

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Religious Studies 2021

Standard 93603

Part A: Commentary

To prove their capability at Scholarship or Outstanding Scholarship level, candidates have to be able to respond to the challenge of exploring the complex scenario set in the prompt material and questions. In their response, they use their highly developed knowledge, skills, and understanding from the field of Religious Studies; they show their ability to integrate, synthesise, and apply it with a strong argument that shows a high level of analysis and critical thinking. Many candidates who sat Scholarship in Religious Studies in 2021 were well prepared, with a range of source material around academic approaches to religious studies, historical and contemporary examples of religious diversity at both its best and worst, pertinent passages from authoritative religious texts and quotations from leading commentators, including rich material from Aotearoa New Zealand, and insightful personal perspectives.

This year, the more successful students were those who understood and wrestled with the prompts and question, thus demonstrating Scholarship level skills of analysis, while drawing on a rich vein of sources. There was a good range of knowledge and skills shown, but perhaps the biggest pointer to even better scholarship performance is to properly address the prompts and question in the exam booklet, rather than writing a previously constructed response to a more general interpretation of the topic.

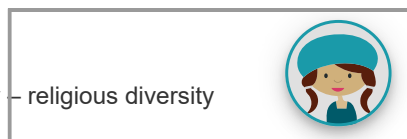
Part B: Report on performance standard

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

- directly addressed the question asked, examining it and challenging it
- wrote convincingly in their argument throughout the essay, holding the reader's attention without lapses in control
- took lines of argument that were novel and had the reader waiting for strong conclusions, which were often surprising, poignant, and sophisticated
- explored a range of ways to integrate the prompt material into their argument
- made their terms of reference clear, being very specific about their understanding of terms like religion, faith, and diversity
- called on the best evidence from a broad range of disciplines, examples, and religious ideas to support their argument and show their highly developed Religious Studies knowledge
- applied their conclusions to a variety of situations
- developed discussion that involved critical analysis, including the ability to consider opposing perspectives
- were able to enter convincingly into opposing views
- wrote with an authentic perspective.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- understood and engaged directly with the question and attempted to define the parameters of their argument
- drew upon a range of disciplines, examples, and religious ideas, generally integrating these well into their response
- produced a discussion that involved the consistent application of analysis
- reflected on counter-arguments that they raised
- were able to develop a substantial argument that was effectively structured
- showed evidence, inferred or explicit, of an understanding of the context of the essay
- lacked in clarity at times or did not examine different viewpoints enough.



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

- did not engage with and / or appreciate the scope of the question and prompt material
 - demonstrated a very limited range of highly developed content knowledge
 - did not appear to have an adequate appreciation of the concept of religious diversity
 - produced responses that were underdeveloped
 - produced responses that were mostly descriptive
 - delivered a prepared response
 - wrote simple answers without nuance or depth.
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