

Assessment Specifications

Scholarship Design and Visual Communication 2026

Published in October 2025

General information

Performance Standard:	93602
Assessment method:	Submitted portfolio
Assessment medium:	Physical Submission
Final date of submission:	28 October 2026

[Design and Visual Communication subject page](#)

[National secondary examinations timetable](#)

Format of the assessment

Candidates submit a portfolio that is assessed equally on three parts:

1. Design Ideation
2. Design Practice
3. Visual Communication

Portfolios should be in the context of a design brief(s), which draw evidence on any aspect associated with spatial or product design. Candidates will need to produce evidence at an advanced level and of an in-depth nature specifically in one of these areas.

Teachers and candidates should be familiar with and refer to the New Zealand Scholarship Design and Visual Communication Performance Standard, including explanatory notes and subject definitions.

Conditions of assessment

The use of chatbots, generative AI, paraphrasing tools, or other tools that can automatically generate content is not permitted and material generated by these tools should not be submitted as part of the candidate's work. **CAD applications may be used.**

Any material from another source appropriately included within a candidate's portfolio must be acknowledged clearly.

Authenticity

Teachers must closely supervise the process of evidence collection to ensure that candidates:

- do not copy from another person or source without appropriate acknowledgement
- do not receive guidance, scaffolding, instruction, assistance, or assessment conditions beyond what is specified as permissible in these Assessment Specifications.

Where a teacher cannot verify that the assessment submitted is the authentic work of the candidate, they must notify NZQA of a possible Candidate Breach of External Assessment.

Further submission instructions and authenticity requirements will be provided in 2026.

Submission requirements

The portfolio is a curated collection of evidence that communicates the candidate's knowledge, understanding, and skills.

Evidence may be drawn from:

- one major unit of work, or
- curated from multiple units of work provided they are integrated into a coherent body of material.

The portfolio must be physically submitted and **should not exceed 40 pages**. A candidate may submit work that uses a variety of media or form. Where possible, original copies should be presented.

Submissions can be up to a maximum size of A3 (297 x 420mm). Larger pages must be folded to A3 size. Where mock-ups, prototypes, and models have been used, photographic evidence must be included. Presentation boards – limited to 4; laminated material – limited to 6 pages.

Special assessment conditions

Refer to the NZQA website for further information:

[Aromatawai special assessment conditions](#)