

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship English 2021

Standard 93001

Part A: Commentary

Legibility was a problem with some scripts. Poor handwriting is an impediment to fluency and coherence, both of which are required to score at Scholarship level.

The quality of each essay is far more important than quantity of words. Candidates would benefit from further teaching and learning about judicious selection of the most pertinent details to support a focused argument.

There were responses from candidates who evidently should not have been entered for Scholarship, based on the evidence of their lack of ability to write an essay, and the limited breadth of texts and the quality of the ideas discussed. There was a marked lack of basic skills – missing capital letters, grammatical errors, and those basic things that say, “I am a candidate for Scholarship English”. Spelling errors in titles or author’s names, and confusion over who wrote the Section A texts (the publishers “Steele Roberts”, and “Bridget”, in some responses!) are errors that cannot be overlooked. The examination is intended to be meant for top candidates who love literature and are good at close reading, not just anyone who wants to ‘have a go’.

Length of response does not correlate to the quality of the grade awarded; over-writing in one section often comes at the cost of limiting the response in another section, and making the same point again and again detracts from the freshness of the response. This was especially true of Section B where novel after novel was used to address Statement 5.

Candidates need to continue to be encouraged to work on synthesising their discussion of texts. This was achieved well in Section A but did not really follow over into Section B and C.

Overall, Section B (Genre) was answered poorly. Further teaching and learning on genre is encouraged so that candidates can really get to the heart of the question in their argument.

Statement 1 (poetry) was very straightforward and elicited ‘Level 3’-type responses from even some otherwise very strong candidates. Those candidates who disagreed with or reframed the statement tended to construct stronger, more synthesised responses.

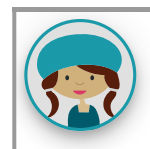
The use of critical lenses to discuss a text did not tend to strengthen a candidate’s response. Frequently, the lens became the focus of the response rather than the statement. Justification for why a lens is being used needs to be made for the discussion to be relevant.

Generally, the more sophisticated the texts, the more sophisticated the responses. As previous reports have commented, using Year 11 texts is not really an option at Scholarship level.

Part B: Report on performance standard

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

- wrestled with the question, and were clearly not presenting a pre-learned response



- demonstrated independent and creative thought
- developed a very coherent and persuasive argument
- wove a wide range of relevant sources into their discussion, demonstrating an excellent knowledge of the context of the text, particularly philosophical thought
- maintained a consistent focus on the requirements of each section
- structured a sophisticated and confident argument that showed independent thought
- wrote a perceptive response, synthesising ideas across and beyond the texts
- used evidence judiciously, integrating precise details and / or quotations and unpacking them in relation to the essay's argument
- wrote accurately, with confidence and flair
- utilised technical language at a high level, especially in Section A
- wrote essays that 'went somewhere' and drew a new conclusion based on the ideas in the response
- were not over-written – writing was precise and concise, and responses showed evidence of having been deliberately very well crafted.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- explicitly addressed the requirements of each question by setting up a clear thesis that was an appropriate response to it
- took a clear stance in relation to the chosen statements in Sections B and C
- wrote an integrated response that used relevant supporting detail to build an argument
- demonstrated a precise knowledge and a secure understanding of chosen texts
- used evidence carefully from chosen texts, integrating concise details and / or quotations and unpacking them in relation to the essay's argument
- wrote fluently, coherently and accurately
- used a range of texts
- showed the ability to synthesise their responses
- had original ideas and connected them within their response
- integrated technical language and / or literary theory into their response in a way that did not overwhelm it.

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

- in Section A, did not address the requirements of the question
- in Sections B and C, did not respond directly to the chosen statements
- made basic errors in spelling and grammar
- did not write in a lucid and controlled way
- chose texts that did not allow for the sophistication expected
- presented a pre-learned response using key words from the previous year's examination
- presented a recrafted 'connections' essay that related poorly to the chosen statement
- demonstrated a superficial understanding of the texts used
- summarised or paraphrased texts without connecting them to the chosen statement
- in Section C, used a limited range of texts, with very little variation in aspects such as time, gender, and type
- wrote responses that did not address the statement (e.g. wrote about literature when a discussion of language was required)
- wrote essays that showed a Level 3 structure – a paragraph for each text with very little synthesis.

Subject page

Previous years' reports

[2020 \(PDF, 115KB\)](#)

[2019 \(PDF, 83KB\)](#)

[2018 \(PDF, 85KB\)](#)

[2017 \(PDF, 53KB\)](#)
