

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Art History 2024

Performance standard 93301

General commentary

The 2024 Art History Scholarship exam paper worked well, with candidates responding across the range of questions and very few not completing three questions.

The quality of answers this year was impressive. Handwriting was sometimes a problem but the candidate responses were effective and points were clearly made. Candidates also drew on a wider range of works than in previous years, indicating more independent study.

Candidates need to be very clear on what visual analysis is, and the difference between description and analysis, in order to be able to deconstruct what an artist has done and how and why they have done it. Works used as evidence need to be selected carefully, allowing plenty of opportunity to answer in depth.

Careful attention to the question asked is always critical and significant.

In Question 1, which asked for a discussion of the ways and methods used to explore form, candidates needed to analyse the methods by which form, not necessarily human, had been constructed and the effect achieved through these methods.

Question 2 needed a clear stance to be taken, and maintained, on the benefits and/or problems associated with patronage, i.e. yes, or it can be both, or no. As with all questions in Sections A and B, visual analysis of specific works was required to support the response.

Question 3 on 'the frame' was popular, drawing a wide range of independent responses, with interpretations of frame defined not only as physical, but also social, political, and environmental.

Some candidates struggled to get a perspective on Question 4, which asked for a discussion on the statement 'the personal is political'. Again, the choice of works here was critical to show how an art work was personal to the artist and also able to be considered political.

Supporting the statement in Question 5 required not only analysis of ways in which chosen works were controversial or ground-breaking but also how they made an impact. Additionally, some candidates selected art works which they successfully argued had considerable impact but were not controversial or ground-breaking.

Question 6 was a popular choice but needed careful reading, as responses had to either justify or refute the statement and commit to the stance taken.

In Section C, candidates were required to explain the ideas in the text 'in their own words' and then discuss main ideas with supporting evidence. The author of the text should be named and ideally referred back to when dealing with each idea, in order to show continued engagement with the text.

Strong responses in this section unpacked the selected ideas, evaluating them and either developing them further or challenging them. In all responses, the argument needed to be supported with relevant evidence.

Overall, the biggest barrier to higher marks in the Scholarship exam this year was the lack of developed visual analysis. Many candidates could write in depth on an art work, but their account was essentially descriptive. Candidates need to explain in depth what stylistic features the artist has employed, how they have been used, and the effect that has been achieved, in relation to the question asked.

At Scholarship level, candidates should also ideally be able to use art terminology effectively in their analyses.

Note too that it is important that candidates have a very clear understanding of the assessment criteria, including the importance of visual analysis in Sections A and B, and the interpretation of text in Section C.

Report on performance standard

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with **Outstanding Performance** commonly:

- demonstrated highly developed knowledge and understanding of the discipline of art history
- showed perception and insight through highly developed visual analyses
- presented comprehensive depth and breadth of knowledge relevant to the question asked
- incorporated critical responses to contexts and ideas
- selected and discussed in depth art works that were relevant to the question
- demonstrated convincing and sophisticated communication integrating their evidence in a mature, cohesive and focused manner
- demonstrated originality and some supporting information from independent study
- demonstrated engagement and a high-level interpretation of text in Section C.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- addressed the question asked
- visually analysed the works discussed at a high level
- selected appropriate works that gave them plenty of room for analysis
- demonstrated depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding
- presented a high level of focused and cohesive communication.

Candidates who were **not awarded Scholarship** commonly:

- demonstrated little visual analysis
- selected works which were not relevant to the question
- wrote answers characterised by generalisation and description
- did not answer the question – or all of the question – asked.