

2015 NZ Scholarship Assessment Report

Visual Arts: Printmaking

Part A: Commentary

Comment on the overall response of candidates to the 2015 examination.

Print Scholarship for 2015 presented an exemplary level of performance that highlighted the astute and intuitive ways in which candidates are tackling the medium. Also dominant was the variety of approaches through which research is being managed and applied within practice. This observation was made across the entire cohort, as each candidate took up individual strategies that aligned workbook to folio in articulate and appropriately accountable ways. Topics ranged from personal identity and histories through to ethics, social, political and popular culture.

The workbooks continue to demonstrate innovations and obvious ownership of ideas around a well-researched and investigated proposition. Moreover, they usefully reveal the way a candidate visually thinks, technically, formally and conceptually. Whether the workbook is image-filled or contains notations or blocks of writing, they all surveyed the multifarious dimensions that led each enquiry.

Candidates' own mark making was considered a strength of the submissions throughout. The panel also commented on the positive inclusion of intuitive making and analysis. This tends to appear as what could be described as fluid developments and shifts that draw on previous discoveries and which are often supported by expert use of media, materials and processes, e.g. the candidate sees something technical such as a wash of media and uses it strategically to create a scene or to make an emotive reference, or they use scale as a means to move between two storylines. Many also understood how colour can organise and play a key role in the development and articulation of an idea.

Overall, the field was rich in content and skill. Drawing skills were grounded in traditional and contemporary conventions with candidates being explorative and inventive in their approach towards their proposition. It was felt that candidates knew how to develop and engage conceptual ideas and did so with confidence and ease. Attention to detail and processes strengthened conceptual sensibilities, which were supported by complex methodologies underpinned by clear and well-articulated vocabularies. Candidates are more and more developing their own vocabularies; visual language that belongs to their proposition and supports the nature of their investigation in context of excellent artists' reference that don't overshadow the candidates' own concerns. Furthermore, it was good to see humour being deployed to progress imagery and thinking.

'New' work that tested out ideas in the bid to expand the candidate's proposition, were intelligently built and expanded upon. This was seen in the workbooks where expanded practice territory was integrated part way through. Often these workbooks had no defining end, i.e. there was lateral thinking embedded throughout the workbook. This was presented in many forms, for example additional photographic studies, collage drawings and ideas from other fields.

The Print Marking panel would like to encourage more students to enter Scholarship. It is clear that many of the candidates that are achieving excellence or merit at L3 would be positively competitive at Scholarship, if not Outstanding Scholarship.

Part B: 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"> • employed printmaking conventions innovatively; synthesising a range of processes and creating an interplay of seamless layers • retained ownership of ideas and work throughout each process, allowing for development of complex approaches to technical, conceptual and contextual ideas • demonstrated a very high entry point and purpose through the establishment of an appropriate genre to suit their aesthetic and ability, combined with a visual vocabulary of multiple artist references • produced work that was highly sophisticated, confident and honest in its execution.
Scholarship	<p>Candidates who were awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • researched their proposition to enable scope and expansion, which often reflected a personal journey and established a sense of ownership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intelligently integrated well-understood print conventions and processes with an authentic proposition • demonstrated the ability to select information specifically for the workbook through editing and ordering of found material, including new generated work not on the folio • sustained a constant engagement between workbook and folio representing strong critical analysis; to the point that unsuccessful work was used to inform 'new' ideas and making.
Other candidates	<p>Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not clarify a proposition clearly and was not well-researched • narrated what was on the folio in literal terms and often explained in past tense; after the event, which then consumed three of the eight workbook pages • demonstrated a lack of critical analysis, particularly when having to make many decisions, one after another in the production of making • filled workbook pages with detailed descriptions of artists' biographies, artists' works, meanings behind the artworks to the detriment of very few visuals and written links/connections to their own proposition.