

2024 NCEA Assessment Report

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

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

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

Assessment

The assessment required candidates to submit a portfolio, that reflected the requirements of the Standard, in one of the formats outlined in the assessment specifications.

Commentary

The standard requires candidates to experiment with processes, materials, and techniques to respond to (Achievement), produce options for (Merit), or refine (Excellence) an art-making intention. Evaluate (Excellence) is an ongoing decision-making process that should be visible in practical work, evidenced by making choices and exploration during the art-making process.

Some successful approaches to this standard included, but were not limited to:

- guided exploration of a range of processes, allowing candidate agency in each sequence of an investigation
- early structured activities, that allowed individual exploration in the later pages
- programmes that allowed choice around subject matter, theme, and media selection.

Candidates submitted portfolios with a diverse range of work, media, contexts, that fulfilled the standard at all levels of achievement. A focus on process was the common theme throughout all successful submissions.

Some of the strategies that successfully showcased student creativity included:

- densely populated authentic workbook pages
- a range of processes condensed into a single page
- thumbnail sketches and studies in multiples
- authentic and concise annotation and labels
- mockups of ideas using collage
- screenshots of process work, especially showing different arrangements and thinking.

Alongside popular subject matter approaches such as the beach and animals, which have been Level 1 mainstays, this year saw many submissions build upon work from Standard 91912. *Ahurea tuakiri*, *kāinga waewae*, and *‘Ko wai au?’* were popular springboards for establishing art-making intentions. Toi Māori and other art-making processes of the Pacific were well represented. Themes

that have been less popular in previous years, but made a significant appearance in 2024, were surrealism, architecture (particularly in photography), portraiture, and self-portraiture.

A variety of innovative processes and exploration of practices were submitted. Some processes, materials, and techniques used were:

- Painting contexts included compositional sketching, tonal studies, and small studies exploring colour and texture (especially when subsequently applied to further explorations), which often proved to be successful.
- Printmaking contexts often included evidence of experiments, planning, trials, failures, and work in etching, woodblock relief, and gelli plate.
- Photography and Design contexts often included annotated contact sheets, typographic explorations, and working with techniques such as cyanotype, double exposure, photomanipulation, and vector-based pattern.

There were, however, some key areas of limitation, particularly in relation to submitting sufficient visual evidence to meet the Standard.

Heavily templated programmes, did not allow for genuine experimentation, and restricted opportunities for candidates to show their own thinking.

Submissions that focused on sustained outcomes, presenting one or two highly resolved works per page, often did not provide sufficient evidence of an investigative approach or development process.

Submissions that focused on reflecting on work produced for Standard 91915 had limited opportunity to show selection and reflection to refine practical work. Similarly, extensive written evaluation, although a valuable teaching and learning process, limited practical investigation that demonstrated the ability to explore (Achievement), apply (Merit), and evaluate (Excellence).

Inspiration images, though useful for outlining an initial art-making intention, are problematic if they occupy large areas of space within a submission. In some cases, significant amounts of analysis of established practice and biographical research were included. This is not required evidence for Standard 91914. Concise annotations, or small examples of (labelled) artist model work, may be useful, but the submission should comprise the candidates own visual exploration.

Where submissions exceeded eight pages, only the first eight pages were viewed as evidence for verification, as stated in the assessment specifications.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- presented a volume of evidence reflective of eight A3 pages of work
- met the curriculum level for media use in the context of workbook process
- presented related work, but connections between sequences were not explored
- presented ideas informed by established practice
- used thumbnail sketches to explore visual ideas and compositions
- provided some evidence of a development process, usually through compositional planning
- explored multiple processes, even if limited to one material
- made basic observational studies
- used processes, materials, and techniques, but did not apply them to their own art making or show understanding of a connection
- created larger and fewer studies or process works per page
- repeated elements without moving forward.

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

- developed multiple processes or techniques
- experimented with a range of options to further develop
- submitted full pages, where space was used efficiently to highlight visual work
- revisited imagery, symbols, or colour palette to show clear connections between sequences
- explored the recording of subject matter before using subject matter in more advanced compositions
- used thumbnail sketches to explore options before applying media in small studies or experiments
- established an art-making intention early through annotation, brief research to support conceptual thinking, or in a small mood board or mind map, to provide a starting point for development
- moved beyond emulations of established practice and incorporated own ideas
- used techniques derived from established practice to explore own ideas
- identified some successful ideas in explorations to develop
- sometimes approached the refining of processes or techniques, but did not have clear connections or a clear development process
- sometimes showcased strong development process that reflected on experimental sequences, but was limited by technical application.

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

- identified authentic contexts or approaches to a given context early in their process
- presented iterations of developments to explore different ways of doing the same thing
- moved ideas forward quickly, often within one page
- presented a brief mood board or examples of established practice to focus an initial art-making intention
- refined the use of processes, materials, and techniques to demonstrate competent manipulation in a process or workbook-based context
- selected thumbnail concept sketches to become small studies for testing techniques, colour, or materials
- filled pages densely, making full use of the eight-page specification
- used experimental sequences to move towards an outcome, then explored iterations of this planned outcome in later experimental sequences
- revisited ideas and explored them in new ways in each sequence
- used concise and thoughtful annotation as part of the art-making process, rather than writing reflections
- demonstrated purposeful decision making and informed selection of which processes and conventions to advance
- demonstrated complexity and sophistication in compositional studies
- explored alternative pathways for moving work forward.

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

- contained very few pages, included blank pages, or large gaps
- presented single artworks without process or investigative evidence
- the use of media in a process or workbook-based context
- presented subject matter or themes that were not related between works and pages
- provided evidence of exploration of mark-making or paint swatches, without any evidence of an art-making intention

- lacked visual evidence and contained primarily written work
- used multiple pages for analysis of established practice or mood boards
- provided evidence that did not meet the specifications (i.e. less than eight pages).

Achievement standard 91915: Create a sustained body of related art works in response to an art making proposition

Assessment

The assessment required candidates to submit a portfolio, that reflected the requirements of the Standard, in one of the formats outlined in the assessment specifications.

Commentary

Candidates were more successful when they brought their own identity into their work and personally connected with their art-making proposition. Popular themes this year included landscapes, *kōwhaiwhai*, *tāonga*, Aotearoa New Zealand manu, awa, and moana. Exploration of cultural identity was evident across the submissions, connecting to the themes of *kāinga tupu*, *kāinga tūturu*, and '*Ko wai au?*' Portraiture and visual pepeha were popular conventions to communicate these themes.

Processes, materials, and techniques that were used included: typography, layering of maps, grid format, cyanotype, double exposure, silhouette, digital collage, etching, paper weaving, and stencilling.

There was a strong focus on artist models from Aotearoa New Zealand to support candidate decision making and idea development. Successful submissions used artist models implicitly, mixing selected elements or approaches with their own art-making proposition. Frequently used artist models included Vanessa Edwards, Shane Cotton, Nicky Foreman, Penny Howard, Bill Hammond, Don Binney, Sam Mitchell, Kelcy Taratoa, John Pule, John Bevan Ford, David Salle, Star Gossage, and Jerry Takigawa.

Successful submissions benefitted from programmes that combined teacher-led structure with opportunities for student agency as the work evolved. This approach enabled candidates to leverage their strengths and select appropriate conventions, techniques, and media to suit their art-making proposition. Notably, this balance supported candidates to demonstrate reflection and refinement in the creation and sequencing of artworks, essential for achieving at Merit and Excellence.

Most portfolios exemplified an appropriate number of works for the 5-credit weighting of the Standard. Six to eight, considered artworks was consistently observed in painting / printmaking submissions, with slightly more work presented in photography / design submissions.

Portfolios produced with digital processes, often included too many artworks on an A1 folio board. This limited candidates' opportunities to edit, select and clarify ideas. The focus of this achievement standard is sustained works, so highly finished work (versus preparatory images) should be included. Ordering and hierarchy of scale in the final artworks also supports candidates to show reflection and a resolved endpoint. Where candidates created original source imagery, with specific reference to design submissions, they were more successful.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- produced a sustained body of related artworks with sufficient use of media, process, and techniques
- showed an awareness of art-making conventions, with artworks visually demonstrating stylistic and thematic intentions
- used connections between elements in the submission to unify the art-making proposition, e.g. subject matter, colour palette, and pattern
- created artist model emulations that related to their art-making proposition
- used a wide range of media to produce work versus reflecting and selecting the most appropriate media for their intended purpose
- worked with a narrow proposition that limited the progression of ideas, therefore produced repetitive singular works
- applied text or pattern as decorative elements
- described shape and form through line work and tone with dry and wet media
- had some compositional awareness in the placement of elements within works
- did not demonstrate sustained control of media across works
attempted to reflect on connections between elements and their art-making proposition, but demonstrated inconsistent skill with media.

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

- identified a clear art-making proposition and engaged authentically with subject matter
- selected and used media and technologies according to an intended purpose
- investigated a range of art-making conventions to progress ideas forward
- considered ideas and techniques informed by appropriate artist model selection
- enhanced connections between works by reflecting on elements from previous works and bringing them through into further developed works
- allowed ideas to build from start to finish, showing reflection in the order and layout of individual works within the submission
- showed reflection in making by editing out unsuccessful elements or conventions
- personalised their approach and choice of final outcomes
- demonstrated fluency with selected media and conventions; however, lacked clarification of ideas.

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

- established a clear and unique proposition that was evident from the beginning of the submission
- showed consistent progression towards an intended art-making proposition
- used reflective practice to select successful conventions and ideas to further refine
- selected images and created compositional arrangements that enhanced the relationships between works
- integrated new subject matter to support the clarification of their art-making proposition
- displayed fluency with technical skills, e.g. considered colour, surface and layering in the application of wet media
- showed understanding of perspective when necessary
- fully integrated text or pattern into individual works, adding both meaning and depth to the artwork
- showed understanding of lighting and exposure in photographic work
- applied appropriate design conventions to meet the requirements of a brief.

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

- submitted incomplete submissions or explorative work
- did not use or had limited use of art-making conventions
- did not meet Level 6 of the New Zealand Curriculum for media use
- relied heavily on found imagery
- submitted a body of work with repeating elements
- included artworks unconnected to the art-making proposition
- used found compositions with limited integration of own ideas or processes
- did not order, sequence, and size individual art works
- used line to define shape but struggled to represent form and depth.