. Many candidates' portfolios centred on individual interests, allowing for refreshing interpretations of themes and established practices.

Developing ideas through formal photographic concerns was common. Successful candidates demonstrated good understanding of camera functions and investigated pictorial elements and principles such as light, shadow, depth-of-field framing, and viewpoint. Candidates who were less successful often resorted to filters, effects, and layering to compensate for a lacking knowledge.

Collage was heavily used by candidates as a picture-making device. When used effectively, it was appropriately used in relation to specific established practices studied and in the context of the photographic proposition being explored.

Candidates that embarked on a Documentary or Straight Photography proposition used a range of models to drive development of pictorial ideas. Within this approach, a strong understanding of the genre allowed candidates to explore a depth of ideas through photographic devices to regenerate pictorially.

The integration of text and image was not well-resolved by many candidates. When established photographic conventions were not clearly understood, the outcomes often resembled poorly designed posters. Less successful candidates often appeared to have

referenced other fields or simply used text to 'label' subject matter. Successful candidates clearly understood the purpose and effect of text in the established contexts studied and used this to advance their ideas.

The quality of printing on portfolios varied widely. The apparent reliance by some candidates on low-end laser printers and photocopiers should be cautioned. Often, the paper surface/inks limited the range of tones in the images, preventing candidates from demonstrating control of the technical processes.

Candidates were sometimes disadvantaged when poor printing hindered the reading of work; resolution/exposure was incorrect; portfolio exemplars were used as artist models in a derivative manner; collage, tessellations, or colour variations were used as developments out of context, with insufficient understanding.

Successful candidates demonstrated clear understanding of photographic picture-making and a sound grasp of techniques in analogue or digital realms and often used photographic paper.

## **90481 Produce a body of work within printmaking to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They commonly:**

- engaged systematically with print processes with control but without understanding conventions
- began with a limited proposition that provided adequate information for the generation of ideas but restricted sustained development or extension
- created work with a limited range of plates, relying on them to develop ideas that led to repetition and reduced their ability to extend
- relied on a theme or narrative with a narrow pictorial vocabulary that limited the extension of pictorial ideas.

### **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They commonly:**

- began with an inadequate proposition around popular culture (e.g. street art) or unrelated found imagery
- did not develop ideas because of a superficial investigation of the subject
- appeared to have limited access to printmaking materials and/or poor technical control
- used photocopies, collage, found images, and media other than printmaking, with insufficient evidence of an engagement in printmaking
- arranged work on the portfolio randomly repeating plates and collaging prints to 'fill' panels.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit commonly:**

- combined aspects from traditional and contemporary artist models to develop and extend ideas
- demonstrated technical skill and understanding across a range of print processes but relied on technical manipulation rather than exploration of ideas
- revisited pictorial issues combining these with technical considerations and new plates to extend ideas
- integrated conventions related to Installation (projections) with understanding into printmaking practice
- began the portfolio competently but on the second panel decreased performance through inconsistent layout, poor decisions, or poor time management.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:**

- demonstrated clear intentions from the outset of the portfolio and used drawing to intelligently clarify their proposition to make original prints by making purposeful and critical decisions
- showed technical facility and understood how diverse processes and media can be combined with sensitivity and understanding to make innovative works
- provided convincing evidence of further exploration of their proposition with the addition of new plates, mixed-media works, or new artistic references
- developed each idea with intent, enabling swift clarification and regeneration
- demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of print practices referencing appropriate models to support the proposition.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Candidates' submissions clearly indicated that traditional printmaking approaches are adapting to embrace the rapidly evolving interface between traditional, digital, and new technologies, which has altered the boundaries of printmaking. The perception that the field is all-encompassing without conventions and procedures, however, has begun to impact on the achievement of some printmaking candidates.

Portfolios presented by some candidates contained a body of work predominantly in paint, beginning with what appeared to be a design brief, others presented seemingly as photography submissions – common to all of these was a lack of engagement with printmaking. Successful candidates addressed traditional and/or contemporary print conventions with consistency and greater invention in the application of different media and techniques, but some candidates were disadvantaged by a lack of understanding of the parameters of contemporary print practice.

Candidates were sometimes disadvantaged by the exclusive use of processes such as cut stencils, spray paint, random collage, and found imagery. Insufficient evidence of engagement in actual printmaking and the repetitive reuse of plates/prints were characteristic of candidates operating at lower levels of achievement. These processes can

be used successfully, usually in combination with traditional techniques, but the key to this approach is the evidence of understanding.

An extension into Installation conventions to develop ideas was more common this year. Candidates who successfully incorporated this approach seemed aware of the need to appropriately document work. Size, scale, and media information were included, and each photo provided additional information about the work. At higher levels of achievement, candidates used installation in the context of contemporary print practice to regenerate their ideas into innovative and exciting new directions, with possibilities beyond the portfolio.

Reference to specific printmakers and exemplars from established printmaking practice appeared to be intermittent and implicit across candidates' submissions. Successful candidates appeared to have had exposure to explicit printmaking models and a comprehensive technical and conceptual vocabulary. Many displayed knowledge of a range of print techniques including mono-printing, collagraphs, dry-point and woodcut combined with other appropriate processes, such as lithographs and silkscreen. Many candidates appeared to utilise accessible, non-toxic, economic print processes with a high level of engagement.

## **90482 Produce a body of work within sculpture to show understanding of art-making methods and ideas**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They commonly:**

- generated ideas within a narrow proposition in a systematic manner
- explored the initial proposition to generate work but usually with limited development
- referenced established practice to develop ideas in a literal or emulous way
- used drawing and construction techniques with control but relied on a theme that was not well supported by relevant sculptural conventions and/or processes.

### **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They commonly:**

- presented work that was not consistent with Level 7 of The New Zealand Curriculum
- showed limited consideration of a systematic approach to generate and then develop more than one sculptural idea
- demonstrated insufficient sculpture-making throughout the submission
- presented repetitious documentation such as several photographs of one sculpture.

### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit commonly:**

- generated ideas towards a clear sculptural proposition related to either formal and/or expressive properties early on the portfolio
- clearly indicated a focus on more than one sculptural idea on board one, which enabled systematic development and extension of these initial investigations

- continually observed the possibilities suggested by the materials and techniques, to support the development and extension of ideas with understanding
- used materials with understanding to build on earlier successes, extending ideas with convincing solutions.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:**

- presented drawings that utilised various methods to explore and further develop ideas, enabling regeneration to occur
- documented ideas succinctly, without taking up large amounts of space on the portfolio, allowing ample room for more refined ideas to be clearly presented
- considered a broad range of established practice, implicitly including artist models outside of the sculptural field but clearly relevant and appropriate to the conceptual concerns being investigated
- critically explored a range and depth of ideas, creating outcomes that involved risk-taking and originality.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Many candidates provided evidence of carefully considered conceptual propositions relevant to their personal identity. Appropriate sculpture practitioners were referenced, and the candidates continued to make sculptural works throughout the entire submission. A majority of candidates were clearly stimulated by the opportunity to use sculpture as a vehicle for ongoing thinking and making.

An increasing number of portfolios included evidence of digital processes such as animation, performance, photo-manipulation, projection, time-based and moving images on the portfolio. Successful candidates had a clear purpose when employing these processes and investigated appropriate art practitioners working in these fields.

Presentation of drawings and photographic evidence was generally satisfactory. Candidates were sometimes disadvantaged by poorly documented work, such as indiscriminate cropping of photographs and the absence of descriptive labels (dimensions and materials) that hindered the reading of the work. Candidates who considered placing the work in an appropriate space to be recorded were often advantaged through the more clearly communicated ideas. Consideration of accessible materials, techniques, and sculpture processes was an integral part of the development in successful submissions. Artist models working outside the sculptural field (but relevant to the conceptual ideas) were successfully employed to assist candidates in the production, generation, and development of ideas. The standard requires that candidates produce a body of 'individual, related works that form a coherent series or sequence' to demonstrate the systematic development of ideas. Some candidates would have benefited from referring to the 'Explanatory Notes' for the standard, which include specific information about appropriate evidence of drawing as a developmental process, the critical approach, and digital processes.