National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2011 Assessment Report

Visual Arts Level 3

90517 **Produce original work within design to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas**

90667 **Produce original work within painting to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas**

90668 **Produce original work within photography to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas**

90669 **Produce original work within printmaking to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas**

90670 **Produce original work within sculpture to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas**

OVERVIEW

These reports should be used in conjunction with the NZQA Visual Arts level 3 exemplars to help students work within the constraints and opportunities provided by the achievement standard(s) and the submission requirements. These and previous reports can be used by students as a focus for discussion and critique as they are developing their art works.

STANDARD REPORTS

90517 Produce original work within design to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas

COMMENTARY

The achievement standard demands a high level of commitment, which was achieved to a considerable level in 2012.

Community-based campaigns tackled such subjects as health, the environment, social injustice, and child safety. Others promoted musical events, a new gallery, a dance studio, or a fashion label. Sports and architecture featured as popular subjects in a large number of briefs. Some candidates chose book illustration and clearly understood their target audience and genre. Many candidates, when promoting a magazine, began with the design of a masthead.

A clear and concise brief was very helpful to the candidate. The proposition needed to sustain interest and support new directions throughout the portfolio. Whole-school programmes are not encouraged at this level.

A number of candidates generated research at the start of the portfolio in the form of an image bank. It was exciting to see how many candidates took their own photographs, and in a number of cases directed confident photo shoots.

Candidates used a wide range of drawing strategies and approaches to media to generate their initial ideas. Some candidates worked by hand or with collage and used a scanner to record these images. This allowed for the development of drawings away from a computer, while being able to maintain the unique character in digital format.

Candidates achieving the standard with Merit or Excellence took time to find appropriate artistic models. They understood how using a broad range of established practice could help solve problems and extend their ideas. It is, however, disappointing to still find a number of candidates merely replicating the work of their artistic models.

It was very evident when candidates understood the concept underlying their brief considered their target audience. Coupled with skilful and fluent application of the formal design elements – type, colour, space, line – generally these portfolios communicated their message very successfully.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- presented a mood board that outlined their starting point
- used a range of drawing conventions and media approaches to generate ideas
- explored a series of pictorial and graphic options, at the beginning of the portfolio
- presented work in a coherent and logical manner
- showed knowledge of established practice and considered both style and genre in choosing their artistic models

- analysed and related successful aspects from earlier work to regenerate ideas on board two
- showed knowledge of suitable design and illustrative techniques appropriate to target audience
- printed options at an appropriate size
- considered and controlled the use of colour
- did not use an excessive amount of typeface options on any one solution
- analysed text and image relationships, ensuring that the message to be communicated was clear
- understood that low-dpi photographs resulted in pixelated images
- avoided stretching the images
- presented final outcomes as very small images, which made it difficult to evaluate their success
- did not sustain the pace and depth of the initial enquiry, across three boards.

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 typically:

- began without a brief, or in some cases a brief that did not make sense
- lacked an initial resource from which ideas can be generated
- relied on shared images, supposedly from within a class programme
- repeated images often
- submitted other designer's images without any attempt to take ownership of them
- presented a portfolio with which had few options
- changed typefaces regularly without analysing or clarifying their decisions
- layered dark coloured drawings and/or dark coloured typefaces on dark backgrounds, resulting in illegible outcomes
- included too much writing on their portfolios
- placed images onto three-dimensional objects like T-shirts, boxes, shopping bags, surf boards etc without any consideration for their volumetric form
- needed to refer to more appropriate and useful established practice
- worked with computers but lacked the necessary technical knowledge and skills to control outcomes
- applied too much opacity to images resulting in a confused figure/field relationship
- demonstrated limited understanding of pictorial conventions
- demonstrated poor presentation skills where layout was confused and undisciplined
- used large-scale images to fill gaps and/or submitted too little work.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- identified the best outcome from the ideas generated and clarified
- took the time to show evidence of the 'making' of three-dimensional outcomes e.g. a garment
- used a template to make a three-dimensional package after designing the graphic communication for it

- demonstrated the success of page layouts by making the catalogue or book or magazine, and including photographs of it on the portfolio
- evaluated final outcomes by placing them in context e.g. a poster in a bus stop, a banner across a street etc
- presented work at an appropriate size and used sound layout skills when doing paste-up of their work
- showed a degree of movement within sequential bodies of work
- investigated alternative but appropriate stylistic strategies
- developed options, through drawing, that showed that they understood visually and / or conceptually, the design problem established
- continued to reference their brief while working across the portfolio
- demonstrated some understanding of the graphic relationship between typography and image to visually communicate a message / idea
- controlled and used type hierarchy – scale, weight etc
- showed knowledge and understanding of tone and colour and negative space to create focal points and spatial relationships
- showed understanding of how to select and edit while clarifying and regenerating ideas
- selected appropriate print resolution
- used appropriate weight of line when scaling images
- took ownership of the proposition through purposeful drawing
- researched useful artistic models to help develop ideas.

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 typically:

- started with a thorough resource e.g. an art-directed photo shoot, illustrations, textures, colour selections, stock imagery, typefaces, and a purposeful mood board that established a 'look and feel' to the work
- acknowledged their client / market / purpose from the outset
- interpreted drawing in a lateral way and searched to find and demonstrate their unique voice
- used sophisticated hand-drawn techniques and integrated them successfully with digital technology
- made sensitive typeface selection appropriate to the intentions of their design brief
- selected and controlled colour purposefully
- edited thumbnail drawings with confidence
- used a formal investigation into type and image to help strengthen the communication
- recognised the conceptual underpinning of their brief at all times
- explored more than one way of communicating that could be humorous, narrative-based, ironic, campaign-based, propaganda-centred, or playful
- synthesised artistic models from design and from other disciplines into their work
- expanded the enquiry on board three in an intelligent manner
- when using graphic novel, developed characters with a range of expressions and moods appropriate to the narrative.

90667 Produce original work within painting to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas

COMMENTARY

Overall, the quantity and quality of submissions for this painting examination was pleasing. Of interest also was the broad range of painting practice submitted. Genres of work which included book illustration, street art, pop-surrealism, new abstraction, advertising, architecture, installation were used.

Some submissions used a complex compositional device where interactions or dissolution between works occurs. For example, triptych or the interlocking of macro and micro forms commonly found in Māori carving were at times used successfully to relate individual works to one another across the developing portfolio. Candidates who used these devices carefully, without pictorial / compositional confusion, were more successful because their intent was clearer.

Some candidates chose to use media from outside traditional painting practices and effectively integrated these into developing painting projects. Photographic media, installation, digital media, and model / marguette-making were all used by candidates to generate subject matter, analyse established ideas, and deepen the sophistication of work. This is not to say that these hybrid practices were always successful but when used with skill and integrity, they were able to reflect the vibrancy of contemporary Painting.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- presented work that had resulted from good preliminary drawing and experimentation
- managed the constraints of the three-panel format with skill to show how ideas were developed
- linked ideas, methods, and media
- applied the influences provided by appropriate artists' models that were relevant to the ideas and types of work that were important to the candidate
- forced poorly reasoned change onto the developing project that did not allow for the integration of issues important to the early work.

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 typically:

- lacked skill in conventional drawing and painting procedure
- drew or coloured in over photography in an attempt to produce an effect of realist or photorealist painting
- used collage, paint splatters, dribbles, glitter, shellac, texture, or 3D relief to fracture, complicate, or accessorise a series of works that lacked sufficient subject matter
- used poor quality paint, limiting ability to control spatial illusion, painterly surface and form.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- integrated an investigation of colour into the larger inquiry of the project
- gathered a good range of subject matter relating to imagery, media, and colour that was useful to sustain the project at a high level
- selected and applied appropriate references related to genre, but failed to synthesise this influence into their own work
- demonstrated a thorough approach when generating and analysing aspects of their project, but sometimes struggled with synthesis; thus, such portfolios lacked the depth and capacity to build and deepen the work.

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 typically:

- maintained a sustained investigation into the use of media and technique that appeared to represent the candidates' interests and skill. Examples of this were a body of work in which the candidate focussed on watercolour painting as both a means of experimentation, development, and the production of finished works, or a portfolio in which the inquiry into colour and surface used heavy impasto and was focused on throughout
- took a mature approach to the use of artists' models; themes, media, procedure, or methods were integrated into own work
- demonstrated a reflection of the candidates' own interests and tastes, choice of style, genre, and artistic precedent.

OTHER COMMENTS

This 14-credit achievement standard represents the submission of work from 140 hours of nominal teaching, learning, and assessment. This work is edited down to fit onto three panels.

The layout of the portfolio should reflect the development of the project's ideas and focus, not necessarily its development over time. Therefore, candidates should be advised to avoid fixing works to the portfolio before the end of the course of study. This will allow the layout of the portfolio to be altered to reflect what the candidate sees as being the most important work, to convey the strengths of the project. The discovery of options and the analysis of successful groups of works can be greatly assisted by moving the works around to compare them.

90668   Produce original work within photography to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas

COMMENTARY

The Visual Arts fields are separate and distinct subjects, each with their own particular characteristics and constraints. In Photography, this includes the basics of light, tone, depth of field, viewpoint, scale etc. It also encompasses particular technical aspects dependant on the type of photographic exploration being done e.g. colour, surface, Photoshop, montage etc.

Candidates who were successful in this examination showed explicit understanding and appropriate use of these aspects, in conjunction with their ideas. Candidates were unable to achieve the standard where they engaged principally in the language of a different field e.g. Design.

Although there can be crossovers between Visual Arts fields (and often students use ideas and methods from established practice in other fields), there was an increasing number of submissions where the slippage into other fields was inappropriate. This was particularly the case for submissions where text, typography, and poster-making were so prevalent that the candidate lost their connection with the practice of photography and may have been better off submitting in Design.

One of the key aspects of photographic language is editing. The best submissions were tightly edited and formatted to best support the candidate's conceptual development. They considered the sizing of images in relation to their importance and used series and sequencing to convey supporting ideas. These portfolios did not include every image from a shoot, but edited effectively in order to present the key aspects of the idea.

Full panel print-outs sometimes inhibited the editing process, as it appeared that often the images had not been viewed at the final size until the screen dump was printed. In addition, where candidates presented in this way and their work was too large for the A1 panel, they were unlikely to be successful.

Many candidates chose to explore a popular book, text or film scenario and presented work that illustrated or narrated this. Often, in this case, the outcome was already in existence. Candidates, who found their own expression and direction within the story in order to fulfil the regeneration and clarification requirements of the standard, were able to achieve highly.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- showed engagement with an idea, subject matter, or pictorial device across three panels
- used technical devices appropriately and for a pictorial purpose e.g. PhotoShop filters
- struggled to maintain clarity of ideas and intention on panel three
- used photographic pictorial devices such as depth of field, scale, reframing etc, to develop their idea
- presented work that was able to be read through the use of controlled lighting, tone, colour etc.

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 typically:

- selected a very limited subject matter that did not provide sufficient material to sustain an exploration across three panels
- repeated images or ideas, not allowing for regeneration
- used montage or 'scrap booking' as a method of combining ideas for panel three
- did not undertake a sufficiently in-depth course of study for level 8 of the NZ Curriculum
- founded their work principally in practice other than photography, particularly design and mixed media.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- used a variety of formats and viewpoints to advance the pictorial proposition
- established options and recognised which were successful
- understood the genre within which they were working and maintained this throughout the submission
- consistently provided options for development on panel one and two but ran out of critical understanding on panel three, and reinforced ideas already seen on panel two rather than showing further development.

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 typically:

- provided a wide range of options in both pictorial and conceptual approaches
- pushed their ideas beyond a safe or obvious pathway for development
- used established practice from fields other than photography with purpose to synthesise and extend ideas
- mastered the technical requirements and characteristics of their chosen area of study, whether it was analogue, antiquarian, digital etc.
- continued to make high-level decisions through to the end of panel three.

90669 Produce original work within printmaking to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas

Commentary

The diversity and inventiveness of Printmaking practice this year demonstrated an understanding of both traditional and digital printmaking techniques and processes and current contemporary art practice. Many candidates took personal ownership of their proposition and provided options to allow for experimentation and development in a range of topics including evidence this year of textile printmaking. Many candidates thought outside the square with surface, seeking a range of surfaces to print on to such as plastics, walls, fabric, latex, cardboard boxes and furniture.

This year candidates selected topics from an area of interest often related to contemporary events such as war, politics and social issues. Many were dealing with these in mature and sophisticated ways based on a thorough body of research and investigation that became obvious in the candidates decision making process.

Traditional printmaking processes and methods such as monotype, lithography, screen printing, dry point and etching were used with skill and understanding. Text continued to be used more purposefully and many students considered a variety of ways to depict their ideas. These came in the shape of combining several pictorial devices or techniques such as montage and collage. The re-contextualising of prints into three-dimensional spaces appears to becoming more popular. This often enabled students to consider scale and give the illusion of their prints being larger than they were.

We are seeing more candidates using digital processes as support or in conjunction with other more traditional techniques and as backgrounds for further layering of other print processes. Some portfolios showed print works being scanned and manipulated in Photoshop and then printed digitally. It was pleasing to see such processes being used successfully to allow candidates to explore different compositional options, however digital processes should not be seen in an ends in themselves.

Teachers should encourage candidates to constantly revisit earlier investigations and to seek new pathways that their ideas could extend into, and to select and integrate those possibilities into their work. It is important for candidates not to become to over-dependent on the selected artist models they research as they can be seen as overlooking pictorial options within the work being generated.

The use of a whole panel for one or two works, or in particular the over reliance on one or two plates, does not allow the candidate to show evidence of clarification and regeneration of ideas. Candidates should be encouraged to continue to develop skills in research to extend their own ideas and to be motivated by models of artistic practice with which they can identify. It is essential that teaching and learning programmes provide candidates with many opportunities and latitudes to explore a range of interests and options. This will allow for candidates to evaluate and critically reflect their practice and process.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- used a consistent visual vocabulary in combination with appropriate techniques, despite the fact that sometimes there were elements of repetition
- demonstrated a satisfactory level of technical facility with the print processes selected
- established a sound proposition that provided sufficient evidence of the study of a theme or concept that enabled candidates to generate and clarify pictorial ideas in a linear progression
- offered some depth and exploration of subject matter or theme to extend and regenerate ideas; in most cases, this was supported with appropriate research of selected contemporary art practice
- demonstrated evidence of idea development by using a range of compositional devices and appropriately used print sequences to support their proposition.

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 typically:

- showed very little evidence in the development of ideas
- unable to sustain a comm on theme over three panels to show a systematic approach
- demonstrated poor facility
- with processes, materials, and media used and compositional devices were not understood often representing weak technical ability in cutting, making plates, or a lack of control in printing and use of ink, including wiping, layering, rolling, and mixing
- demonstrated a lack of research relevant to the proposition undertaken, therefore presenting ideas that were confused and unclear
- presented starting points that were limited by subject matter and initial resources, resulting in an unsustainable enquiry.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- showed a critical analysis of ideas that were systematically developed and reviewed, showing understanding of editing and ordering of sequences of prints, each print building on the previous one
- demonstrated strong technical knowledge and skill with digital and traditional printmaking processes
- showed understanding of the characteristics and constraints of a range of print practices
- presented themes that were original and ideas that were clearly evaluated, to provide more than one possible direction for further investigation
- utilised a depth of research on a topic or selected subject matter to inform ideas, including pictorial devices and processes appropriate to selected established practice.

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 typically:

- demonstrated purposeful and critical evaluation
- showed facility of print conventions and practice through the use of a range of media and materials
- fluently demonstrated intelligent decision making and editorial skills to identify ideas that were not adding to the investigation in order to purposefully focus on synthesis, regeneration, and visual crafting
- demonstrated a high level of ownership of their development process
- presented an independent investigation that synthesised unexpected approaches and multiple directions to obtain original ideas
- represented high levels of risk-taking, resulting in insightful outcomes
- demonstrated the ability to depart from various types of established practice to enable the production of creative and innovative ideas through printmaking.

90670   Produce original work within sculpture to show extensive knowledge of art-making methods and ideas

COMMENTARY

Many candidates operated with a high degree of confidence in the engagement of clear sculptural propositions. The ability to employ research to good effect in the production of work has helped candidates broaden their understanding of sculptural practice. It was apparent that candidates had taken advantage of the opportunities to attend both local and national exhibitions. It was also pleasing to see candidates make good use of readily available materials and sculptural techniques in the production of work.

Some candidates still misunderstood the notion of performance as a genuine part of sculptural practice. It is not appropriate to engage in creative play, dress up, or faux performance as a way to merely activate an object or installation proposition. Where performance was used appropriately, the submission clearly started within the realms of performance and was appropriately documented as such. These candidates also pursued an honest performance or sculptural act that used real materials in context with a genuine audience or carefully considered activity. The inclusion of site, materials, performance duration, and other important contextual information was provided in concise notes at the bottom of the relevant images.

Candidates who were successful in the documentation of video and installation used images that described a range of viewpoints that allowed for a clear reading of how the installation operated in space. The inclusion of brief notes indicating site and duration of video or kinetic work helped establish the candidate's level of understanding about the conventions of this kind of work.

Digital drawing processes have become increasingly popular. Successful candidates understood how digital drawing processes can be used appropriately to develop ideas, rather than be used as a substitute for real sculptural resolutions. In some cases, candidates used drawing that operated as a parallel informative process to the three-dimensional work.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- used simple and readily available sculptural processes and / or materials to work through ideas quickly and efficiently
- created a body of work that was clearly informed by traditional established sculptural practice
- used appropriate processes to explore traditional sculptural ideas such as transformation of form through physical force
- generated ideas in response to a traditional sculptural proposition such as scale shift
- investigated possibilities of one or two similar materials in a series of related sculptural resolutions
- used a basic knowledge of a sculptural proposition to work through ideas logically and predictably.

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 typically:

- presented work that was not at Level 8 of the New Zealand Curriculum
- produced only one or two sculptural works within a body of other creative activity
- fixated on the communication of a theme or social/political issue at the expense of sculptural practice
- engaged in creative play that did not use ideas or methods from recent or established sculptural practice
- presented quantities of small repetitive exercises with materials that showed no regeneration of ideas
- explored only one idea, usually in the creation of a limited form or forms, that was re-contextualised or resurfaced in a different material or colour.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- established a clear sculptural proposition that tested a range of methods and techniques to develop and refine the sculptural outcomes
- utilised the aesthetic of established and recent practice with confidence
- used photographic documentation to describe the context of a sculptural work as well as clearly showing detail of the work
- showed an understanding of how a sculpture's site can influence the reading of the work
- started a submission with a clear and simple sculptural proposition that grew naturally and organically into options for further development
- employed a systematic approach to evaluating ideas and presented these ideas in an edited hierarchy of image, so that the size of the image delineated its importance.

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 typically:

- used prior research alongside experimentation of methods and processes that allowed for a high level of resolved sculpture at the start of the submission
- understood the appropriate point at which to shift the scale of work in context to site and conceptual and/or formal position
- applied an understanding of established practice that showed an ability to present their own sculptural ideas through a synthesis of ideas based within a central proposition
- used appropriate attitudes to honest performance or sculptural acts that used materials in context, with a genuine audience or situation
- made lateral jumps in the relating of ideas and methods in the production of work, providing opportunities for unexpected outcomes in finished sculpture
- maintained technical control with processes, materials, and techniques that allowed the candidate to produce a range and richness of ideas.