

This assessment report is based on assessments for 2023. It may not reflect achievement standards that have been updated.

2023 NCEA Assessment Report

Subject: Visual Arts
Level: Level 1
Achievement standard(s): 91914, 91915

General commentary

Most school submissions had investigated some aspects of mātauranga Māori in their programmes. A greater number of candidates specifically reflected on their own cultural narratives through their art-making propositions in 2023.

Heavily templated programmes sometimes appeared to stifle authentic workbook and exploration processes. While templates can be good starting points, candidates should also have some evidence of self-directed exploration.

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

Achievement standard 91914: Explore visual arts processes and conventions to inform own art-making

Assessment

Candidates were required to submit a workbook of 8–10 A3 pages or equivalent.

Digital submissions could be in the form of a reproduction of the 8–10 pages or a slideshow of 8–10 slides no more than 4 minutes in length if time-based components were included.

Commentary

The most successful programmes embraced the essence of the standard with an importance placed on the process. The time candidates spent thinking and doing, on the journey to their final resolved works, was authentically documented; and evidence of the failures and options not extended was as valuable as the directions candidates chose to develop, in providing evidence of Achievement.

Many submissions included extensive annotation or reflective writing and while in some cases this is useful for a candidate's own thinking process, it is not a requirement of the standard. In almost all submissions, thinking processes explained by the annotation were already evident in the visual work submitted. Annotation should be authentic for the candidate's working process. Other writing such as written artist analysis or biographical details, while acknowledged as an important part of teaching and learning, visual art-making, and as a contributing factor to arts-based literacy, does not contribute to assessment for this standard.

This new standard poses challenges and opportunities for the sector. It has been two decades since an externally assessed workbook has been part of the Visual Arts (with the exception of Scholarship, which is quite a different prospect), and many teachers may be new to assessing process work in this way. The verification process and professional development for the sector will support teachers to make judgements and refine assessment processes, so the standard can be used to value and reward the extensive thinking, making, and exploring work that candidates do on the way to their final outcomes.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- produced an adequate amount of New Zealand Curriculum Level 6 work to warrant 5 credits at NCEA Level 1. For example, at least 8 A3 pages were completed, which were moderately filled with practical work or a combination of practical and written elements.
- relied on found imagery to generate ideas and intention
- experimented with media using methods such as paint swatches or full page experiments
- used a range of media to record visual information
- explored compositional ideas through rough pencil sketching, with each compositional idea responding to intention, often by including established subject matter
- explored two or more different media, sometimes favouring one method over others. For example, a sustained pencil composition exploration was undertaken, with only a single page exploration in paint
- explored three or more media, and multiple processes
- digital art submissions included screen captures of work with different layers visible to show process and options
- photography explorations included contact sheets to show the full range of options the candidate was able to generate
- in submissions where a process image of a resolved work was included, presented experimental work leading to the resolution
- relied on guidance provided by class programmes to experiment, particularly evident in template-heavy workbooks
- relied on emulation of artist-model work without bringing own ideas into the process
- explored appropriate conventions for the media being investigated
- did not progress exploration further into application in the developmental process. For example, media experiments were carried out but not used in further studies
- demonstrated some connections between explorations but were inconsistent
- sustained threads of investigation to begin to show development of processes, materials, and techniques
- sustained exploration but the submission contained repetition or work spread out over more submission space than necessary
- culminated in a plan for a single resolved work, rather than providing multiple opportunities for development
- in structured programmes, left some exercises incomplete, but exploration elsewhere compensated for this.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- worked to their strengths when investigating media.
- made connections between threads of investigation and revisited elements from earlier experimental sequences
- reused motifs and imagery in subsequent investigations
- presented compositional explorations that involved development by rearranging elements, rather than unrelated compositional ideas
- in pencil composition sketches, demonstrated confidence in media handling and understood the purpose of this process
- experimented with media alongside pictorial and compositional exercises, and united these with small studies in particular media
- advanced the art-making intention through each investigation; options for further development often had a relationship of some kind
- integrated approaches of artist influences into experimentation where these have been used as a starting point
- moved beyond prescribed source imagery or was able to identify a particular focus within prescribed source imagery
- in digital media works, provided multiple options by rearranging elements within works and providing screen captures as evidence
- used space on pages effectively, with composition and media exploration densely packed to show more options
- in submissions at the upper end, candidates developed imagery with intent, adding or adapting elements rather than just repeating them
- handled media with confidence, starting to show control of processes relative to the art-making intention
- presented several pages of sustained and dense development, while other pages were not as comprehensive, possibly due to them being confident in certain processes or materials, and not as comfortable in others
- developed multiple possibilities for further development or resolution.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- created densely populated pages, where development of a technique or process could be seen within one page of work, allowing subsequent explorations to refine processes
- demonstrated consistent skill with media for a workbook context
- made informed choices about which processes, materials, and techniques to refine, based on previous experimentation
- were able to convey their thinking process through visual information with minimal written clarification required
- created multiple iterations of studies that brought together media explorations and compositional ideas
- presented and refined multiple possibilities for further development
- undertook sustained exploration in selected techniques that were then synthesised into candidate's own work. For example, explored a technique, then incorporated the technique into a series of experiments that developed original compositions
- synthesised artist model approaches into their own development processes

- made choices about media appropriate to mood, aesthetic, or conceptual intention
- used a variety of mark-making, exploring within one media, or exploring one idea using multiple media
- contained playful experimentation and recognised moments where experimentation 'clicked'.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not provide options for further development
- did not respond to an artistic intention, or an artistic intention was not clear
- provided sparsely populated pages
- submitted insufficient work to warrant 5 credits at NCEA Level 1
- presented work that was not appropriate for Level 6 of the New Zealand Curriculum
- submitted some content that was not appropriate for the assessment of the standard, such as whole pages dedicated to written analysis of artist influences
- contained evidence of one-off works that did not constitute experimentation
- repeated media explorations or processes without changing any factors in order to constitute experimentation
- in structured programs, left some exercises incomplete without further exploration in other areas to compensate
- presented compositional sketches that were hastily completed, ill-proportioned, or ill-considered, contributing little to the exploration of art-making options
- presented photographic explorations that contained only a handful of photographs, with no evidence of a wider generation of images
- presented exploration that showed no evidence of consideration of conventions of art-making practice.

Achievement standard 91915: Create a sustained body of related artworks in response to an art-making proposal.

Assessment

Candidates were required to submit a physical portfolio containing a body of work, with original works submitted where possible. There was no set or prescribed layout for how the works should appear on the folio; however, where artworks had been created to be viewed in a sequence, the layout had to reflect this.

The number of artworks that constitutes a body of artworks was mostly interpreted as 6–8 artworks; however, slightly more work was presented in digital art-making propositions, which seemed appropriate.

Moving Image submissions, in a screen-based medium that allows 3D media to be assessed, were permitted in 2023 but none were submitted.

Commentary

Parallels drawn between the assessment specifications and the language of the achievement criteria for Standards 91915 and 90916 allowed verifiers to draw on their previous knowledge and make accurate assessment judgements.

The intention for Standard 91915 is that the related works within the sustained body of artworks are resolved final works, which have evolved from an earlier process of exploration, experimentation, and development. In 2022, some submissions still included process drawings, with dry media or photography used to introduce the art-making proposition. In 2023, it was pleasing to see that the majority of submissions did not include preparatory imagery or observational recording drawings. Instead, most candidates presented resolved works that were informed by an art-making proposition from the beginning.

Elements of mātauranga Māori and knowledge from other cultures were integrated into works. In some submissions, text was used as an expression of mātauranga. When using text, in either te reo or English, it needs to be considered as both a pictorial element and conceptual element of the artwork. Conceptual considerations should consider the connection between the meaning of the text and the pictorial elements it is being placed with or alongside. When using imagery derived from mātauranga Māori and other cultures, it is important for candidates to incorporate these within their art-making intention.

More successful submissions that utilised text, fully integrated the text into the individual work, adding both meaning and depth to the artwork. Less successful submissions added text over the top of artwork without considering how text added value to the work.

Digital modes of working resulted in slightly more outcomes being presented in submissions than analogue modes of working, which is appropriate.

Most teaching and learning programmes have supported the candidates to make connections to their own identity and interests. Submissions awarded Achievement often benefited from a scaffolded programme, which capitalised on candidate interest and level of skill. However, programmes of teaching and learning that supported candidates to achieve at Excellence provided sufficient structure to give the candidate direction, but allowed them to take ownership of the visual and conceptual elements of the body of work.

The exploration of a range of media is not a requirement of the standard. Submissions that identified the most suitable fields of practice for the intended purpose, right from the initial proposition, were more successful.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- produced a sustained body of related artworks with sufficient New Zealand Curriculum Level 6 work within the submission to reflect 5 credits at NCEA Level 1
- used connections between elements in the submission to unify the kaupapa of the work
- used art-making conventions appropriately
- at the lower end of the grade range, worked with a narrow proposition that limited the development of ideas
- included emulations of art model imagery related to their art-making intention
- used a wide range of media to produce work versus selecting and refining use of the most appropriate media for the intended purpose
- at the lower end of the grade range, produced repetitive, singular works or had a heavy reliance on tracing, which was limiting in terms of showing candidates' skills and creativity
- at the lower end of the grade range, showed limited compositional understanding in the placement of elements within works
- described shape and form through line work and rendering with dry and wet media

- at the higher end of the achieved band, started to reflect on connections made between elements and their art-making proposition; however, displayed inconsistent application of skill with media
- produced work that showed an understanding of art-making conventions, with artworks visually reflecting stylistic and contemporary art-making practice
- at the lower end of the grade range, used text or pattern as decorative elements as opposed to integrating them into the work
- at the lower end of the grade range, used repetition of subject matter in subsequent works to make connections, as opposed to reflecting and combining the subject matter with other elements
- at the higher end of the achieved band, often displayed some areas of control with media application; however, this was not sustained across most of the works
- when producing a digital art submission, showed conceptual development but showed limited technical proficiency.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- used media with control to produce a sustained body of related artworks
- identified a clear art-making proposition and engaged personally with subject matter
- presented resolved artwork across most of the submission
- showed an understanding of line, shape, tone, and form
- established a colour palette, which helped to unify works
- presented work in a logical order, allowing ideas to build from start to finish
- enhanced connections between works by reflecting on elements from previous works and bringing them through into further developed works
- investigated art-making conventions appropriately
- selected and used media and technologies according to intended purpose
- when using text or pattern, started to integrate these into the work as a visual / compositional element
- at the higher end of the grade range, consistently used media with control, with some areas of fluency.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- established a unique proposition that was evident from the beginning of the submission
- used reflective practice to select successful conventions and ideas to refine the making of subsequent works
- showed clarification by editing out unsuccessful elements or conventions
- selected images and created compositional arrangements that enhanced the relationships between works
- showed progression towards an intended purpose
- integrated new subject matter to support the clarification of their art-making proposition
- displayed fluency with technical skills throughout the submission
- demonstrated the selection and competent manipulation of media with skill
- explored the most appropriate approaches to art-making for their intended purpose
- considered surface textures in the application of paint

- showed understanding of perspective
- integrated stylistic and pictorial conventions that were appropriate to their proposition
- fully integrated text or pattern into individual works, adding both meaning and depth to the artwork
- showed clear understanding of lighting in photographic work
- paid close attention to colour schemes and considered relationships in digital work.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- had areas of unresolved work
- produced an appropriate number of artworks for the standard; however, displayed inconsistent understanding of art-making conventions
- used a range of procedures, materials, and techniques; however, struggled with the skills required to accurately represent form or create depth
- presented works that were related by subject matter, colour, or theme
- produced work with media that was below Level 6 of the New Zealand Curriculum
- included a small number of artworks that seem unconnected to their art-making proposition.