2025 NCEA Assessment Report

Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Subject: Design and Visual Communication

Level: 2

Achievement standard(s): 91337, 91338, 91339

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

Achievement standard 91337: Use visual communication techniques to generate design ideas

Commentary

When selecting design briefs, it is helpful to consider the scale of the project in terms of both its breadth and complexity. Briefs should provide enough scope for individuals to demonstrate their understanding of the achievement standard, while still being manageable enough to allow ideas to be explored thoroughly. Straightforward, well-defined briefs often support deeper investigation and more focused development of design ideas.

A clear sense of context also plays an important role in communicating design thinking. Establishing the context early in the work helps viewers understand the purpose and direction of the ideas being generated. Providing this context allows visual experiments to move beyond abstract shapes and forms, transforming them into meaningful and recognisable design concepts.

When preparing work for submission, it is beneficial to curate selections that best demonstrate how visual communication techniques were used to generate ideas. This does not require including every piece of work produced during the project. Large volumes of general research are often submitted but are not necessary for this standard, which focuses specifically on visual idea generation. It is also important to consider the order in which the work will be viewed so the progression of thinking is clear and intentional.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- communicated ideas that showed elements of both function and aesthetic
- explored ideas that were generally predictable and expected, these often resembled existing examples or were a literal interpretation of the influence or starting point
- used visual communication skills that were a mix of 2D and 3D modes
- provided ideas that were given context through the addition of people or other contextual items, so that they became an idea rather than just a form
- communicated the basic function and aesthetic considerations for the design ideas
- communicated aesthetics through colour and simple materiality
- showed function which was often generic or consisted of simple detail – usually materials and construction or human interface as the main aspects and then elements specific to the context such as floor plans in spatial contexts, pattern pieces for textiles.

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

- explored ideas that were more challenging in nature
- generated a range of ideas that were unexpected, different, or interesting, demonstrating an interpretation of influences or inspiration that was non-literal and manipulated
- used design strategies involving development through iterations or a wide range of singular ideas to meet the brief
- clarified through visual communication the design's functionality and details, allowing a clear understanding of the candidate's thinking
- incorporated function into initial design ideas, showed how people interacted with the design, and used rendering to enhance communication. The work demonstrated design intent rather than merely playing with shapes or adding unnecessary elements.
- showed the context of their design clearly, linked to functionality, and was integrated in their process
- explored their ideas in greater detail using a range of visual communication modes and methods
- showed more balance between the consideration of aesthetic and functional qualities
- provided visual communication which allowed clear understanding of the thinking and understanding of the designs forms and functions
- provided design work which communicated how people would use and interact with the design, and there was often consideration for the intended environment.

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

- included in-depth exploration and quality visual communication techniques that effectively conveyed ideas, developments, and iterations
- demonstrated a comprehensive exploration of both the functional and aesthetic qualities of their design
- showed brave, new, or weird ideas that remained grounded and functional
- used a second iteration of exploration of a chosen design idea with clear and purposeful intent, or the in-depth interrogation of specific design elements
- showed a genuine connection to their context, and presented a process that was easy to follow
- generated a range of interesting or different design ideas where context and function were considered from the beginning
- made a thorough exploration of function and aesthetics with attention to some of the finer details of the design
- used multiple viewpoints throughout their process and used a variety of visual communication techniques
- visually communicated their thinking clearly, using the most appropriate methods of communication
- provided clear and easy to follow work
- extended their designs through regeneration, manipulation, or original ideation
- communicated multiple elements of the design like texture, lighting, the human interface, and specific construction for that design.

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

- lacked exploration and often presented only a single design idea
- had concepts that were too basic or lacked the complexity required for a Level 2 DVC project
- had submissions that were poorly drawn, simplistic, and lacked detail, sometimes featuring basic single line drawings in no recognised drawing method. Crucially, the visual communication did not identify the function or purpose of the design.

- provided evidence that was unclear or lacking context to determine what the design was
- produced work that lacked communication of function and/or aesthetics.

Achievement standard 91338: Produce instrumental perspective projection drawings to communicate design ideas

Commentary

Most submissions for this standard are now created using CAD software, which highlights the importance of understanding the fundamentals of working drawings and their purpose. A strong grasp of these principles helps ensure that decisions about conventions, layout, and accuracy are made by the designer rather than being left entirely to automated software processes.

This Level 2 standard requires the application of technical drawing conventions, including assembly drawings, detail drawings, and dimensions verified using standard scales. This represents a significant progression from Level 1, which focuses primarily on instrumental drawing techniques.

Overall, achievement in this standard continues to improve. High-quality 2D drawing sets demonstrate a clear understanding of composition, formatting, and the communication of complex technical information. Producing drawings of this calibre requires sustained, focused time within learning programmes, and it is encouraging to see an increasing number of submissions showing the level of accuracy, organisation, and clarity associated with Merit and Excellence performance.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- produced a set of interconnected 2D instrumental working drawings
- showed technical details expressing complex visual communication (plan, elevations, clearly related and linked cross section)
- submitted pages related through titles or numbering in sequence
- used recognised drawing conventions appropriate to the drawings being produced (e.g. labelling, scale, line-type; construction lines, outlines, section lines)
- communicated both functional and aesthetic qualities of their design (e.g. room purpose, materiality in elevations for spatial or shape and componentry of a product design)
- did not use standard scale for their views – e.g. the CAD application had not been formatted to give a 1:50 elevation scale but it might be 1:48
- neglected to add vertical dimensions to the elevations of spatial design drawings.

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

- produced a set of interconnecting 2D instrumental working drawings
- communicated technical details of the design
- showed construction information or complex detailing that related to the design
- produced drawings which were clearly communicated when appropriate use and application of tools to link pages were applied (e.g. the use of labelled cutting planes to link sectional views, NSEW symbols, and page sequence numbering in title blocks)
- produced drawings that were skilfully and accurately drawn, either by hand with instruments or with CAD applications, using standard technical drawing scales
- applied drawing conventions appropriately to the context of drawings being presented (e.g. in the spatial or product design fields)
- sometimes neglected to add vertical dimensions to the elevations of spatial design drawings, which meant that coherent and informative information was not provided for an Excellence grade.

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

- communicated the technical details of the design effectively and to a high standard using appropriate conventions for the type of working drawing
- ensured effective understanding of a set of drawings, consistently and accurately drawn and including sectional views and enlarged details
- added details to the set of working drawings which were accurately related to the design, consistent with information communicated in the other linked drawings
- effectively informed the design and supported the coherency of the communication
- produced a set of drawings which flowed through the relationship of its parts, interconnected nature of the sheets, and the use of technical information which was easy to understand
- chose design projects appropriate for this level
- reflected good instruction and mastery of the drawing systems needed to produce this level of work.

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

- produced a set of interconnected drawings that did not show enough technical details about the design (e.g. a working drawing that contained a plan or top view, but lacked technical details of distinct parts, assembly, functionality in the plans, or materiality in the elevations)
- produced room spaces in floor plans that were not labelled or described with the placement of furniture blocks
- produced product design drawings with a lot of details, but with limited assembled views of the overall object, often with no dimensioning to show how big the object was and to relate it to the given scale.

Achievement standard 91339: Produce instrumental perspective projection drawings to communicate design ideas

Commentary

The accuracy of mechanical perspective projections is easiest to verify when the original drawings can be viewed clearly. This allows assessors to check the specific techniques used, including vanishing point placement and the projection of heights from plans and elevations. Poor quality submissions make it difficult to closely examine the drawing surface in order to check straight edges and test alignment. When work is submitted only as scanned images or photographs – especially photos taken from a distance to capture a large sheet – some of this verification becomes difficult to reliably check.

Instrumental perspective projections are inherently complex and require a strong understanding of projection principles. Candidates must clearly show how they have constructed the drawing, particularly for circles and curved features. In weaker submissions, these elements were often freehanded or estimated, while higher-level work showed accurately plotted points and clearly presented construction lines.

Accuracy and quality of drawing presentation remain important. Clean, well-organised drawing sheets and appropriate pencil choices help ensure clarity. Some candidates used CAD tools to produce their perspective projections, which is acceptable when the projection is generated in the same way it would be created on a drawing sheet. However, rendered 3D models (such as those produced in SketchUp) do not meet the requirements of this standard.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- produced an instrumental perspective drawing using the basic principles of perspective projection
- correctly set out the picture plane, eye-level line, ground line, vanishing points, and station point
- labelled key features clearly
- used projection techniques to show design features
- included some detailing or complexity in the form or features of the object
- projected only what was evident in the plan and elevation
- guessed widths or features rather than accurately projecting.

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

- produced an instrumental perspective drawing that applied projection principles accurately
- correctly set out the picture plane, eye line, ground line, vanishing points, and height information
- used a height line or an elevation to project heights
- labelled height marks clearly so projection could be verified
- projected design details such as window frames, doorframes, and railings with clarity
- communicated thickness, depth, materials, or construction through these details
- created drawings with clear and effective line work
- worked at a scale large enough for details to be easily seen
- plotted points accurately to create more complex shapes or curves

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

- selected a viewpoint that clearly communicated visual information and design detail
- produced a perspective projection that was highly informative and visually realistic
- showed the overall form and structure of the object or building effectively
- used the picture plane and viewpoint to generate a large, clear image of the design
- ensured the image size resulted from projection techniques, not digital enlargement
- projected all features accurately, including elements such as weatherboards, fittings, handles, guttering, flooring, and decking
- demonstrated strong drawing skill to communicate design information
- used advanced techniques such as exploded views, visible interior details through windows, or removed exterior cladding to reveal framing.

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

- attempted an instrumental perspective drawing but did not apply projection principles correctly
- incorrectly projected the vanishing points from the station point and picture plane
- showed misunderstanding of the relationship between the station point, picture plane, and vanishing points
- had no elevation or labelled height information from which to project heights
- produced drawings that were too simple in form and lacked complex detail
- presented drawings that did not represent their own design ideas
- submitted freehand sketches or computer-generated perspectives (such as 3D CAD models) instead of an instrumental perspective projection.