

Assessment Specifications

Level 2 Art History 2026

Published in October 2025

General information

Domain:	Art History
Standards:	91180, 91181, 91182
Assessment method:	Examination, end of year
Assessment medium:	Online digital examination

[Art History subject page](#)

[National secondary examinations timetable](#)

Information relating to all achievement standards

Candidates are encouraged to write a concise response of no more than 750–800 words (4–5 pages) for each standard. Assessment will be based on the quality of the response rather than its length.

Information in planning spaces will not be marked.

Further information about digital external assessment can be found on the NZQA website.

[Digital external assessment](#)

Areas of Study

1. Towards Modernism (c.1780–1900)

Artists:

- Jacques Louis David
- Vigée Le Brun
- Eugène Delacroix
- Édouard Manet
- Edgar Degas
- Antonio Canova
- Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres

- Théodore Géricault
- Claude Monet
- Mary Cassatt
- Gustave Courbet
- Honoré Daumier
- Jean-François Millet
- Paul Gauguin
- Georges Seurat
- Berthe Morisot
- Vincent van Gogh
- Paul Cézanne.

Buildings and structures:

- L'Arc de Triomphe
- The Panthéon (Sainte-Geneviève)
- The Eiffel Tower.

Styles:

- Neoclassicism
- Impressionism
- Iron and steel innovations
- Post-Impressionism
- Realism
- Architectural Revivalism (Neoclassical)
- Romanticism.

Meanings:

- Conflict and suffering
- Depictions of men and women (including portraiture)
- Work and leisure
- Contemporary events in this period
- Modernity (e.g. cities, railways, café society, technological innovations).

Contexts:

- Artistic and/or Technological (e.g. innovation, influences, new materials)
- Economic (e.g. wealth, prosperity, patronage, industrialisation)
- Social (e.g. domestic life, social class, rural and urban environments)
- Political (e.g. revolution, national identity)
- Philosophical (e.g. enlightenment, orientalism/the exotic, socialism).

2. Art in Aotearoa (c.1800–1980)

Artists:

- Augustus Earle
- Charles Heaphy
- John Kinder
- C.F. Goldie
- Gottfried Lindauer
- Rita Angus
- William Sutton
- Doris Lusk
- Robyn Kahukiwa
- Frances Hodgkins
- Cliff Whiting
- Colin McCahon.

Styles:

- Whare and wharenui, whakairo, kōwhaiwhai, tukutuku and raranga
- New Zealand painting (colonialism, regionalism and emerging identity).

Meanings:

- Sense of place (e.g. exploration, identity, landscape)
- Spiritual and religious beliefs
- Cultural
- Social and everyday life (e.g. domestic life, customs, representations of men and women).

Contexts:

- Artistic (e.g. traditional, cultural interaction, international influences)
- Geographic (e.g. land and sea, regions)
- Social (e.g. community, rural and urban environments)
- Historical (e.g. colonial, national identity).

Resources or information supplied

Candidates will be provided with:

- one resource booklet for use with all 3 standards, containing 12 plates (6 plates for each area of study).

Candidates completing the assessment on paper will also be provided with:

- a question-and-answer booklet for each standard.

Special assessment conditions

Refer to the NZQA website for further information:

[Aromatawai special assessment conditions](#)

Specific information for individual achievement standards

Standard:	91180
Title:	Examine the effects of formal elements of art works
Version:	2
Number of credits:	4

Candidates will be required to answer ONE of two questions from their area of study. To answer their chosen question, candidates select TWO art works. BOTH art works must be from the resource booklet.

Candidates will be expected to use the language of art history to demonstrate understanding of formal elements of art (form, colour, composition, tone, technique, media/materials, light, line, space, scale, decorative features).

Standard:	91181
Title:	Examine the meanings conveyed by art works
Version:	3
Number of credits:	4

Candidates will be required to answer ONE of two questions from their area of study. To answer their chosen question, candidates select TWO art works. One art work must be from the resource booklet and the other art work may be selected from the resource booklet, or may be a work of the candidate's own choice.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate understanding of meanings listed in these assessment specifications.

Standard:	91182
Title:	Examine the influence of context(s) on art works
Version:	2
Number of credits:	4

Candidates will be required to answer ONE of two questions from their area of study. To answer their chosen question, candidates select TWO art works. One art work must be from the resource booklet, and the other art work may be selected from the resource booklet or may be a work of the candidate's own choice.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate understanding of how the context(s) listed in these assessment specifications have influenced the characteristics and production of art works.