



2026 External Assessment Instructions for NCEA Level 3 and NZ Scholarship Visual Arts Submissions

*Principal's Nominees and teachers should read these instructions before
beginning to process candidate portfolios/workbooks for submission to NZQA*

25 May 2026 v1

NZQA

Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority



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Section 1: Assessment Information

1. Key tasks and dates

Candidate:	March	October	Before 2 Nov	End of Dec 2026 – Jan 2027	Jan 2027	Feb 2027
	☐ Prepare work for submission.	☐ Check that personalised label information is correct (NSN, Name, Address, Standard). Update if necessary.	☐ Complete Authenticity form and affix to board. ☐ Submit work to school by their deadline.	☐ Portfolios and workbooks returned directly to candidates. • <i>If selected for Top Art, the portfolios are retained by NZQA. Candidates will be notified in early February.</i>	☐ NCEA Candidates can view results online mid-January on NZQA result release day.	☐ NZ Scholarship candidates can view their results online, on NZ Scholarship results release day.
Teacher:	March	August	12-16 Oct	Prior to Nov 2	Nov 2	
	☐ Read the Level 3 and NZ Scholarship Visual Arts Assessment Specifications.	☐ Check candidate entries are correct in your school student management system (SMS) and in the Provider Login.	☐ Check with the Principals Nominee is the personalised labels have been received. ☐ Check the labels are correct. • <i>Remember late entries will NOT receive personalised labels.</i>	☐ Book courier company to collect L3 and Scholarship VA folios and workbooks. ☐ Check the labels have been completed and placed correctly on the folios and workbooks and packaged correctly for the courier pick up. ☐ Check Moving Image submissions can be opened and viewed.	• Portfolios and workbooks due ☐ Have Level 3 and Scholarship submissions ready for 9am collections ☐ Check that the submissions have been collected by the courier. ☐ Upload all Digital Moving Image submissions.	
Principal's Nominee:	1 Sep	October	2 Nov	2-6 Nov		
	☐ Submit data via SMS API file to NZQA for candidates to receive personalised exam materials. Do this before 1 Sep.	☐ Complete any late entries and submit entry file via SMS API to NZQA.	☐ Online applications for Level 3 Derived Grades must be made by 5:00pm	☐ Complete and submit the online attendance rolls through the Provider Log in . Refer Completing Attendance Rolls section in submission instructions		
NZQA:	12 – 16 Oct	End of Dec 2026	Jan 2027	Feb 2027	Jun 2027	
	☐ NZQA to provide schools who have submitted entries personalised labels. Addressed to the Principals Nominee.	☐ Portfolios and workbooks returned directly to candidates.	☐ NCEA results are released.	☐ NZ Scholarship results are released. ☐ Contact Candidates selected for Top Art.	☐ All unclaimed portfolios and workbooks returned to NZQA will be destroyed.	

2. Portfolio format requirements

Level 3 and NZ Scholarship Visual Arts portfolios may be submitted either as a physical (previously known as three-panel portfolio board) or as a digital (previously known as a moving image portfolio) submission. For **all** NZ Scholarship submissions, a physical workbook is also required.

The body of work for the digital portfolio (moving image) should represent a similar volume of work to that of the physical board (three-panel portfolio). The moving image submission should not be merely a digital representation of the three-panel portfolio board.

More information on specific format requirements can be found in the Assessment Specifications on the NZQA website: <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/visual-arts/>

3. Authentication of candidate work

Candidates are required to sign the NCEA Level 3 and NZ Scholarship Visual Arts Authenticity Declaration (available on the [NZQA Visual Arts subject page](#)) to stipulate that the work is their own. Schools are required to report to NZQA if they have concerns that any portfolio submitted is not the candidate's own. If a school cannot authenticate a candidate's work, they should follow the [process](#) for possible authenticity breaches of externally assessed standards.

Completed and signed [Visual Arts Level 3 and NZ Scholarship Authenticity Declarations](#) are to be attached to the left-most panel on the outside of each candidate's portfolio, prior to submission to NZQA. Ensure the 2026 declaration is used and printed singled sided so both sides of the form are visible and securely stuck to the board.

4. Completing online attendance rolls

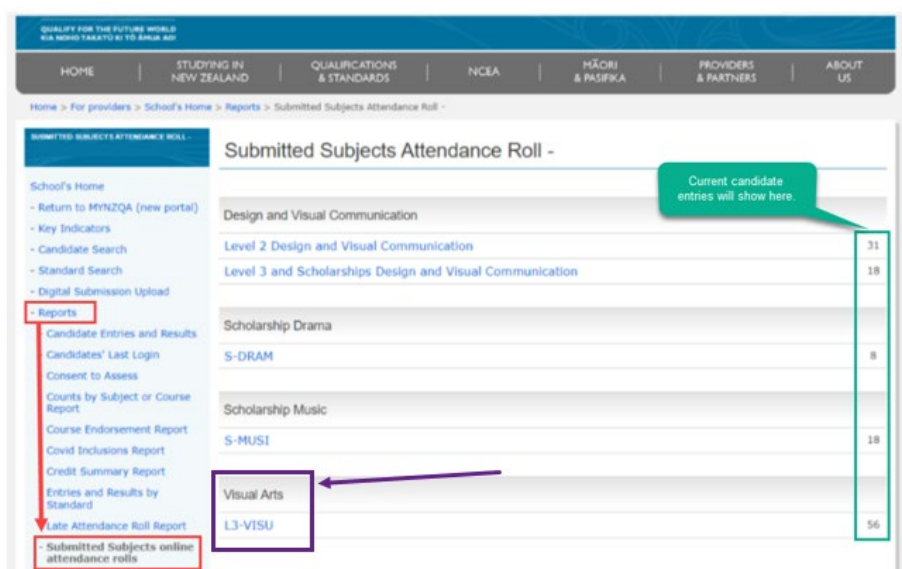
All schools are required to complete and submit attendance rolls for candidates who are entered for any external Level 3 or NZ Scholarship standard.

Accurate completion of the online roll is vital for tracking, reconciliation and recording candidates that did not submit work. Incorrect data may create issues for candidate results.

The Principal's Nominee must complete the online attendance rolls from their secure Provider login by 6 November 2026.

The Principal's Nominee must:

1. Log into the [Provider log in](#).
2. Click **Reports** then **Submitted Subjects online attendance rolls**
3. Click on the appropriate **Visual Arts** link to open the attendance roll (e.g. L3-VISU).



4. For each candidate tick the submission type for each standard where they have entries
 - a. D = Digital (refers to the previously named M - Moving Image)
 - b. P = Physical (refers to the previously named 3 – three panel board)
 - c. DNS = Did Not Submit.

Candidate Name	NSN	Serial Number	Standard 91455			Standard 91456			Standard 91457		
			Submission Method			Submission Method			Submission Method		
			D	P	DNS	D	P	DNS	D	P	DNS
Candidate A	100000001	20864	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Candidate B	100000002	31022	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Candidate C	100000003	12021	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Candidate D	100000004	40041	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Candidate E	100000005	12171	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. **Partially completed rolls:** for any rolls where you have partially completed the submissions for candidates (e.g. 6 out of 13 candidates have submitted work so far), click **Save and Close**.
6. **Fully completed rolls:** once all the submission data has been entered, click **Submit** (e.g. 13 out of 13 candidates submitted or did not submit work).

If changes need to be made after the 'Submit' button has been selected, click the 'Edit' button, enter the corrected attendance information and re-submit the roll. You can edit a submitted roll up until the 6 November 2026. If you need to make any changes after 6 November 2026, please email the Logistics team at logistics@nzqa.govt.nz of the late changes required.

5. Return of marked portfolios to candidates

Following marking, Level 3 and NZ Scholarship portfolios and workbooks will be returned direct to the candidate's New Zealand address that was registered with NZQA in the 1 September 2026 SMS API file. Unless selected for the Top Art exhibition, all correctly addressed portfolios should have been returned by end of January 2027. If they have not, candidate's must contact the External Assessment team on externalvisualart@nzqa.govt.nz. Portfolios are dispatched by field, once marked.

For portfolios and workbooks returned to NZQA because of an incorrect or international address, NZQA will attempt to contact the candidate and/or school for the new address to forward the work to. If no response is received, the work will be destroyed after June 2027.

Please ensure that the personalised candidate label provided contains the correct return address. **If not, cover the incorrect address with a sticky label and clearly write the correct NZ address.**

Digital Moving Image submissions for Level 3 and NZ Scholarship will not be returned.

6. Other information for Painting and digital submissions

- If there are concerns the painting media have not completely cured, it is recommended those candidates:
 - a. place **plastic or baking paper (do not use tissue paper)** between boards to limit potential damage
 - b. affix A3 images of completed boards to the back of the portfolio, **or**
 - c. substitute high resolution photographs for paintings.
- It is recommended schools take four photographs of each candidate's physical submission: one for each panel and one of the entire board. These must be securely stored by the school until the completion of the reviews and reconsiderations process in 2027.
- The naming and storage of moving image files in the school's computer drive is managed by schools and must not include the candidate's name.
NZQA's required file naming convention is: [School No]-[NSN]-[Standard No].[extension]
Example: 0045-134567891-91979.mov
- It is recommended schools check that all expected uploads of moving image have occurred.
- Schools must keep a secure copy of candidate moving image until the end of March 2027.
- It is recommended that the candidate keeps a personal copy of their moving image until the end of March 2027.
- NZQA will store a copy of the moving image and marked files for security and reference purposes.
- NZQA will delete candidate's moving image and marked files after 30 June 2027.

7. Derived grades

NCEA

A derived grade may be applied for by a candidate who, after 1 October 2026, has suffered a temporary impairment including a physical injury or an emotional trauma, which has seriously impaired the candidate's preparation for submission. A derived grade is not available for the loss of time to complete the pieces of artwork. The absence or impairment for the candidate must comply with NZQA's Derived Grade [guidelines](#).

A candidate seeking a derived grade applies to NZQA through the school by completing the relevant sections of the [derived grade application form](#).

The school submits a derived grade based on an assessment of the standard-specific evidence demonstrated by the candidate in the portfolio and other work.

There must be sufficient evidence available to confirm the candidate is performing at the level of the grade reported.

Candidates must submit their portfolio of evidence as per the assessment specifications, regardless of the level of completion. The school must send the portfolio to NZQA along with the submissions from its other candidates.

A derived grade is **not available** where a candidate does not submit a portfolio.

There is no derived grade process for NZ Scholarship.

8. Enquiries

Please refer any enquiries relating to these instructions or the submission of work to:

Visual Arts Support
External Assessment
externalvisualart@nzqa.govt.nz

Kylie Merrick
National Assessment Facilitator
External Assessment
kylie.merrick@nzqa.govt.nz

Section 2: Submitting portfolios

9. Submitting Moving Image portfolios (digital)

Candidates submitting a Moving Image portfolio will still receive personalised labels as a backup, these are **not required** for submissions made digitally.

Moving Image portfolios must be submitted to NZQA by 5.00 pm **Monday 2 November 2026**. **To submit moving image portfolios digitally, use this [Google form](#) and follow the prompts.** We recommend you upload digital files before the deadline to enable you to seek assistance if there are any upload issues.

Candidates and teachers are required to complete the [NCEA Level 3 and NZ Scholarship Visual Arts Authenticity Declaration](#) for each candidate and upload it alongside their portfolio.

Schools must retain copies of all moving image submissions sent to NZQA.

Digital evidence must be submitted as:

A maximum of TWO files (one being the authenticity statement)

Permitted file types:

Video: AVI, M4V, MP4, MOV, WEBM, MTS

Authenticity Declaration: PDF

File size: maximum of 5GB each

NZQA's required file naming convention

[School No]-[NSN]-[Standard No]-[Description].[extension]

Example:

0045-134567891-91455-Video.mov

0045-134567891-91455-Declaration.pdf

10. Labelling and packaging of physical submissions

NZQA will supply schools with personalised candidate labels (barcoded with a 5-digit serial number) to attach to Level 3 and NZ Scholarship portfolio boards and workbooks for all entries received by 1 September 2026.

If these materials have not arrived at the school by 3.30pm Friday 16 October 2026, contact the Visual Arts support on 0800 697 296.

Ideas on how to package portfolios and workbooks: To ensure there is no damage between the school and the marking venue, consider using bubble wrap, large pieces of paper, large rubbish bags or cardboard for the exterior packaging of up to 3 boards at a time, plus baking paper or plastic for the insides of painting boards in case they are not dry. Acceptable options on holding pieces of work onto the board include using art glue or double-sided tape.

Please do not use blue tack to attach pieces of art onto the board.

Placement of labels: Schools must check the correct labels are attached to each candidate's portfolio/workbook before the submission date.

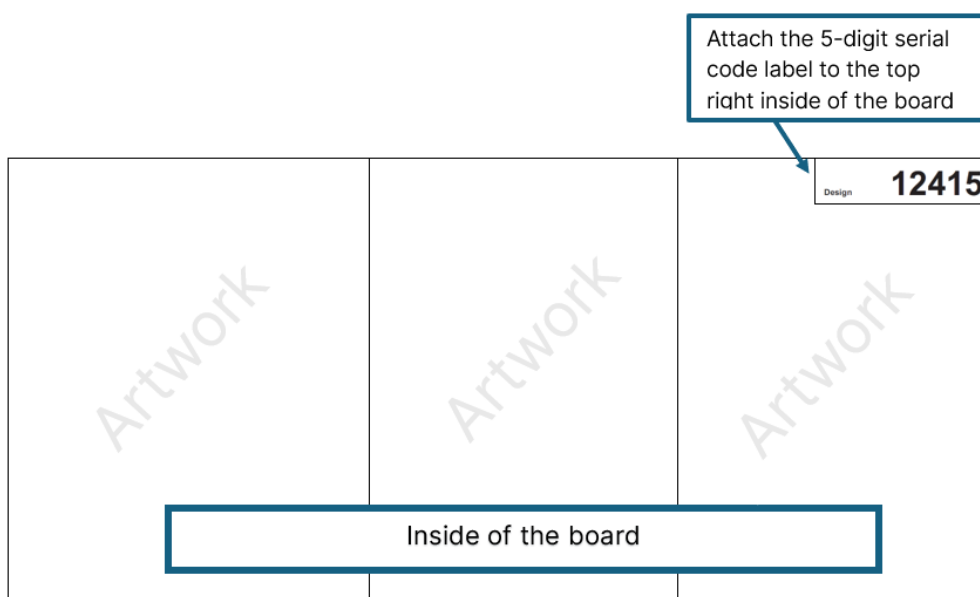
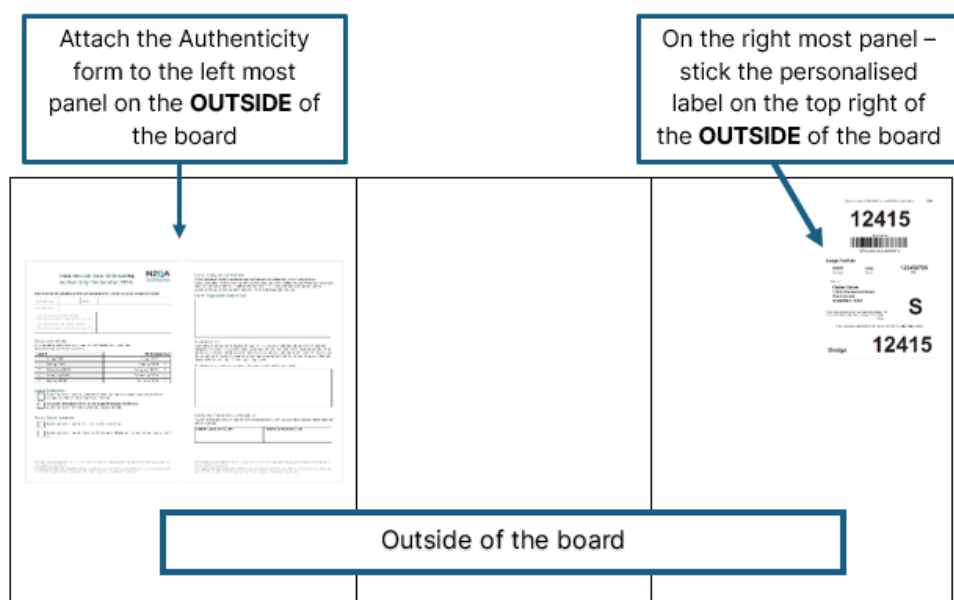
Outside of portfolio: the address label must show the return address for the portfolio. If the printed address is incorrect, cover it with a sticky label and write the correct return address clearly on this. Print on one-sided, sign and date the Authenticity form. Attach the [Authenticity Form](#) to the left most panel of the outside of the board.

Inside of portfolio (artwork side): the label must display the 5-digit serial code. If a candidate is entered for more than one NCEA Level 3 Visual Arts standard, ensure that the correct label is attached to the correct portfolio, and that the labels attached to the outside and inside of the portfolio are both for the same field e.g. Painting.

Missing/temporary labels

If a label for a Level 3 and/or NZ Scholarship candidate has not arrived, schools should first check they have made an entry.

- If there is no entry, the school will need to refer to the instructions for [Materials for late entries](#) to produce temporary labels for these candidates' portfolios and submit an entry to NZQA for the entry to be created.
- If the entry was submitted before 1 September, contact the External Assessment team on 0800 697 296



11. Requirements for NZ Scholarship entries

Format

NZ Scholarship entries must include both a portfolio (physical 3-panel board or digital moving image) and an **A3 physical workbook**. Please note: digital workbooks are not accepted.

A Level 3 submission may also be entered for NZ Scholarship (in the same medium) if accompanied by a physical workbook.

Labelling requirements for NZ Scholarship portfolio workbook (example A)

NZ Scholarship portfolio workbooks follow the same labelling requirements as Level 3 portfolios, with an added 'S' to indicate a NZ Scholarship submission. Schools will receive an additional serial code sticker for each NZ Scholarship workbook, as shown.



Place this label at TOP RIGHT on the OUTSIDE of the Portfolio 2026

12415

Serial Number

9145512345678912415

Design Portfolio

91455 Standard	0123 School	123456789 NSN
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Return to

Farmer Brown
1 Old Macdonald Road
Countryside
Greenfield 0000

(Note: Your portfolio will be returned to this address, if it is incorrect please make clear changes on this label)

PEEL

Example A of NZ Scholarship workbook

If a Candidate is no longer entering for NZ Scholarship:

If a candidate is no longer submitting physical work for NZ Scholarship, please cross out the large **S** on the personalised label attached to the front of the portfolio board (example B). Tick the DNS (Did not submit) column when submitting the online attendance roll.

12. Courier arrangements for submissions

Schools are responsible for making courier arrangements for the collection and delivery of the NCEA Level 3 and NZ Scholarship Visual Art submissions.

You may use any courier company. It is the school's responsibility to arrange a collection and contact the courier company if portfolios are not collected on this day.

Candidates, caregivers and schools cannot deliver their own portfolios to the venue. Portfolios and workbooks must be submitted by the school via a courier.

NZQA does not supply pre-paid courier tickets for the delivery of Level 3 and NZ Scholarship materials to the marking venue.

The collection date for Level 3 and NZ Scholarship is: **Monday 2 November 2026.**

Packed portfolio submissions are to be addressed to:

NZQA

C/ - Lower Hutt Badminton Hall
25 Vogel Street
Naenae
LOWER HUTT 5011

Phone number: 0272660617 *

*(this number is for the delivery of submission – courier drivers only)

13. Materials for late entries

NZQA will only provide personalised materials for entries made by 1 September 2026. If schools have missed this deadline, late entries will need to be submitted by the school to NZQA.

Follow the instructions below to create temporary labels for each late entry candidate's portfolio.

- Temporary labels for Moving Image submissions are not required ([digital submission](#))
- Do not attempt to create bar codes. NZQA will generate barcoded labels once the portfolio has been received at the marking venue.

The temporary labels must include:

Outside of portfolio board:	• National Student Number (NSN) • candidate name and return address for portfolio • field name, e.g., Photography • standard number • large 'S' to denote NZ Scholarship, if relevant.
Inside of portfolio:	• field name, e.g., Photography • standard number.
Front cover of NZ Scholarship workbook:	• field name and standard number • National Student Number (NSN) • large 'S' to denote NZ Scholarship.

1

Outside front of board example:

NSN: 123456789

Josephine Smith
123 Street Name
Suburb
City Postcode

Photography 91456

S

2

Inside of board example:

Photography 91456

3

Front cover of Scholarship workbook example:

Photography 91456

NSN: 123456789

S

14. Late submissions

Late candidate submissions (**after 2 November**) can only be made if:

- an email is sent to externalvisualart@nzqa.govt.nz by the school's Principal or Principal's Nominee verifying that the late submission(s) was the result of an act of omission on the part of the school and that the candidate(s) has not worked on the submission after 2 November; and
- the email is sent prior to submitting the late work to NZQA.

Note: the subject line of the email will need to include '**Late submission – Visual Arts**'.

Please check the candidate(s) are entered for the standard to be submitted. If there are no current entries, schools will be required to submit an entry to NZQA.

NZQA will acknowledge the request and/or provide further instructions if applicable.