

## 2024 NCEA Assessment Report

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| Subject:                 | Visual Arts                       |
| Level:                   | 3                                 |
| Achievement standard(s): | 91455, 91456, 91457, 91458, 91459 |

### General commentary

Candidates presented a portfolio of individual candidate-led evidence for assessment, consisting of either a three-panel portfolio (folio board) or a digital moving image (DMI) submission, representing the requirements of the standard.

### Report on individual achievement standard(s)

#### **Achievement standard 91455: Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within design practice**

##### Commentary

Submissions for Level 3 Design were of a high quality and, at a national level, it was encouraging to see an increased uptake in candidates participating in the external standard.

In portfolio submissions, image making and an illustrative approach to a range of graphic media was, overall, a strong point. Many candidates confidently demonstrated their ability to manipulate and construct images and these skill sets informed a variety of creative projects, such as character illustration, book design, social awareness campaigns, and board game design.

The upper level of achievement in the digital-format, narrative-based game design and world-building briefs was underpinned by motion-based sequences and character-driven narratives. These were designed, edited, and composed to communicate a clear and succinct storyline.

In both physical portfolios and DMI formats, it is essential that candidates include a clear proposal in their submission. The proposal should introduce the topic, its significance, and communicate the aims and purpose of the project and methods they will use. Better frameworks for the design brief would provide direction and ensures projects are cohesive and structured, rather than a list of 5–6 formats that the candidate will produce.

Some candidates allow more time to organise and sequence work. In some portfolio submissions the work on Panels 1 and 2 was often far stronger than on Panel 3; omitting weaker or less effective work is critical to achieving at Merit and Excellence. Editing streamlines the learning journey and highlights critical analysis. By showcasing only the strongest aspects of the work, candidates reflect a confidence and clarity in decision-making.

With DMI submissions, it is important that candidates remember that time is critical. Transitions are often slow, using up valuable time on overly stylised, distracting transition techniques. fragmenting the systematic ordering of evidence. When utilising sound, candidates need to thoughtfully consider how sound enhances the narrative and story-telling arc.

Candidates presenting portfolios that focused on character design for game design, need to represent all facets of a character study, such as personality, props, environments, emotion, pose, assets, costume, etc, to ensure ownership and relevance to narrative and purpose of the game or story. Candidates are encouraged to allow adequate time for environmental design to communicate and realise the overarching narrative and solution. This means integrating characters and assets with type treatment and environmental design appropriate to media.

Candidates need to show development and process clearly in their work, from conceptual exploration to refined output, and remain cognisant of the level of the standard. Generating original content is essential, and candidates that thoroughly brainstorm ideas, developing their own visual resources to propel their investigation into topic, are rewarded. In these cases, this resource building and mode of drawing out, fuels ideation and opportunity for new links and sustained making.

Candidates are encouraged to limit how many formats they engage with to gain deeper knowledge of media and to be able to employ and exploit design conventions and principles appropriate to the brief formats. A deeper understanding of brief formats (collateral types) is needed, and a candidate interested in double-page spreads could be encouraged to focus on typography and editorial design. In parallel, a candidate interested in user-interface design for web, wayfinding, and apps could focus on brand and information architecture for user navigation.

Certain collateral types require an understanding of specific design conventions, i.e. posters clearly communicated event information, such as location, time, and other information around accessibility. Typography should show experimentation with typeface and some understandings of typographic conventions, such as hierarchy, grid, body copy, columns, pull-quotes, etc.

Candidates are discouraged from presenting work from earlier internals on Panel 1, because it is evident that this brief and direction does not link to subsequent work. Candidates are encouraged to develop a visual tone of voice in alignment with their skill sets, ideas, and the subject at hand. Portfolios that were awarded at Excellence were exemplary examples of technical proficiency, demonstrating fluent control of visual language and graphic treatment. These submissions had been edited, and all ideas and media outputs were highly crafted showcasing the incredible talent undertaking design at Level 3.

Candidates need to manage authenticity within their work. In some instances, candidates were overly reliant on stock images and artwork that was not their own. Candidates must generate their own material to present for assessment.

## Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- presented a brief as a simple list of formats they planned to produce, instead of clearly outlining the inquiry or purpose behind their brief and topic
- presented logo work in a logical manner with some range of options suggesting brainstorming in line with topic
- gathered images at the top of Panel 1 as source material; these images were straight from the internet and often highlighted close copying
- included visual elements and combined symbols, icons, motifs, and imagery related to their topic to communicate a message
- used the identity created on Panel 1 across Panels 2 and 3 by applying it consistently to a range of material
- managed a systematic process that explored and used conventions with some understanding of format protocols and selected media
- demonstrated limited knowledge of the characteristics and constraints associated with typeface selection and use

- demonstrated an understanding of limiting their colour palette, but some candidates were not evaluating the legibility, e.g. black type on deep crimson backgrounds or pale pink on light mauve backgrounds
- lay up all the work they had produced on the portfolio but needed to demonstrate further editing of the less successful work
- referenced artistic models very closely and obviously prioritised visual style over communication of an idea relevant to the topic
- replicated artistic models without developing beyond the models
- revisited their initial artworks to refine ideas towards a final work, emphasising a clear phase of exploration and communication, effectively manipulating and exploring visual protocols through analogue and / or digital processes
- produced a sufficient amount of work in alignment with the standard
- at the higher end of Achievement, produced original content and generated their own graphic material to propel a systematic drawing and design process
- at the higher end of Achievement, engaged with drawing procedures, developing their own images systematically by using collage and drawing out processes to gain ownership.

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

- provided evidence of purposeful research by discussing the topic and its relevance to audience in the brief (at the higher end of the standard), rather than simply listing the formats they would be making
- explored multiple ideas within each phase of practice, continuing to respond and develop ideas to the topic
- gathered images from their own photo shoot or drawing to brainstorm and generate an image bank, highlighting a variety of media and drawing processes to engage with the ideas related to the topic
- presented purposeful outcomes that communicated information and themes effectively
- demonstrated an understanding of design communication conventions and visually edited and analysed to refine artwork
- demonstrated a clear understanding of thematic ideas and design elements that were relevant and believable within the context of the topic
- demonstrated technical facility in moving image to integrate a range of making processes from analogue storyboarding to digital sequences
- understood and had control of conventions specific to a format, i.e. double-page spread design addressed gutter, type hierarchy, slogans, display text, quotes, drop capitals, scale, colour, and body copy columns
- understood the function of a logo and juggled more than one slogan effectively
- used a limited number of typefaces with understanding, allowing for legible outcomes
- used knowledge of grid layouts and type to develop illustration into book formats and / or publications and, at the high end of Merit, made the catalogue, book, or magazine
- researched and used a range of artistic models to develop their ideas and form own links
- performed evenly across the submission, usually identifying the best outcome from the ideas generated, showing a greater degree of analysis, integration of ideas, and shifts within sequential bodies of work
- evaluated final outcomes by placing them in context, e.g. a poster in a bus-stop, a banner on a lamppost, etc.
- presented final outcomes at an appropriate size, and used layout skills across all three panels, with space around each image to allow careful reading of the work

- demonstrated knowledge and understanding of tone, colour, and negative space to create focal points and spatial relationships
- in DMI submissions, candidates that presented their final sequence at the beginning, then selected and edited phases of narrative development (e.g. storyboarding, character development, asset design, environment construction, and brand application) made best use of the three-minute timeframe to evidence the standard
- edited weaker works to ensure the portfolio represented the 'best of' ideas regeneration

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

- established a brief within a real and believable context, such as a social awareness campaign or narrative focused on a particular issue and age group
- acknowledged research into the client, context, and audience from the outset and selected a topic that allowed for a depth of research
- selected brief formats purposefully, ensuring originality and relevance to their topic, while making meaningful connections between the concepts and audience
- interpreted visual brainstorming and managed drawing processes in a lateral way to invent and form a unique visual voice
- conducted a drawing-out phase that informed the development of assets, props, symbols, motifs, and imagery to effectively communicate their topic
- constructed a thorough resource, e.g. an art-directed photo-shoot, candidate's own illustrations, textures, well-considered colour selections, appropriate typefaces, a range of clever and creative tag-lines, and well-written story for publications
- demonstrated high visual skill levels and technical acumen, fluently editing and refining outcomes consistently across the portfolio
- in DMI submissions, utilised and exploited drawing as a foundation strategy to create resources, incorporating diverse media 2D / 3D media and materials to produce animatics and storyboards
- in DMI submissions, wrote and directed the narrative with the technical fluency to execute a finished sequence that maintained a story-telling arc to communicate message and meaning
- demonstrated a strong understanding of selected artist models, synthesising their influences to develop original and forward-moving ideas
- in narrative-driven projects (e.g. graphic novels), demonstrated clear authorship of the narrative, applying the storytelling arcs with clever copywriting and precision.
- investigated and created custom typefaces using drawing techniques, adding a personal and project-relevant dimension to their work
- employed more than one communication strategy that could be humorous, narrative- based, ironical, campaign-based, metaphorical, propaganda-centred, or playful
- used sophisticated hand-drawn techniques and integrated them successfully with digital technology when appropriate, often art-directing a photo-shoot and integrating it with media
- made sensitive typeface selection appropriate to the intentions of their design brief and used a formal investigation into type and image to help strengthen the communication
- understood the function of a logo and / or a slogan and used it cleverly, testing the success of a logo once it was designed and consistently applying brand rules
- demonstrated thorough knowledge of the formal design elements and used conventions creatively to both communicate and surprise
- presented evidence of the 'making' of character design for world-building or game-based narratives and three-dimensional outcomes (e.g. a garment design); in DMI submissions, this learning was sequenced effectively in terms of time

- developed characters, with a range of expressions and moods, for a written script working towards a graphic novel; then proceeded to design the cover, several double-page spreads, a poster, etc. by combining text and image fluently
- constructed environments for characters and considered such things as depth of field, cropping and text and images relationships within each format
- expanded the enquiry on Panel 3 in an intelligent manner employing a format that was purposeful to the brief with time to synthesise and execute

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

- included no brief or briefs that were either incomplete or did not make sense
- presented unordered and unlabelled work on the portfolio
- continued to work across the panels without considering and responding to topic of the brief
- relied on stock-imagery, photographs of products, and people that that were already very successfully branded
- used other people's images and / or vector images readily found on the internet, without attempting to take any ownership of them
- changed typefaces regularly without making decisions or understanding the character of the chosen typeface
- repeated pages of thumbnail images across their panels, which all appeared much the same, making it difficult to decipher meaning from them
- included images that were very digitally distorted, to the point where ideas were illegible or unintelligible
- demonstrated limited knowledge and investigation of type and image, or awareness of a grid layout system
- demonstrated limited use of drawing processes to develop ideas, research, and understanding of established practice
- repeated outcomes, which demonstrated a limited set of options with minor shifts
- made close reference to old fashioned or prosaic and unhelpful models
- lacked evidence of having looked at established practice
- used large scale images to fill gaps
- presented portfolios with big gaps on the panels
- included imagery that was printed at very low resolution
- presented portfolios with sequences of work that had no relationship to each other
- provided very low-level evidence
- selected one idea from the exploration phase, scaled it up, and submitted it as the final
- produced insufficient work in alignment with the standard to achieve

Candidates who presented **DMI** submissions and were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- submitted work that clearly belonged to a different standard and, therefore, did not meet the criteria for Achievement for Level 3 Design
- forced print-based media into a moving image slide show that revealed sufficiency issues, and it was an unsuitable format for viewing evidence
- focused on making a digital environment for a game, showing each technical process step at the expense of generating ideas
- demonstrated limited understanding of the conventions required to produce digital, motion, and interactive outcomes
- included a brief that was out of scope, too vacuous and large to be realised, produced or managed.

## **Achievement standard 91456: Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within painting practice**

### **Commentary**

A diverse range of responses to candidate-driven proposals ensured that individual voice was a strong feature of the 2024 examination. The evidence showed that most candidates were fully invested in art-making processes and obviously enjoyed engagement with art ideas, media, and techniques. As a result, candidates produced strong evidence of personal industry to further their skills and conceptual understanding within painting.

Consistent with established painting practices, there was a broad range of subject matter and approaches as to what painting is understood to represent. Study of contemporary artists, genres, and art-historical 'isms' allowed candidates to position themselves in relation to wider contexts. While surrealistic and juxtapositional approaches continue to be popular, there is also work where the development of painterly ideas is more subtly addressed. This is present in landscape, portraiture, geometric and lyrical abstraction, and tried-and-tested still-life. Modes of working beyond a Western paradigm are also well-represented and indicates the rich and varied cultural backgrounds of many of our ākonga.

The most successful portfolios show a high level of individual engagement and ownership of a particular subject, theme, or mode of working. Candidates who perform well at the upper levels are able to identify the strengths within their own artwork and build upon these accordingly. By using research, production, review, experimentation, and innovation, candidates can sustain their enquiry over the course of the year.

The production of authentic, primary source material is the strongest factor in success at upper levels, and meaningful development of secondary sources continues to underpin performance at all levels. Reference to existing practice and combinations of 'artist model' approaches appropriate to the content is a valid way to drive development within a proposition. However, candidates should be mindful of relying on Pinterest or similar sources on which to base artwork. Purposeful appropriation with the intent to change, subvert, or create new meaning is occasionally seen. Extensive, sustained, verbatim reproductions of other artists' works is strongly discouraged, as this impacts the authenticity of the submission.

Pictorial development was often achieved by candidates with passages of art-making in sequences or series of ideas. Candidates were able to communicate development by carefully selecting works in relation to each other for their pictorial concerns. Smaller passages and work that had a preparatory or drawn quality to the paint supported subsequent larger pieces. At times, the imposition of unrelated or disparate artist models to show development, for the purpose of meeting the standard descriptor, detracted from the intrinsic qualities of the candidate's work.

Thoughtful development of colour palette and surfaces in paintings was also a feature of this year's mahi. Many candidates were able to demonstrate subtle shifts in thinking by carefully developing layers in their artworks, employing scumbling, washes, glazes, and other textural approaches. Carefully considered pictorial and compositional devices were indications of preparatory works beyond the portfolio. More expressive portfolio approaches often demonstrated subtle control of the media, suggesting that candidates had invested considerable time developing an assured hand in the production of a mark or gesture with a loaded brush. Less successful approaches were often reliant on paint straight from a tube or a single layer.

There were several strategies towards the layout and ordering of works that offered varying levels of success. Submissions that varied in format and scale, other than standard paper sizes, were able to demonstrate an understanding of compositional concerns. Often placed in the early section of the portfolio, these works informed the practice for subsequent pieces. Candidates should be wary of producing very large-scale artworks on the portfolio, as this limits the space and opportunity to show development. Candidates who submitted single-panel artworks fared less well in this regard.

Candidates are advised to photograph large-scale works and label these clearly with dimensions and media.

Due to the qualities of acrylic, painting on the portfolio panel itself for display can interfere with the reading of artwork. Similarly, placing works too closely together can also inhibit understanding. A gap of around 3–5 mm between artworks is sufficient to allow 'breathing space'. Candidates and teachers should be mindful of drying time and of added mediums and varnish that can adversely affect work. Facing artworks can become stuck together, resulting in significant damage. To mitigate this, some schools placed plastic between panels for transit to the marking venue. The addition of 3D or sharp components to the portfolio is strongly discouraged, as this can lead to damage to the submission or injury to personnel during handling of the portfolios. Glitter is not recommended as this can come loose and interfere with the process.

Digital painting was successfully employed by some candidates this year, with work presented that was securely grounded in painterly concerns. However, candidates should be mindful of overlap in practice from other fields to ensure that their submission conforms to norms associated with painting practice. For example, listing different versions of character poses and storyboarding may be more aligned with Design submissions. Although the use of AI in the production of work is increasingly used in contemporary practice, candidates should be aware of the nature of developing and re-generating individual ideas within painting practice. Where AI was employed successfully, it was integrated as a sketch or generative process before candidates returned to paint as the main driver for their proposition.

Level 3 Painting is best represented by candidates who have the opportunity to find their strengths within individual approaches. Diversity within painting practice is celebrated; there are no hierarchies between modes of practice and production. Candidates are encouraged to find subjects that are meaningful to them and relate these to existing, established practices, so that they can develop as artists and see themselves within wider artistic and cultural contexts.

## Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- identified proposition built upon a chosen subject or process
- problem-solved and expanded on technique in a linear fashion
- created ordered and coherent links between images and technique
- employed established practice using appropriate models
- demonstrated some consideration of layout and hierarchy of images
- produced a sufficient amount work at the appropriate curriculum level
- produced a limited number of phases of production.

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

- used media with consistent, considered application
- developed a cohesive approach to subject involving clear stages of development
- identified clear links between subject and technique
- were invested in image-making towards a particular goal, purpose, or effect
- developed a consistent colour scheme in line with their intent
- chose specific approaches from established practice and combined them to create a particular effect.

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

- employed a range of authentic, self-generated imagery
- moved beyond explicit reference to artist models to quickly establish their own modalities

- communicated critical understanding by employing a range of strategies
- developed and extend their approach to media handling, demonstrating thoughtful engagement
- demonstrated industry, invention, and control of their approaches to media
- worked in clear series and sequences to advance their proposition
- adopted a range of pictorial strategies to communicate their idea with clarity
- demonstrated a depth of understanding of materials, process, and techniques particular to their intent.

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

- demonstrated a lack of meaningful engagement with established painting practice
- lacked sufficient control of media and paint processes consistent with the curriculum level
- lacked evidence of regeneration of idea or shift in technique
- had insufficient evidence on the portfolio.

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## **Achievement standard 91457: Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within photography practice**

### **Commentary**

The overall quality of photography and the investment that candidates put into establishing a proposition was pleasing in 2024. There was an increase in the number of portfolios submitted for this standard, which is positive. Many candidates presented strong and authentic connections with their topics. Common topics included sport, culture, environment, identity, whānau, and friends, and the exploration of tūrangawaewae. This authentic engagement tended to lead to more meaningful and considered submissions. The opportunity to revisit spaces or communities over time allowed for deeper exploration and the development of more refined ideas; this was visible across all grade boundaries.

It is important in both digital format and portfolio formats that candidates plan and research a topic which is meaningful and can provide a range of subject matter. Candidates who focused on a single event or very short time-framed event (e.g. an afternoon walk, baking a cake, or attending a sports game) limited themselves to being able to meet the requirements of the standard. While some of these submissions were technically adequate, those that were not awarded Achievement lacked depth in their investigation of topic.

Confidence in using camera settings (e.g. exposure, white balance and manual, aperture or shutter speed priority) was demonstrated in both submission formats, reflecting improved technical skills and understanding of photographic practice.

Despite the number of DMI submissions being small, most delivered well-timed transitions, purposeful use of sound, and were well-edited, designed, and composed. A clear progression of ideas and creative strategies were used, with candidates showing a strong ability to develop and refine concepts and techniques.

With portfolio submissions, it was noted that more and more candidates are choosing to work with A1-panel prints; however, it is recommended to cut these prints up into at least three sections to prevent wrinkling and distortion of presented imagery. Candidates should also avoid using large diagonal pieces of double-sided tape, as this shows up, and they should ensure proper presentation with straight lines by using a guillotine or ruler. When presenting darker imagery, a black portfolio panel should be avoided as it can reduce tonal contrast. Candidates should spend time playing with different sequential layouts for photographs, aiming to select the best layout for clear readability.

Editing and hierarchical decisions can streamline the photographic journey and give value to critical analysis, and are important for gaining Achievement with Merit or Excellence.

It is essential for candidates to consider their role as photographers to be inclusive of having ownership over the printed image. Editing tools in the Adobe suite, for example, of Photoshop, Lightroom, and Bridge can be used to address exposure issues and refine tonal ranges. In addition, testing prints on a photocopier can help candidates to make informed decisions around adjusting exposure, tone, and colour saturation. Checking histograms and light properties of files is also a useful strategy for achieving high-quality printed results.

Many candidates applied tactile strategies to their presentation of photographic imagery to regenerate ideas. Methods included: printing on tissue paper, transparency film, textured print papers, working with embroidery thread, using various tapes, painting on photographs, image transfer on plywood or thick card, and presenting imagery using considered installation techniques and projections. When used appropriately, these types of strategies often enhanced the physicality of surface and offered purposeful regeneration of ideas.

## Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- portrayed an adequate level of engagement and development of ideas, with a clear and straightforward established proposition
- presented subject matter that was revisited and photographed over a time period to support the generation and clarification of ideas
- explored relevant established practice to assist with ideas and selected conventions to make a body of work, though not always consistently understood and applied
- demonstrated a sufficient level of control with camera settings and functions, e.g. selective focus (such as depth of field), contrast, a range of viewpoints, and varying the distance from subject matter
- presented a portfolio that displayed sufficient control of print processes and an adequate level of presentation; however, in some cases, this was technically inconsistent making the readability challenging sometimes.

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

- presented a deeper level of investment towards a proposition, with clear evidence of research and planning to realise the scope and possibilities of ideas
- investigated a range of viewpoints and perspectives when taking photoshoots, often involving a shift in location or subject, making consistent links between sequences that were considered and well thought out
- analysed their own work and the work of others from established practice to support decisions and next steps
- demonstrated a clear readability of intent across the three panels, with a progression of ideas that were supported by appropriate established practice
- featured consideration towards colour and tone, control of light and form; however, Panel 3 sometimes lacked further development to extend ideas (e.g. used Photoshop filters to create different effects on ideas previously presented).

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

- demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of light sources and their effects, engaging with it in a more deliberate and intentional way and applying different lighting decisions in order to stage phases of the investigation

- established a proposition founded during research to form ideas that offered depth, and supported the proposition with evidence of contextual research and established practice to inform and direct individual and original photoshoots
- incorporated skilful photographic conventions, along with understanding of camera control and photo editing, in ways that were critically supportive of their ideas, resulting in often rich contrast, extreme depth of field, considered use of shutter speed, aperture, and ISO (film speed)
- made clear and consistent progression through iterative stages, and deeply engaged in ideas to make critical decisions from the volume of photographs taken
- applied an intelligent and systematic layout of sequences and hierarchy of images across the three panels to support their thinking process.

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

- demonstrated inadequate camera skills with little control of technical aspects (e.g. exposure, focus, lighting, resolution), making the readability of the work challenging
- presented minimal realisation that the use of selected pictorial devices (e.g. varying viewpoints, shifting the distance between camera and subject, and changes in focus) is needed to support image taking and making
- did not demonstrate sufficient photo-shoots, so ideas were singular and insufficient for a thorough photographic inquiry to sustain three panels
- did not manage a systematic process to support the clarification and regeneration of ideas
- lacked evidence of engaging with photographic established practice to support the generation of ideas.

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## Achievement standard 91458: Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within printmaking practice

### Commentary

At a national level, it was great to see an increase in the number of candidates participating in this standard, with so many considered bodies of learning presented. There was a strong sense of ownership and portfolios that built on individual stylistic interests and strengths, with authentic candidate voice clearly embedded in the work.

In keeping with the history of printmaking as a social and political media, many submissions involved concepts relating to whānau, cultural, religious, and social issues. It was pleasing to see an increased interest in formal picture making and abstraction. These submissions were handled in a sophisticated manner and demonstrated an openness to take risks and explore unknown territory. Some candidates presented accomplished narratives; however, it is important that submissions still move conceptually or pictorially to regenerate ideas and so meet the standard.

Strong drawing, confident use of colour, and impressive technical skills were characteristic of many submissions. Most candidates demonstrated evidence of deep thinking, analysis, and sound decision-making.

Critical to development is the ordering of works to help with the reading of the submission. Works may not necessarily sit best in the order they were produced. While most passages of work were well edited and arranged to show clearly the ideas and shifts across all three panels, some candidates presented submissions where panels were interchangeable and had similar compositions across the panels. Analysis of successful aspects and prioritising these helped advance and extend learning.

Sequences of small works, photographs of larger works, and thumbnail studies often enabled space to demonstrate a greater depth and range of exploration. Small works allowed candidates to try out and investigate options and show decision making between series of works.

Ensuring there is breathing space around each work is important to reading the portfolio. It is important that prints are not presented edge-to-edge, unless they are intended to be read as one work.

Many candidates used a range of processes to extend ideas and reform these into new works. Some candidates produced complex, layered imagery, weaving together two or three processes in one work, thus helping communicate an idea succinctly.

Colour was used with purpose to communicate meaning. Sensitive and appropriate colour was selected to enhance meaning. Monochromatic ink, with expressive plate tone, was often used well to convey mood, create atmosphere, or show an interest in gestural mark-making and surface. Embossing was also used purposefully.

There was a resurgence in the use of woodcut for its expressive qualities. Woodcuts were beautifully cut showing understanding of mark as tone. Reductive woodcuts demonstrated understanding of the layering process.

Submissions that dealt with ideas from a personal experience or perspective were powerful, especially when the candidate took their own photos to work from. In many cases, printmaking conventions were strongly linked to cultural traditions. When the candidate appeared to have a genuine connection to the culture, the work often communicated that personal association.

Candidates must be diligent in sourcing their own subject matter to avoid plagiarism, and should avoid using borrowed or existing images from artists.

Candidates should be strongly advised not to use the same plate more than once. Repeated use of a plate is detrimental to development and often results in producing imagery that does not regenerate ideas. As a result, submissions 'jump on the spot' rather than pushing forward. Instead, candidates should be encouraged to revisit previous work and consider other ways to move on with new imagery, by changing scale, viewpoint, or proximity. Evaluation and reflection are key to successfully regenerating ideas.

Impressive technical skills were evident, including methods such as monoprint, drypoint, woodcut, screenprint, and collagraphs. There were also some submissions that used photographic processes such as pronto plate, solar plate and digital prints. While many works were complex, with multiple layered compositions that were carefully registered and printed, other successful submissions relied on simply mastering one process, such as monoprint, and using this with flair. Examiners were impressed with the sophistication and the range of approaches evident.

Printmaking lends itself well to those who love to draw. Simple and accessible processes (e.g. hand printing, rolled-slab monoprinting, using a copier and frottage rubbings onto tissue, etc.) are affordable, do not require a press, and can be used to produce very successful results. Printmaking easily spans painterly, photographic, sculptural, graphic, collage, digital, and illustration-based interests.

Three-dimensional print works and installations were well integrated within bodies of work. These works were often used to regenerate and extend ideas, helping shift the work into new directions.

Many submissions clearly demonstrated understanding of how to integrate one element (such as directional mark-making, colour, or shape) from a range of researched artists' works, rather than mimicking established practice. This ensures innovation, resulting in candidates creating original works and maintaining momentum across all panels. Reflection and thorough analysis are key in the development and extension of ideas and are fundamental to high achievement in this standard. In synthesising ideas through printmaking, there was an obvious sense of joy conveyed through the learning presented.

## Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- established a proposition and presented some ideas relating to this
- presented repetitive imagery or reused the same plate
- built on some strengths through analysis of successful elements
- developed ideas slowly through sequences of works
- demonstrated basic skills and understanding of the characteristics of printmaking techniques and the use of ink

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

- employed a wide visual vocabulary to set up a well-defined yet broad proposition
- combined a range of pictorial devices to reform ideas
- ordered and sized images to emphasise strengths and show decision making
- demonstrated a well-developed understanding of specific print media
- maintained momentum and purpose across all three panels and prioritised options clearly
- presented sequences of small studies to open pictorial or conceptual possibilities.

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

- drew on ideas from a wide variety of sources and seamlessly integrated these through authentic, personalised learning
- demonstrated ownership of ideas and embraced individual stylistic strengths
- analysed strengths to provide options and expand subject / concept
- established a range of possibilities, building on previous learning
- selected and mixed colour critically to communicate meaning
- confidently selected and used methods to emphasise ideas

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

- began with a narrow, single idea or a series of unrelated works
- printed the same plate or imagery repeatedly
- failed to build on their strengths
- relied heavily on found images
- demonstrated a lack of sensitivity in the use of ink, often applying too much.

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## Achievement standard 91459: Produce a systematic body of work that integrates conventions and regenerates ideas within sculpture practice

### Commentary

Candidates presented a wide range of genuine, sculptural activity that was driven by student / ākonga-directed subject matter and ideas. These submissions often explored contemporary issues or personal experiences. Candidates consistently demonstrated a strong understanding of sculptural principles and produced creative, ambitious work that operated within a broad range of established sculptural practice. Many candidates experimented with materials and processes before focusing on aligned, technical methods in the production of work. Successful submissions started by demonstrating a clear understanding of implicit sculptural conventions from established practice. Some submissions utilised a strong use of humour and the abject, whilst others investigated simple formal or material properties. Many candidates addressed personal narratives and contemporary

issues, like body image and environmental concerns. Successful candidates engaged in honest research that looked at both conceptual and formal concerns related to the production of sculptural work. These candidates also ensured that sculptural activity was at the centre of this work. Most candidates utilised accessible, inexpensive materials and processes that allowed them to make a range of honest and interesting sculptural work.

Almost all candidates presented clear photographic documentation of sculptural work in logical sequences. It would help examiners further, when assessing the success of sculptural work, if small contextual labels regarding dimensions, materials, site (where appropriate), or duration were placed underneath images.

Schools are discouraged from using class programmes that predetermine the sculptural exploration conceptually and technically, as this negates the candidate's ability to employ critical analysis of ideas.

## Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- engaged in a simple thematic approach to connect ideas in a submission
- referenced established sculpture practice explicitly in their work
- used simple materials and accessible spaces to explore a narrow field of sculptural practice
- made similar small-scale object works that were built upon in a logical sequence
- presented well-ordered and well-sized photographic documentation of sculptural work

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

- submitted a body of work with a clear proposition that was expanded upon with reference to established sculptural practice
- utilised a range of sculpture conventions that were linked conceptually by reference to appropriate, established sculptural practice
- understood the nature of materials, processes, scale, and site within a sculptural proposition
- employed a logical sequence of photo-documentation, prioritising successful work at a larger scale within the body of work to emphasise success.

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

- presented sculptural work that was underpinned by personal convictions or experiences, backed up by appropriate research
- presented a body of work that transcended referenced, established sculptural practice to create innovative sculptural outcomes
- displayed an ambitious attitude to scale, site, collaboration, and openness to refining processes in the production of work
- presented well-photographed images of the sculptural work to convey the sense of scale, providing a narrative that enhanced the sculptural proposition
- utilised contextual labels underneath sequences of photo-documentation of the work, allowing for a full understanding of the context.

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

- made objects that did not demonstrate an understanding of established sculptural practice
- made a very limited number of works
- did not edit the photo-documentation to sequence ideas logically
- made very little sculptural work within a body of picture-making.