

2015 NZ Scholarship Assessment Report

Design and Visual Communication

Report on performance standard

Scholarship with Outstanding Performance	<p>Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engaged in a design context that was well customised to suit their own interests, expertise and approaches to design identified, explored and resolved a variety of design issues that covered aesthetics, function, and human interaction demonstrated iterative and purposeful design strategies, exploring some diverse themes that resulted in either a stunning conceptual statement or refined / innovative outcome integrated a range of skills and knowledge that were used to strengthen and deepen understanding and the quality of the design ideas synthesised design ideas; pushed the boundaries; revisited design thoughts with rigour and solved problems used a range of design techniques to initiate, explore and evolve ideas in a sophisticated and in-depth way; allowing ideas to take a life of their own in leading towards possible design outcomes produced unique and innovative ideas, often with a new perspective to the brief, engaging with the design problem in a deeply personal way that resulted in a unique designer outcome with a clear and distinctive designer voice that expressed fresh thinking developed ideas that integrated a range of thinking and layers of meaning that were explored and unified - abstraction of ideas, and in some cases, also used as a method to progress ideas demonstrated design thinking that was inspired and had coherent elements of creativity and ingenuity, stemming from original and highly refined ideation - candidates showed that they could think differently and cleverly integrated their ideas, design thinking processes and visual communication skills to explore ideas and develop outcomes beyond the predictable - they showed distinct and innovative ideation derived from a range of sources used visual communication techniques with a high level of fluency and sophistication to convey a perceptive and compelling design narrative in a highly captivating manner articulated design ideas and thinking convincingly, with a range of advanced visual communication techniques used to express and develop design ideas used visual techniques that helped to understand, explore and resolve issues. Often looking at the design from different perspectives employed outstanding visual presentation techniques, working to their own personal strengths with a visual impact that was convincing, leaving a lasting impression with a 'wow' factor that evoked the spirit of the design as well as celebrating its features.
Scholarship	<p>Candidates who were awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> used ideation techniques to generate and discover ideas that were worth pursuing further as part of a design strategy for exploring and refining ideas that were meaningful to the design context employed research material in a focused and informative manner that integrated effectively with design thinking generated design ideas effectively using creative initiating approaches (drawing from nature, designers for inspiration, redrawing to simplify)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated the exploration and evolution of ideas that were managed and completed in a skilful and wide-ranging manner, blending thoughts and influences, inspiration and ideas • applied a cohesive design process which allowed the creative development of ideas, leading to a well-considered design outcome • investigated and explored alternative design ideas, considering the details within a whole idea and in relation to each other, interrogating these as design possibilities • addressed a range of design issues related to the design context • explored design issues and ideas beyond surface or form characteristics • articulated the clear communication of ideas and design thinking using suitable visual techniques (sketching, model-making and/or formal drawing - digital and/or manual) as suitable to the strengths of the candidate • used visuals that showed a variety of angles, that explained product function, or that related scale through referencing the human element, for the effective communicating of ideas or thinking without the need to read supporting annotation • used increasingly complex and detailed visuals to communicate an increasing understanding of the design ideas as the project progressed.
Other candidates	<p>Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produced ideation material but did not take these ideas any further in a purposeful manner into the development phase, lost opportunities of interesting starting points were common with the candidate unable to conclude their project in a convincing manner after a promising beginning • lacked the demonstration of innovative or in-depth design thinking, with candidates disadvantaged by; the substantial scale of the design brief undertaken; a lack of design ideation strategies; a strict conforming to a prescribed, predetermined approach • did not show the engagement required for their design context – the work was not in-depth or did not show quality exploration and evolution of an outcome. Some candidates would over simplify ideas in order to make them easier to deal with • did not evolve ideas with purpose – lacked the ongoing aspect of design development that draws on design considerations and explores ideas with depth or detail • generated a range of ideas using set creative exercises or techniques but did not develop their own perspective or point of view as a designer throughout their project. Used inspiration material directly rather than using it to stimulate own thinking • showed ideas relevant to an identified design brief or problem but overlooked major issues or failed to address aspects of the brief • showed minimal or no reference to the human body in architectural or product design ideas • showed details of the design explored independently without considering how they may affect the overall design • described design ideas rather than exploring or evolving them • used development to explain how the design idea functioned rather than exploring the idea further for the purposes of improving the final outcome • lacked a well-considered or refined design solution, often ending up with a pre-determined solution without sufficient consideration or influence of alternatives • lacked skills in visual communication to competently describe design ideas, in showing a clear design narrative, or in presenting a refined outcome • showed an over reliance on notes to the detriment of effective visual communication

	<p>that made it difficult to ascertain the actual visual qualities of their ideas, and resulted in a lack of visual analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showed a distinct lack of understanding demonstrated with regards to the principles associated with composition, layout and visual communication • lacked drawing skills and were not able to use these to effectively advance their design thinking • lacked the presentation skills and did not professionally promote their solutions • submitted incomplete or unresolved work, lacking the communication of a finished outcome.
Standard specific comments	<p>There is no examination paper for this subject – rather students submit a portfolio which is assessed externally. For Scholarship DVC, the assessment conditions remain relatively consistent year to year with a portfolio submission of a major design project and an assessment schedule that has a relatively consistent application of intention each year.</p> <p>The standard of evidence required to gain a Scholarship award continues a trend of improvement over recent years as the subject matures.</p> <p>The effective use of ideation strategies used for the generation of diverse and creative ideas can aid opportunities for success, though there are still many approaches to initiating ideas that were either generic class activities which didn't allow students to engage with the design context in a meaningful way that would enable the effective evolution of ideas.</p> <p>The more successful submissions not only used these strategies well in the initial stages of the project, but also successfully ran this approach throughout the ongoing exploration and refinement of design ideas. This evidence would see candidates purposefully following through with interesting beginnings and potential innovative possibilities that have emerged through ideas.</p> <p>At the top end, the quality of Outstanding Scholarship submissions continued to match the highest levels of a select number of exceptional submissions that have been received in past years. There was the continued featuring of both spatial design and product design coming to the fore at the very top end, with more architectural projects generally reaching up to and near the Outstanding Scholarship level.</p> <p>For the top ranking submissions, their varied approach and strengths reminded again that there is no single approach in attaining outstanding success. The design contexts and design practice demonstrated for the contenders for Top Scholar varied in scale, design field and visual communication modes, stretching both design thinking and approaches to visual communication.</p> <p>The use of digitally based evidence continues to increase and improve as ready access to software becomes more prevalent. While still images prevail, there is a growing trend of moving image and digital animation starting to emerge. For this format it remains essential that purposeful editing and composition, from a cinematic perspective, is well considered.</p> <p>The universal principles of visual communication ensuring design ideas and narratives are succinct, clearly communicated, informative and interesting, remains key to success, irrespective of the mode being used. The depth and detail of visual communication is paramount to effective candidate evidence. The need for extensive design drawings as well as the more polished, finished drawings is still the basis for a successful submission. The comprehensive use of design drawings (whether done by hand or digitally) best expresses the design intent of a candidate in the depth and detail required.</p> <p>Candidates need to be aware that drawing is not just for the purposes of explaining their ideas, but is also a tool for design thinking. Hence, the visual narrative of creative thinking is key to both the evolving and resolving of design ideas as well as the effective communicating of this evidence of design thinking.</p> <p>The number of submissions that have an excessive use of annotation and/or collected</p>

research material continues to decline as many candidates are more appropriately coming to terms with communicating their own thinking visually. The more extensive use of visuals, whether it be original manual drawing, photographic evidence of mock-ups, models or large work, or digital evidence submitted as either print outs or using the appropriate file formats, is being seen and generally meeting with a greater degree of success.

In terms of refined presentation, most candidates are evidencing this in a more selective manner that largely tends to be best suited for the presenting of the final outcome in an exhibition context. This more targeted approach allows the candidates to best utilise presentation skills to maximum effect, rather than take on the burden of presenting the entire project, which can be quite time-intensive and repetitive with little additional benefit.

There were instances of candidates who put on high quality presentations to only evidence this through small photographs only. Where possible, any presentation panels should be re-printed up to a suitable size within the given assessment specifications for Scholarship DVC to allow suitable reward of the presentation skills shown.

With the increasing amount of evidence that is heavily digital, candidates have the available opportunity to submit their evidence as a digital format (in line with the requirements of the assessment specifications) in addition to a hard copy as this can also overcome potential printing limitations and cost for some candidates.

Exemplar and assessment resources are to be found on the NZQA website and the developments auger well for a dynamic area with a growing level of credibility. Any students achieving well should be exceptionally pleased with their efforts and the evidence of work they have produced stands them well in terms of the pursuit of further career pathways in the creative industries and any such related fields.