

## Assessment Report

# New Zealand Scholarship Design and Visual Communication 2025

## Performance standard 93602

### General commentary

Many strong submissions were received for Scholarship Design and Visual Communication that covered a range of contexts. Spatial Design submissions were the most common type of project with very few Product Design projects submitted. Despite being in minority, Product Design contexts continue to be suitable and often successful for Scholarship. The new page limit of forty pages did not limit the quality of work received. The quality of submission was, if anything, enhanced by containing fewer pages.

The top submissions engaged deeply with their context, and this informed a personalised and highly thoughtful approach to designing. These candidates developed their own design perspectives, and this typically led to outcomes that were intentional and sophisticated.

A range of visual communication techniques were employed by candidates, including hand sketches, models, and CAD applications. All techniques supported successful thinking and outcomes were utilised well. There was no one visual technique that was more likely to result in success. However, candidates needed to ensure that they used techniques to communicate ideas coherently, including showing context, form, and details clearly. Successful candidates were able to use visual techniques skilfully to bring together all elements of the design.

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 candidates 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.

### Report on performance standard

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

- demonstrated a high level of visual fluency that enabled them to communicate a narrative convincingly
- used digital curation of the project to increase clarity and effective communication
- developed tightly focused design briefs that displayed high levels of understanding of their intentions, enabling greater depth of thinking
- demonstrated full engagement with the people, place, and purpose that they were designing for
- showed a high level of resolution with a satisfying outcome
- were visually articulate, expressing a captivating visual story using fluent and sophisticated visual techniques
- used intentional design thinking to develop and build an idea

- demonstrated sustained levels of sophisticated thinking and convincing communication
- presented a design process with conviction and integrity
- presented an elegant final design through a deep exploration of the context and refinement of 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.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- selected a project context that was suitable in scope, that contained challenges to be addressed but was not too large or complex
- used initiating source material to create ideas that had a sense of purpose
- brought their own point of view of the context into the project, rather than a generic approach
- recognised good ideas during ideation phases and pursued these further
- demonstrated understanding of the context that they were designing for
- endeavoured to improve ideas and solve identified problems
- used visual communication techniques to communicate their thinking
- demonstrated application of skills and knowledge through incorporation of skilful visual communication techniques or through application of design or technical knowledge
- included design practice to work on and improve ideas, not just illustrate them
- used visual tools to develop and test ideas, and communicated design thinking clearly through suitable visual techniques (e.g. sketching, model-making, formal drawing, or presentation drawings).

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

- used inspiration sources too literally and did not develop their own interpretation
- showed evidence of spending too much time ideating forms
- engaged in contexts that were too large or complex to think about, e.g. large apartment buildings or extravagant family homes
- showed design practice that was missing obvious considerations
- did not demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the design context
- demonstrated lower level of detail, skill, and knowledge in their treatment of the design issues
- 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 written explanations and stakeholder feedback to explain the design and make choices, rather than showing own design thinking
- utilised a variety of strategies to explore and generate ideas but only at a superficial level
- presented visual techniques to illustrate ideas, rather than think about and improve a design
- submitted incomplete or unresolved work, lacking the completion of a finished outcome, often owing to an over emphasis on ideation and initial idea generation.