

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2013 Assessment Report

Visual Arts Level 3

- 90455 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within design practice**
- 90456 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within painting practice**
- 90457 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within photography practice**
- 90458 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within printmaking practice**
- 90459 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within sculpture practice**

STANDARD REPORTS

Design

90455 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within design practice

COMMENTARY

Overall the standard of work for level 3 Design submissions reflected a seamless adoption of the newly aligned achievement standard. The range of design specialisation across the submitted portfolios was very encouraging. Briefs spanned the wider design field, including costume design, industrial and furniture design, environmental design, interior design, brand and identity design, social campaigns and commentary, popular culture, publication design (children's books and graphic novels), character development and manga, motion graphics, music videos, promotional video, and animations.

At the upper end of Excellence, candidates showed evidence of engaging in professionally aligned projects. These candidates demonstrated sound understanding of the visual, theoretical and conceptual contexts behind their proposal and outcomes. The high level of craft in the production of artwork in some cases exceeded level 3 expectations. Some folios presented an entire body of work that fluently capitalised on media, material and design methodologies. These folios often synthesised ideas within and across the field of design and visual arts. Within each creative phase, these candidates exhibited their ability to employ strategies from across these fields to critically inform and refine their work.

Candidates whose work is assessed at the upper end of Merit and who wish to lift their performance to Excellence level are advised to focus on their capacity to use conventions and procedures that foster greater pictorial and craft refinement. Candidates in the high merit range were sometimes heavy-handed in their execution. They might also give closer attention to their approach to selecting and analysing links within and between phases of working, in order to identify the best options for synthesis and regeneration.

Candidates whose work is assessed at the upper level of Achievement and who wish to lift their performance to Merit are advised to immerse themselves more fully within their topic and to exploit the initial resources that they use on board one. A repertoire of resources such as mood-boards, photo-shoots, maquette, site interrogation, audience identification, typeface design, observational drawing and character exploration are likely to generate a wider and deeper set of initial options for inquiry. Evidence of proficient use and integration of media, process and materials, combined with the ability to purposefully execute their own combinations, selections and refinement might well move candidates into the Merit range.

The Not Achieved results for 2013 reflected folios that presented artwork at an inappropriate scale, or that presented processes or outcomes that showed an over-reliance on images sourced from other practitioners, without evidence of adjustment or new formations. A lack of sufficiency was easily identified in these cases, as the amount of work presented on Not Achieved folios was simply not comparable to the national standard or benchmarks.

Candidates who left a significant portion of a board empty, or who presented artwork at a scale that was discordant with the collateral and formats under investigation, (such as very

large business cards the size of magazine covers), failed to meet the requirements of the standard. Candidates are required to select and manage a brief that enables them to get involved, and that encourages them to play to their pictorial, formal and technical strengths.

The integration of a range of contemporary design conventions highlighted the value candidates are placing on research in conjunction with making (practice). Projects/briefs that encouraged a wider and more inventive set of design collateral were a feature of the 2013 design submissions.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- presented an image bank at the outset of board one that they had some degree of authorship of i.e. a mood board, a montage, observational drawing, tools of the trade collection, an art directed photo-shoot, a script, character development or story board
- determined a brief relevant to the field of design and were able to outline a project scope, an application list and present outcomes in context e.g. a call to action campaign presented collateral such as badges, interactive brochures, posters, public installations, performance etc.
- showed evidence of having thought about the logical and systematic layout of their folio
- worked systematically to identify and generate typographical options that were suitable to subject or message and appropriate to the format and collateral outcomes being explored
- presented ideas that were underpinned by a practical understanding of 2D and 3D design conventions which were reformed and brought together to extend and communicate ideas
- explored and reformed appropriate conventions associated with logo design that were pertinent to their chosen topic and or brand
- employed three dimensional maquette and drawing strategies alongside site, scale, form, function and material investigations to inform and reform ideas
- employed two dimensional drawing strategies such as montage, photo-shoots, collage, positive vs. negative, site installation and stencil and mixed media studies to inform and reform ideas
- established coherent links to inform the regeneration of final outcomes – this was seen across a range of design specialisation e.g. costume design, industrial and furniture design, environmental design, interior design, brand and identity design, social campaigns and commentary, popular culture, publication design (children's books, graphic novels), character development and manga, motion graphics and animations
- revisited ideas and visual approaches by applying some new working methods and conventions from the field of design and visual arts
- exercised control over their colour palette and demonstrated, through the regeneration of their ideas, that editorial decisions were being made
- produced artwork that adequately utilised media to communicate ideas, message and function
- refrained from simply reproducing other designers' work
- presented a sufficient amount of work and used all of the available folio space to present developmental phases of work alongside final work, avoiding the need for filler or workbook drawings.

NOT ACHIEVED

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

- produced insufficient evidence and presented outcomes at an inappropriate scale which revealed a lack of own work
- operated at a level lower than the skills and knowledge required in the level 3 Design Standard
- presented processes and outcomes that showed an over-reliance on images sourced from other photographers, designers and artists without any adjustment, reformations or extension of their own
- produced and presented digital outcomes that were pixelated and/ or illegible as a result of poor resolution and image size
- did not choose a brief that enabled them to get involved and start from a position of relevance or personal interest
- produced and presented drawings and 3D maquette that were poorly crafted and inappropriate to the brief in terms of media, scale, function, materiality and design solution
- brought together too many elements and conventions with little control which showed conflicting and unconsidered text and image selection, weak combination and readability issues
- consistently presented an inadequate and small repertoire of 2D and 3D drawing strategies and approaches
- did not start with an appropriate resource bank to fuel the generation of ideas and sustain extension into new work
- did not provide enough evidence of research or show use of models to inform their visual approach or working methods
- presented work that showed limited use or understanding of conventions that failed to inform and propel the practical generation of ideas
- were unable to reform or extend ideas because they were not working systematically through a line of enquiry and/or an iterative process.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- choreographed the layout of the folio in order to show a systematic and cohesive line of inquiry
- provided evidence of being genuinely involved in their brief and set about exploring particular ideas that they identified as relevant to their subject, topic, client, audience, aesthetic pitch (look and feel) and brand (product/service) values
- provided a sufficient body of reference and resource material that they had ownership of i.e. mood-board, art directed photo shoot, montage or drawing series, all of which were founded in appropriate design models within the field of costume design, industrial and furniture design, environmental design, interior design, brand and identity design, social campaigns and commentary, popular culture, publication design (children's books, graphic novels), character development and manga, motion graphics and animations

- employed a wide repertoire of 2D and 3D conventions that were purposefully integrated throughout the development of their ideas
- managed an iterative process where they were able to selectively revisit and extend ideas to achieve an intended outcome
- identified links between phases of working and considered selections in order to determine suitable directions and extensions
- were able to select and combine visual strategies from particular conventions to produce work that integrated text and image relationship/form and function in final outcomes
- analysed outcomes between each phase of working and subsequently looked for new combinations to communicate message and enhance end user experience
- unpacked the work of other practitioners and related findings to their own work which ensured and informed the extension of craft, ideas, media and outcomes.

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:

- took ownership of their topic at the outset by employing 2D and 3D drawing methods to generate a wide range of potential ideas and directions
- enhanced and refined design solutions by paying attention to visual aesthetics and craftsmanship
- communicated conventions associated with the candidate's choice of genre, typography, media, collateral, aesthetics, visual language repertoire and end user knowledge
- identified and explored collateral formats that were appropriate to their brand, audience, narrative, genre, message or project purpose
- identified an aesthetic sensibility and employed media, process and methods that they had the skill set to execute
- applied a critical framework (system/process) for evaluating ideas and selecting formal visual language strategies from research
- applied a critical framework to identify best avenues for conceptual and visual synthesis and extension
- managed an iterative process that systematically and fluently triangulated and presented research, critical thinking and 'making' phases across the folio
- communicated their own exploration and findings from the following phases:
brainstorming; resource generation; developing linear and lateral options for inquiry; exploring approaches from precedents from contemporary 2D and 3D practices; prolifically making own work; extending and refining ideas through knowledge of subject and experimentation; taking risks and shifting formats; commandeering a repertoire of 2D and 3D design and visual arts conventions; questioning and clarifying outcomes; locating context and reflecting on turning points worthy of integration and synthesis; refining and crafting outcomes.

Painting

90456 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within painting practice

COMMENTARY

2013 candidates presented an impressive array of painting submissions that showed enthusiasm, enjoyment and skill in the making of artworks. The increased number of folios submitted for the examination reflects the popularity and vitality of the Visual Arts and the important contribution they make to New Zealand culture.

The broad range of approaches to painting practice seen across the cohort of submissions in 2013 was noteworthy.

There are many candidates working in forms of Expressionism. While this genre of painting is no more worthwhile than any other, many folios demonstrate fluency in established procedure and technique and develop an integrated symbolic vocabulary to their work that is appropriate to this type of painting.

Collage is used successfully to integrate divergent subject matter, to test figure and ground relationships, to combine and juxtapose found imagery with painting and to produce humour. Collage is often used purposefully and skillfully to regenerate work, analyse and re-phrase an established idea and develop a new position.

Forms of painting that use architectural, geometric and 3-dimensional space are at times handled very well. There is evidence of candidates having established skill in technical/architectural drawing, tonal drawing and in applying flat 'hard-edged' paint suitable to this type of work.

Forms of painting derived from Maori art making are also done well when traditions of practice are integrated with established and contemporary methods and ideas. Particularly, some very successful submissions made sophisticated interplays between traditional forms and popular culture, reflecting a personal dialogue that the candidate has in their own experience. These submissions often show the investigation of interplays of cultural tradition and a maintaining of the integrity of those traditions. A wide variety of artists from established and contemporary contexts are an obvious inspiration to candidates.

Fantasy and Surrealist painting traditions are popular this year. Successful submissions show an awareness of the pictorial and symbolic conventions of such painting and how to avoid overstatement and cliché. Some surprisingly complex and successful distortions and disjunctions of single pictorial space impressed the markers.

Markers recognise obvious similarities between folios this year that seem to reflect class programmes devised by teachers which prescribe such things as:

- subject matter
- method or sequences of production
- media and procedures for their use
- formatting the layout of works on folios
- selection of artists to use as models of practice.

Such programmes which govern how a group of candidates practice, risk students being forced to:

- make types of work they don't like or don't have the skills for
- use methods inappropriate to the type of work they are making
- make inappropriate change on a developing project through the introduction of an artist model that is untimely or irrelevant to the work at hand
- grapple with the change produced by the unnecessary introduction of new media and procedures.

All such prescriptions can divert a candidate from developing a genuine, purposeful and synthetic project in painting. Where class oriented programmes are used, they should be structured as flexibly as possible so that highly able students can work away from or push against the constraints of the programme. Students should be enabled to develop an interrelated set of parameters that include subject matter, media, methods of working and context or artistic precedent that are devised to meet their individual artistic purpose.

There was a decrease in the number of submissions where work was unnecessarily or thoughtlessly embellished with splatters, dribbles, shellac, glitter, ripping or chopping up. This is not to say that such elements are never appropriate or useful, but that they have been used to produce the appearance of re-forming or advancing a body of work, when in fact their use arises out of a lack of purpose or analysis in the existing work.

Many submissions reveal a project of work being driven by a 'theme'; an overarching topic or subject that is abstract or social or emotional. Are there good and bad themes, topics or subject matter that can be chosen? It seems hard to think of a subject or theme that is a poor one. But some submissions show a chosen subject or theme handled badly. Problems arise in the unknowing lapse into cliché or poorly understood use of ideas and issues. Forcing an abstract theme onto a type of work where expressions or representations of that theme are difficult or impossible make it confusing for candidates to develop and clarify ideas. Choosing a subject that the candidate lacks the skills to deal with procedurally limits the possibility of successfully synthesising a body of work in painting.

Again this year, too many submissions featured paintings made over photocopies or photographic prints as a means for students to disguise a lack of skill in rendering imagery realistically. Students and teachers should consider whether the skill set of students is sufficient and appropriate to/for the type of work they wish to make. Some such submissions were clearly motivated by an interest to consider and integrate photographic picture making and painting. Too heavy a reliance on painting over photographs can limit the depth and range of such inquiry.

The use of photo-copies or prints hidden under a veil of paint to stand-in for imagery that a candidate is not capable of rendering in paint should be avoided.

Good submissions reveal that the student can use the constraints of the folio format to demonstrate how they reflect on their work, develop a sense of purpose and prioritise selected paths of inquiry. Some submissions present limited and carefully selected generative work that makes clear the important origins of the project. There is no repetition or redundant work. This shows that the student is reflective and analytic about their work and understands its purpose.

Again, candidates should refrain from sticking works to the folio before they are certain of the overall effect, or continuum in their folio. As with the design and installation of exhibitions by professional artists, the editing and selection of passages and groups of works in a folio is an important phase of working in itself which significantly influences how the work as a whole is interpreted and evaluated.

Candidates should be encouraged to select types of painting that interest them and to examine, through both contextual background study and practical inquiry, the ideas, techniques, media and methods of practice appropriate to their selection. Developing an individuated practical project that applies and synthesises such practices is what the achievement standard invites.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- showed in some submissions use of conventions of comics and graphic novels with sincerity or parody, but prioritised story-telling over the testing of pictorial ideas. This made it impossible to achieve the standard at a higher level because insufficient time and space had been given to testing composition, use of media, the development of an individual technique, and/or dynamics of colour
- included photos or drawings of subject matter when works that follow immediately from them show this subject matter being used to develop ideas. This is a waste of space in the folio and reduces space to show evidence of the development, refinement and re-generation of ideas
- showed a method of working where observational drawing and painting from natural or built environments systematically give way to abstraction
- developed successful individual or small groups of works but did not reveal how they have reflected and advanced upon these successes by integrating them into subsequent works, or through the well-considered application of influences from another artist
- showed how an influence from an artistic model has been observed and applied to their own work using their own subject matter, motifs, and compositions.

NOT ACHIEVED

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

- showed in some submissions use of conventions of comics by directly copying characters and stories in which they appear from existing sources. They then made superficial and poorly executed additions of background media treatment or text without re-phrasing, subverting, or juxtaposing these in ways that developed an integrated body of work in painting. Barbie, Mickey, Minnie, Dragon Ball Z, Hulk and Superman copies feature in this group of submissions
- (some submissions) attempted to develop a comic by developing their own narratives but were lacking in skill and knowledge of procedure to adequately control an inquiry into 'picture making' as they did so
- appeared capable of imagining or generating a pictorial idea but were insufficiently skilled in the use of established procedure to develop this idea to a level adequate to meet the standard

- featured paintings made over photocopies as a means for students to disguise or compensate for a lack of skill in rendering imagery realistically. Consideration must be given to whether the skill set of candidates is sufficient and appropriate for the type of work they wish to make
- failed to integrate basic relationships between background and foreground. In some submissions, shifts in colour, scale and proportion, light and dark were inadequately tested for their influence on pictorial dynamics. Particularly, some candidates merely made a set of textured grounds and repeatedly 'plonked' cut out figures or images onto them
- chose to work in collage as a means to generate possibilities for content, but did not integrate these into subsequent painted works where the relationships of tension or disjunction between found and invented imagery should be an important part of the project
- made explicit copy or pastiche of work by an artistic model. This revealed lack of knowledge of how to develop one's own work and limited the potential to do so
- applied photographs of photocopies to paint over in an apparent desire to demonstrate skill and interest in realist/photorealist painting. Candidates would be better off to paint simplified or stylised figures/imagery and accept the limits of their skills in rendering, knowing that this does not limit their ability to make good painting.

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 portraiture successfully – a sample of folios using portraiture showed sensitivity to this genre of painting. Given the constraints to composition in portraiture, candidates manipulated colour, mark making/gesture and subject choice to examine both the representational and expressive qualities possible
- chose to use photographically derived imagery as subject matter and undertook their own photo-shoots. This is to be encouraged as it tends to produce an investment in and understanding of the candidate's own project from an early point and provides an opportunity for the candidate to generate and develop pictorial ideas from the outset
- chose to work in conventions of collage as a means to generate and test possibilities for content. This was then integrated into painted works where the relationships of tension or disjunction between found and invented imagery were an important part of the project. The potential for humour arising from such disjunction is often a feature of submissions using collage at this level.

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:

- (some) used ideas and imagery derived from conventions and traditions of Comics and Graphic novels that provided opportunity to investigate pictorial inquiry that was 'painterly' i.e. the development of a sequential narrative was integrated into inquiry into image making, composition, use of colour and media
- subverted comic book convention to make ironic or satirical work that contrasted traditional distinctions between 'popular' and 'high' culture or between popular and fine art

- in submissions where candidates chose to develop work sincerely engaged by comics and graphic novels, they used methods and conventions of practice embedded in these forms of visual arts i.e. they developed their own characters, placed them in stories or worlds of their own invention and tested pictorial issues of framing, sequencing of time, point of view and image-text relationships
- demonstrated a high quality of figure drawing and rendering (where such were a feature of the type of work chosen). This may reflect that teachers and students are negotiating the selection of types of work/genres that are appropriate to the skills and interests of students and/or the introduction of courses of study in figure drawing/painting in junior school that will prepare students for subsequent projects at this level
- demonstrated candidates' fluent use of paint media, developing individual technique sensitive to the tactile and material qualities of paint, effects of surface. These qualities are part of Painting's defining character
- made every work in the folio contribute something important to the accumulating evidence of the candidate's developing work. No redundant or irrelevant works
- revealed that some preliminary works which generated the 'ideas' for the project have not been included in the folio, and the student has an established purpose in the project
- developed the project through a variety of successfully integrated shifts that include good individual works and that fit into a continuum of working
- revealed candidates' fluency in the use of colour to test variations of figure and ground, to produce pictorial hierarchy (emphasis), and to produce meaning.

Photography

90457 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within photography practice

COMMENTARY

The overall quality of 2013 photography submissions was high both technically and conceptually. Candidates used photographically rich subject matter, and there was evidence of strong individual decision-making, supported by in-depth research to formulate a proposition.

An extensive range of topics, often related to contemporary events or individual issues, motivated 2013 candidates. It is important that candidates invest time in developing a proposition that will offer scope and useful questions to ask themselves, including “what am I trying to communicate with my work? What is my work about? What is the purpose of the next visit back to my site/subject?”

Candidates demonstrated diverse and creative approaches, at times playful and inventive, to photographic techniques and methods. The best examples of photographic editing software provided subtle adjustments to correct contrast and colour casts, rather than to keep working with filters. Candidates using filters or overlaid shapes need to ensure these connect to their concept. Applying every possible software editing filter to the third panel is not necessarily an avenue to extend and refine a work.

Decision-making that is the candidate’s own is central to the process of presenting a portfolio submission. The selection of pictorial devices is what supports and enhances the development and extension of ideas. It is critical that particular lighting techniques and respective light qualities are appropriate to the ideas. Lenses can support the viewpoint taken. Candidates can explore a range of lens options that are appropriate to the proposition. For example, a macro lens is likely to be more useful than simply zooming in and cropping. Viewpoint is another critical device. To investigate a subject matter thoroughly it is useful to view from both high and low angles, birds-eye-view and ground level. Candidates often strengthened their propositions by demonstrating a selection of viewpoints. Candidates articulated their decisions through the exploration of scale to very good effect. Candidates are reminded that using smaller sequences of work and signaling direction through larger works can assist in articulating their decisions and refinements to phases of working.

Printing quality and paper selection are critical factors in Photography. Paper selection and paper surface can significantly detract from or enhance the communication and reading of photographs. Inappropriate paper choice (e.g. photocopying paper) can significantly flatten the tonal range within the image. Layout and editing should occur at various stages throughout the development of a portfolio. To assist candidates with the sizing and sequencing of photographs, it is important that they print work to scale throughout the year so that issues such as ordering and resolution can be addressed. Machine prints of identical size can limit a candidate’s ability to demonstrate a decision making process. Candidates should check how their printer relates to what is on their computer screen. The print profiles setting can assist with this as for example, a purple colour cast, the stretching of photographs, and flat contrast can all disadvantage a candidate’s submission.

It is important that candidates embark on photographic investigations that are relevant to their lives, as the proposition needs to sustain momentum for the duration of the year of study. Candidates are reminded to take care in the way that photographs are arranged on the board, as this affects how they are interpreted and read. As with punctuation marks in a written paragraph, portfolio images require spaces between where one image ends and another begins. Candidates should take care to allow space between sequences of images. Candidates are also advised to test out adhesives as some can create bubbles underneath the photographs and cause damage to images.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- used subject matter and pictorial devices to assist with re-forming and extending ideas into new work
- used technical processes appropriately and for a pictorial purpose, for example: collage, photomontage and filters
- demonstrated their ability to bring together selective photographic conventions to revisit ideas from earlier work
- were able to develop coherent links between phases of work with the assistance of established practice.

NOT ACHIEVED

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

- selected a very limited subject matter that did not provide sufficient material to revisit and re-form an idea
- displayed poor technical facility with media, materials, procedures and methods used, often presenting images with poor contrast, incorrect exposure and weak technical ability with processes such as text, paint, filters and photomontage
- presented irrelevant images which conveyed ideas that were unclear with no or very little reference of established practice; evidence of very little research had been undertaken
- did not edit out earlier phases of working; often resulting in presenting every photograph they took throughout the year.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- developed more ideas by testing out combinations and analysing the links within and between their phases of working
- utilised research that was purposeful to a topic to formulate a proposition while selecting pictorial devices and methods appropriate to selected established practice
- established a range of combinations of particular conventions, that were experimented with on panels one and two, however panel three lacked the critical expansion of ideas required for Achievement with Excellence
- demonstrated proficient technical knowledge and skill with many processes.

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 methods fluently to extend and consolidate ideas, while making intelligent decisions about editing, sequencing and refining their photographs
- showed a high level of ownership with their proposition and presented an independent investigation that synthesised ideas and provided options for unexpected approaches and multiple directions
- were able to regenerate a depth of ideas and critically revisit previous work in order to expand and refine their intended outcome
- represented risk taking that was innovative and demonstrated the ability to depart from established practice which had been used to inform and direct ideas.

Printmaking

90458 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within printmaking practice

COMMENTARY

The level of printmaking submissions was of a high standard in 2013, reflecting a celebration of the act of printmaking. There was evidence of more experimentation and individual bodies of work than in previous years. Even the less strong candidates demonstrated exploration of their own ideas and an active engagement with printmaking.

Traditional print techniques such as woodcut, collage and embossing were more exquisitely handled by candidates than in previous years. Knowledge of formal printmaking conventions underpinned the majority of the work. Many of the best folios drew from a range of experimental contemporary printmaking practice. There was increased evidence of cross-field fertilisation.

Many candidates referenced cultural traditions, combining recognisable symbols and images or developing pertinent narratives in an original way. Their use of colour reflects the energy and concerns of the candidates' age and world. When black and white colour was used, it was used with reason and purpose.

In 2013 many submissions showed sensitive and intelligent exploration of the properties of paper or other printable surfaces; texture, flat relief, cutting into the edge, overlays using different thicknesses and types of paper and the ability to build up, cut out or make an impression. Candidates frequently used embossing and collage to explore spatial elements or two-dimensional relief. Candidates are advised that the selection of paper sufficient to convey their intention is an important consideration. There are inexpensive options including heavy wet strength cartridge that can be put through the photocopier in place of standard photocopy papers.

Candidates do not need to have access to highly technical print processes, such as traditional etching, to be successful in this field. The handmade approach in association with digital reproduction such as ink jet, laser printing, and the photocopier as a printing press is being used successfully. Photoshop is used more and more as a compositional and drawing tool. Scanned images are at their strength when used to re-contextualise a work and reinterpret it.

An increased number of folios appear to be founded first on ideas and then the appropriate print processes are selected to best express them. This provides a much more convincing relationship between what the folio is about and the visual and technical vocabulary that is used to express the ideas. The use of a single work on panel 3 continues to limit candidates' ability to provide evidence of regeneration, refinement, extension or synthesis of ideas in related sequences or series.

When candidates use only appropriated imagery, they effectively limit their opportunities. They do need to consider the possibility of combining found images with their own images. If candidates only use borrowed images they are frequently restricted to particular ways of using them that limit the opportunity for personal growth and creative invention. Not surprisingly, a whole-class approach to printmaking can limit the opportunity for individual candidates to demonstrate their individual development or creativity, when they can only be judged on technical differences.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- demonstrated a lack of balance between technique and ideas
- understood what was happening pictorially but not technically
- were driven by a narrative at the expense of pictorial understanding or vice versa
- showed a limited proposition which resulted in repetitive work that often used its full arsenal without discrimination. A lack of editing or selection when considering layout impacted upon the readability of the submission
- failed to recognise or revisit technical or visual strengths
- selected and used images without discernment; there were too many similar images
- showed sound skill level but little evidence of thinking or linking of ideas. Very small progression of the ideas in related series
- used artist models literally.

NOT ACHIEVED

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

- did not meet the technical standard required of level 8 of the NZ Curriculum
- undertook propositions that were confused, unreadable, or not understood by the candidate. This resulted in repeated motifs or a dependency upon appropriated imagery which did not allow for regeneration nor were they systematic
- made works which were unrelated to each other and would have benefited from a reduction in size. These smaller sequences of ideas could then have been developed into subsequent steps
- appeared to use digital processes without understanding and often masking a lack of engagement or understanding of printmaking (not enough actual evidence of printmaking)
- overused appropriated images that were not sustained, developed or integrated within a body of work
- demonstrated a lack of development – e.g. panel 1 was often stronger than panel 3
- showed a limited understanding and overuse of one technique and its possibilities.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- established the ideas strongly with panels 1 and 2, but panel 3 did not evolve or sustain that which had been established: this suggested a lack of criticality and ability to evaluate what was successful. Criticality and decision making were not clearly documented over the three panels
- demonstrated too much involvement in the narrative to make the print conventions work at the same level
- showed an experimental strength in terms of ideas and technique, with a sense of flow and refinement for example in the handling of colour.

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:

- allowed the work to keep building in terms of the ideas and pictorial exploration, implying that the candidate understood their purpose and strengths and could self-critique in order to move forward
- demonstrated an integration of the narrative with the picture making and print conventions
- engaged in a conversation of ideas which owned and celebrated a diversity of cultural influences and sources. There was a clear ownership and comprehensive understanding in the selection of conventions, original imagery
- exploited fully print techniques and the language of print – such as velvet blacks and luminous light
- employed the use of artist models as intelligent weaponry and not as a crutch.

Sculpture

90459 Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within sculpture practice

COMMENTARY

Markers observed a much stronger standard of work in 2013.

The newly aligned standard allowed assessment judgments to be made in a more holistic way that allowed markers to really engage in the language associated with assessment of Visual Arts practice. As with any small subject the statistical variance can shift greatly with small shifts in the cohort. There was a noticeable lack of whole class programs that restrict candidates to Not Achieve or Achievement. More submissions appeared to have good teacher guidance in photo documentation of sculptural practice and the editing of this work on the folio.

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- utilised a simple sculptural proposition that was built upon thematically
- engaged with making processes that were relevant to the ideas explored
- generated ideas in the field of sculpture to extend ideas
- understood basic conventions of recent and established sculptural practice
- developed coherent links between phases of working
- used simple sculptural processes and/or materials to work through 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:

- produced only one or two sculptural works within a body of other creative activity
- demonstrated a lack of understanding of sculptural conventions
- presented the same sculptural work more than once that was sometimes re-contextualised
- engaged in creative play with materials that did not result in extension of ideas
- presented unedited photo documentation of sculptural work which did not describe the forms in space or were of a poor technical quality
- fixated on the communication of a theme or social/political issue at the expense of sculptural practice
- used moving image within a digital submission to document the work being made at the expense of presenting this work in how it operated in space
- presented unedited video montage that did not engage in sculptural conventions or proposition.

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 a range of appropriate drawing strategies to develop and refine ideas
- explored combinations of sculptural methods and ideas and analysed links within and between phases of working
- demonstrated a good understanding of how materiality and process can activate ideas
- employed a clear sculptural proposition founded in both recent and established practice
- engaged in ambitious sculptural projects that were challenging and yet not always fully resolved
- used photographic documentation to describe the context of a sculptural work as well as clearly show detail of the work
- 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 commonly:

- critiqued and prioritised options within and between phases of working within a sculptural body of work
- presented genuine, ambitious and sophisticated sculptural work in a variety of modes
- understood subtle and complex relationships between methods and ideas within a body of work
- created a significant reservoir of research both sculptural and contextual within a central proposition to extend and refine a body of work
- investigated parallel ideas, materials and processes within the body of work
- employed a high level and range of technical skills that were employed strategically to extend a depth of ideas
- had a command of how materials, scale and site impacted upon works in context
- used materials, procedures and methods fluently to extend and refine a sculptural proposition
- synthesised ideas in the field of sculpture to critically inform and refine own work
- used appropriate attitudes to honest performance or sculptural acts that used materials in context with a genuine audience or situation
- understood the appropriate point at which to shift the scale of work in context to site and conceptual and/or formal position
- presented digital evidence of a sculptural investigation that started with stills of objects that grew logically into video documentation of genuine performance in a logical, well timed and edited manner.

OTHER COMMENTS

The standard of work presented for examination this year was noticeably higher than in previous years. The majority of candidates claimed ownership of individually driven sculptural propositions. There was evidence of some candidates engaging honestly in research-directed inquiry that they had a genuine interest in. These candidates were presenting work that had honesty, conviction, and aesthetic currency ahead of those who rely upon artist models to dictate their learning journey.

Candidates are encouraged to identify clear sculptural propositions that are open enough to allow for options in investigating ideas and methods in the production of work. This would then ensure that the investigation is clearly within the conventions of Sculpture as opposed to Photography or other picture-making conventions.

Photographic documentation was mostly used appropriately to give the examiners a good understanding of the sculptural work presented. Candidates who provided evidence of the spatial context of the work rather than unordered detail shots of work created a good basis to demonstrate a sculptural proposition clearly. Inadequate documentation can disadvantage candidates in that examiners have difficulty in interpreting poorly-lit, out of focus images where picture making is the primary concern at the expense of describing the sculptural work in space.

Candidates are encouraged to edit their portfolios to ensure that repeated images of work or very similar documentation of work does not impede the overall clarity. Important images or photographs should be presented in a larger format to show their importance to the body of work, as a way of demonstrating the clarification and evaluation of ideas. In other words, size of image should emphasize a hierarchy of information.

This year we received digital submissions that encompassed a range of sculptural propositions.

Successful candidates understood the conventions of moving image as another mode of presenting evidence of the criteria of this achievement standard. They demonstrated the ability to show accurately how a work operated in time as well as space. Video documentation of performance was well-labelled with site, duration and contextual information on an index page at the start of the disc. Digital submissions provide opportunity for candidates to present excellent evidence of time-based works such as kinetic sculpture, performance and interactive works. This evidence was presented as footage that was shot from a tripod, was well-lit and well edited. Candidates who, due to the time constraints of the assessment format, chose small excerpts of longer works, showed criticality in how particular works required more time to understand than others which were for example a less important work or repetitive act. The use of an index page with thumbnail video images allowed candidates to set out their work clearly so that examiners could move in and out of the submission with ease. Candidates who did this well used this page to clearly describe the work's duration and how long the presented excerpt was. For example: "A 1 hour performance in Westfield mall, 04/10/2013 (10 second excerpt)".

Digital portfolio candidates should be aware that presenting footage of how the work was made is not an efficient use of the time available to them in this format. Emphasis should be placed on the work rather than documenting the process of how work was made. A two-second photograph of the object would be a better use of the time than a one minute video of making the object. This is true especially when the proposition has nothing to do with this process of making.

Sound in digital submissions should be used appropriately in regards to sculptural conventions. For example field recording of the sound generated by real performance or kinetic sculpture. Candidates should make the sound support the sculptural proposition. The difference between sound and music as soundtrack needs to be recognized and understood by candidates. Unreferenced copyright music played continuously over the submission is detrimental to the sculptural proposition. Assessment specifications for digital submissions have been updated for 2014 and can be found on the NZQA website.