Assessment Specifications

Scholarship Digital Technologies 2026

Published in October 2025

General information

Performance Standard: 93604

Assessment method: Examination, end of year

Assessment medium: Online digital examination

Digital Technologies subject page

National secondary examinations timetable

Format of the assessment

There will be THREE complex questions that require:

- algorithmic comprehension and decomposition
- algorithm development and implementation
- critical reflection and analysis.

The questions could be taken from ANY of the Level 8 Computational Thinking Designing and Developing Digital Outcomes Progress outcomes from the New Zealand Curriculum (2018 update).

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

Digital external assessment

Equipment required

A computer/laptop.

Use of NZQA-provided online portal.

Resources or information supplied

From 2026, this scholarship examination should become an online coded assessment delivered through the NZQA portal, replacing the pseudocode assessment framework previously provided. The format will remain similar, with students presented with three algorithmic and programming problems that they can develop, test, and submit in an NZQA-supported online environment. In addition, there will still be long-answer questions to support and explain their responses.

Further information will be available at the end of February 2026.

Special notes

Students are only able to access the approved examination portal during the assessment.

Students are expected to attempt all three questions.

Students will be required to critically reflect on solutions.

Blank paper will be provided to use for working, but not submitted, as part of the examination.

Further clarification of the standard

Algorithmic comprehension and decomposition – refers to the understanding of algorithm structure and the breaking down of algorithms into structured, logical components of sequence, selection, and iteration.

Algorithm development and implementation – refers to the designing, coding, debugging, and iterating of solutions to meet specified requirements.

Critical reflection and analysis – refers to the informed evaluating of algorithms and reflecting on cost, efficiency, correctness, and implications of solutions.

Solutions can be written in any of the following approved programming languages:

- Python 3
- C
- C++
- C#
- JavaScript.

The standard, including the explanatory notes and subject-specific definitions, can be found here:

https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/NCEA/Scholarships/Scholarship-subjects/Digital-Technologies/Scholarship-Digital-Technologies-Performance-Standard.pdf

Special assessment conditions

Refer to the NZQA website for further information:

Aromatawai special assessment conditions