

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Music 2024

Performance standard 93305

General commentary

Scholarship music in 2024 was consistent with other years, with the one exception being the use of AI generated material in the critical reflection being seen for the first time. This is unacceptable and NZQA requires teachers / schools to validate and attest to the originality and authenticity of a candidate's submission.

Candidates do not need to read their NSN out loud before their introduction, nor should they state their name. This can lead to unnecessary hesitation and nerves making the start of the performance appear unnatural. A file name that is clearly labelled with the NSN is all that is required.

The camera angle is critical to ensure the whole performer can be seen, especially in instances where their technique needs to be observed (e.g., pedalling on the piano). Videos should be set to one fixed camera only – zooming in and out on a performer can mean the candidate loses opportunities to demonstrate their communication (e.g., hand gestures, communication with their accompanist). Accompanists (if applicable) should always be visible to allow the candidate's communication with them to be seen.

For videos submitted for portfolios, it is important to ensure recordings are started at the correct moment. They must not include unnecessary dialogue between performers and their teachers, the audience, or the accompanist before the performance begins or after it ends. The candidate's introduction must be captured in full. The recording should not end until the performance has finished completely (e.g. bowed to the audience, acknowledged their accompanist) as a performance is judged from start to finish, including these aspects (just as any performance recital would be in a live setting). Markers want to see the performer acknowledge the audience and the accompanist if applicable.

Musical examples used in the critical reflection should have clefs and time signatures. Examples cut and pasted from scores without clefs and metre markings become less meaningful.

Authenticity Statements need to be signed by the school - some candidates did not submit these at all.

Scores for performance portfolios need to be supplied.

Report on performance standard

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

- submitted a performance portfolio that was prepared to specifically meet the requirements for the scholarship assessment – a carefully planned and authentic performance in front of an audience with appropriate stage etiquette (introduction of their pieces, engagement with the audience, strong communication with their accompanist and / or other performers (where applicable))
- performed a repertoire that was varied and demonstrated a highly advanced level of technical ability and musical awareness / understanding of the works
- demonstrated a consistently high level of communication throughout the whole performance

- demonstrated a high level of musicality in their interpretations of the pieces - expressive and mature playing that was highly musical; not just technically accurate
- provided a composition portfolio that was well presented and carefully chosen to meet the guidelines of the scholarship criteria
- submitted compositions that were highly creative, well structured, and had instrumentation carefully considered
- presented thematic composition material that was original, well developed, and demonstrated exceptional quality in style
- provided recordings of the works composed (both visual scores and recordings) that demonstrated an exceptional level of quality
- provided a critical analysis that was insightful, highly reflective, and analysed the whole process (i.e., from planning to performance / final completed work) as well as discussing future steps
- demonstrated the ability to support their writing with references to a wider body of knowledge (e.g., other performances, literature)
- included highly relevant annotations and links made to the score(s) in the reflection
- exhibited writing of exceptional quality by effectively utilising appropriate terminology, with well-informed conclusions and insights. Overall the written communication of their response was at a consistently high level throughout.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- presented a well-prepared performance that showcased advanced technical skills and understanding of their chosen works throughout the entire performance
- displayed a consistently high level of communication by providing a succinct and confident introduction at the beginning of the performance plus clearly evident communication with the audience (regardless of its size) and with the accompanist and / or other performers (where applicable), which was maintained throughout
- submitted a composition portfolio which gave clear evidence of originality and comprehensive understanding of elements, characteristics, and performance techniques. The technical demands and capabilities of the instruments chosen were well understood. Visual representation of the works was highly accurate, applicable to the genre, and very detailed. Recordings of the work(s) were of high quality.
- submitted a critical reflection that was reflective, original, and made relevant links to their specific portfolio material and external sources throughout
- effectively and convincingly communicated a written response that was unique and linked strongly to their specific portfolio material
- included well-chosen and applicable annotations
- submitted a complete portfolio that was comprehensive and insightful.

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

- submitted a portfolio that did not sufficiently meet the specified guidelines, e.g., a performance portfolio that was only 8 minutes long (essentially only half a portfolio)
- submitted a portfolio that did not meet the criteria as outlined in the assessment specifications (e.g., performance video was edited and not one recording made specifically for NCEA Scholarship music, the compositions submitted were collaborative works instead of just their own work, elements of the musicology portfolio were not completed as per the guidelines provided)
- wrote a commentary that described rather than reflected on / analysed their works for their critical reflection
- discussed (often at length) aspects of their musical background and achievements as a performer / composer / musician that were not relevant nor required for a critical analysis

- presented a critical reflection that was not substantial, falling well short of the 3,000 word limit with minimal evidence, a lack of detail relevant to their chosen portfolio material, and / or few to no sources used and referenced correctly
- presented a critical reflection that lacked originality and drew on structural elements and / or wording from exemplars
- showed evidence of using AI-generated material.