Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Design and Visual Communication 2023

Performance standard 93602

General commentary

Candidates who were successful in Scholarship utilised a variety of approaches and strengths and showed that there is no single approach in attaining success. Well curated projects where design ideas and thinking were brought together with clarity tended to score well. It is important to use visual techniques to explain the thinking underlying the design practice as well as communicating ideas, decisions, and outcomes.

The top submissions engaged deeply with their context, and this informed a personalised and highly thoughtful approach to designing. The candidates engaged their own design perspectives that were responsive to the needs of the brief, and this typically led to convincing and well considered design thinking and elegantly resolved outcomes.

A range of ideation strategies could be used by candidates. Freehand sketching, physical modelling, and digital tools such as CAD software were used well by successful candidates to explore and experiment with ideas. Candidates who explored one starting point in a variety of different ways rather than trying many different starting points were more likely to be successful. It is advisable to use starting points that are suited to the context, e.g. for spatial contexts it is useful to use a starting point that includes some sense of a spatial experience rather than starting points that are more form based. Ideation that moved into exploring ideas in context helped candidates to move forwards and develop their creative thinking.

Candidate projects covered a good range of suitable contexts. The most successful submissions used contexts that candidates could fully engage with. This may have been a specific site that could be visited and well understood or a human need or opportunity that the candidate could connect with. Candidates are advised to select contexts that they are willing to engage in fully and fearlessly. A simple context that has been explored and resolved innovatively and in depth is often better than a very complex context that is only dealt with superficially.

Candidates need to ensure that they send the best evidence possible of their work. Some candidates submitted small photographs of exhibitions. It was not possible to gauge the quality of visual communication from small photographs of outcomes. Candidates should ensure that they present images of final outcomes that contain suitable detail and definition. Do not submit planning work for exhibitions as it is not relevant to this standard.

Report on performance standard

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

- used intentional design thinking to develop and build an idea
- demonstrated sustained levels of sophisticated thinking and convincing communication
- continued to develop an idea, building in increasing complexity of meaning and purpose
- presented a design process with conviction and integrity
- recognised and pursued quality ideas that showed a personal design point of view
- explored the context bravely and developed clever ideas
- produced design work that was absolutely convincing in its approach and decision making
- engaged in a development process that added complexity and meaning to the developing idea
- thought deeply about the context while refining their ideas and made decisions that resulted in an elegant final design
- used visual communication approaches that powerfully conveyed the intent and meaning of the design ideas and expressed the design decisions in a convincing and compelling manner
- expressed a captivating visual story using fluent and sophisticated visual techniques and strategies.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- showed thinking that engaged with the context and revisited the context throughout the design practice
- demonstrated clear thinking that stemmed from understanding the design context
- recognised the problems that they were solving and demonstrated clear and relevant decision making
- brought their own point of view and personality into the project
- used initiating source material to create ideas that had a sense of purpose
- used visual techniques to convey the thinking embodied in their design practice
- demonstrated application of skills and knowledge. This may have been through incorporating skilful visual communication techniques or through application of design or technical knowledge
- engaged in meaningful ideation at various stages throughout their process
- recognised good ideas during ideation phases and pursued these further
- clearly communicated their ideas and design thinking using visual techniques (e.g. sketching, model-making, formal drawing, or presentation drawings) as suitable to the strengths of the candidate
- used visual techniques to show a variety of viewpoints, explain function or use, and to show the relationship with the context
- used visual communication strategies that allowed them to deepen their understanding of design ideas and to develop and express them in increasing detail.

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

- showed design practice that was missing obvious considerations
- did not demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the design context
- were superficial in their treatment of the design issues and did not express their ideas in a way that demonstrated a high level of detail, skill, and knowledge
- submitted projects that carried out a design process but often lacked a personal, original design response
- conveyed a narrative that seemed to be missing chunks of thinking with the design story jumping around and being difficult to follow
- used a variety of strategies to explore and generate ideas but only on a superficial level
- did not connect ideas to a context or did not show a deepening engagement in the ideas
- engaged in projects that were not a suitable scope, being either too large and complex to properly engage with or too simplistic to allow interesting design thinking to occur
- oversimplified ideas during development and refinement phases rather than adding layers of complexity
- did not use high quality visual communication skills to explore and refine ideas in depth
- did not communicate a well resolved outcome using visual techniques
- submitted incomplete or unresolved work, lacking the completion of a finished outcome; often this was due to an overemphasis on ideation and initial idea generation.