



2026 External Assessment Submission Instructions for NCEA Levels 1 - 3 and NZ Scholarship Design and Visual Communication (DVC)

21 May 2026 v1

NZQA

Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority



Table of Contents

1.	2026 Key tasks and dates	3
2.	Assessment overview	4
3.	Candidate Entries	4
4.	Return of marked portfolios to schools.....	5
5.	Derived Grades	5
6.	Enquiries.....	5
7.	Digital submissions.....	6
8.	Physical submissions.....	6
8.1	Materials sent from NZQA.....	6
8.2	Preparing candidate physical submissions	7
8.3	NZ Scholarship submissions.....	8
8.4	Combined NCEA Level 2/3 and NZ Scholarship submissions.....	8
8.5	Non-barcoded physical submissions.....	9
9.	Packing the portfolios for physical submission.....	9
9.1	Cartons.....	9
9.2	Orange courier bags.....	10
9.3	Sending submissions to NZQA	10
10.	Late submissions	10
11.	Attendance rolls.....	10
11.1	Completing attendance rolls online	11

1. 2026 Key tasks and dates

Candidate:	Mar	13-16 Oct	16-27 Oct	Jan 2027	Feb 2027
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Prepare work for submission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Candidate receives personalised materials if entry to submit physical submission has been made by 1 Sep. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Prepares and packages candidate work for submission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Submission • Digital Submission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ NCEA candidates can view their results online, following NCEA results release. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ NZ Scholarship candidates can view their results online, following NZ Scholarship results release.
Teacher:	Mar	12-16 Oct	16-27 Oct	28 Oct	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Check the Assessment Specifications, instructions and acceptable file types. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Check with the Principal's Nominee if the personalised exam materials have been received. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remember late entries will not receive personalised materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Organise submission materials for distribution to candidates. □ Work together with the candidate to prepare work for submission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Submission • Digital Submission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Portfolio submissions due to NZQA □ NZ Couriers will collect physical submissions for NCEA Levels 1-3 and NZ Scholarship DVC from the school's pick-up point from 9:00am. ▪ Phone NZQA on 0800 697 296, if materials have not been collected by 3:00pm. 	
Principal's Nominee:	1 Sep	12-16 Oct	28 Oct	28-30 Oct	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Submit data via SMS API/web entry to NZQA by 1 Sep for candidates to receive personalised exam materials. ▪ Please ensure entries are flagged correctly as digital or physical submissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Schools receive packing materials. These are addressed to the Principal's Nominee and must be handed to the teacher for preparation and packaging of candidate work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Upload and submit all Digital Submissions to the Provider Login. □ Submit Derived Grade applications (excludes NZ Scholarship) by 5:00pm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Work with the teacher to complete and submit online attendance rolls through the Provider Login. 	
NZQA:		12 – 16 Oct	Nov-Dec	Jan 2027	Feb 2027
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ NZQA to provide schools who have submitted entries by 1 Sep personalised exam materials. These are addressed to the Principal's Nominee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ NZQA marks submissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ NCEA results release. □ NCEA physical submissions are returned to schools – addressed to the Principal's Nominee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ NZ Scholarship results release. □ NZ Scholarship physical submissions are returned to schools – addressed to the Principals' Nominee.

2. Assessment overview

All DVC external assessments are submitted as **portfolios**. Teachers are expected to be familiar with the Assessment Specifications for the current year. These specifications define the requirements of the portfolio for each standard and are found on the [DVC subject page](#).

Both teachers and candidates are responsible for ensuring that candidate portfolio submissions adhere to the requirements of the Assessment Specifications.

These instructions relate to the following NCEA Levels 1-3 and NZ Scholarship DVC standards:

	Standard	Standard Title	Submission method
NCEA L1	92002	Develop product or spatial design ideas informed by the consideration of people	Digital submission only
	92003	Use instrumental drawing techniques to communicate own product or spatial design outcome	Digital OR physical submission
NCEA L2	91337	Use visual communication techniques to generate design ideas	Digital OR physical submission
	91338	Produce working drawings to communicate technical details of a design	Digital OR physical submission
	91339	Produce instrumental perspective projection drawings to communicate design ideas	Digital OR physical submission
NCEA L3	91627	Initiate design ideas through exploration	Digital OR physical submission
	91631	Produce working drawings to communicate production details for a complex design	Digital OR physical submission
NZ Scholarship	93602	DVC New Zealand Scholarship	Physical submission only

As NZ Scholarship portfolios are only accepted as physical submissions, only physical NCEA Level 2/3 submissions are eligible for combined submission.

3. Candidate Entries

Schools are required to submit data via SMS API/web entry to create candidate entries for all NCEA and NZ Scholarship DVC standards to NZQA by 1 September 2026. Candidates must be flagged correctly for DS (Digital Submission) or PS (Physical Submission).

It is important to note that:

- Only candidates entered for digital submissions will have access to upload using [MyNZQA learner portal](#).
- Only candidates entered for physical submissions will receive personalised submission envelopes.

Please ensure entries are flagged correctly as digital or physical submissions. The default setting for standards that can be either Digital or Physical Submission is Digital Submission.

4. Return of marked portfolios to schools

- Physical NCEA Levels 1 - 3 submissions will be returned to schools in late January 2027.
- NZ Scholarship submissions will be returned to schools after the release of NZ Scholarship results in February 2027.
- Digital files are not returned. NZQA will retain a copy of the digital submissions and marked files for security and reference purposes.
- NZQA will delete the candidate's digital submission and marked files after 30 June 2027.

All school deliveries require signature upon receipt. Someone at the school must sign for them. If cartons have not arrived, please check with the school office before contacting NZQA Logistics on 0800 697 296.

5. 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 affected the candidate's preparation for submission. It is not available to compensate for the loss of time prior to 1 October to complete work for a portfolio.

The candidate's absence or impairment must comply with NZQA's derived grade [guidelines](#).

A candidate seeking a derived grade must apply 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.

NZ Scholarship

There is no derived grade process available for NZ Scholarship.

6. Enquiries

Please refer any enquiries relating to these instructions to the External Assessment team on 0800 697 296 or email: examinations@nzqa.govt.nz.

7. Digital submissions

Candidates entered to submit digitally must have portfolios uploaded and submitted through the [Provider log in](#) by 5.00 pm **Wednesday 28 October 2026**.

Schools must retain copies of all submissions sent to NZQA.

Acceptable file types for digital submission are:

- Document (PDF)
- Image (JPG, JPEG)
- Video (MP4)

PDF and MP4 are the recommended file types. MP4 files should not exceed 3 minutes. Teachers and candidates are advised to read the [Assessment Specifications](#) prior to the upload and submission of files.

To submit portfolios digitally, the school will need to be familiar with accessing and submitting work via the [Provider log in](#).

- [Digital submissions guide for schools and kura \(English\)](#)
- [Digital submissions guide for schools and kura \(Māori\)](#)

For assistance during the submission process:

- Email examinations@nzqa.govt.nz and in the subject line, type '**DVC Submission**'.
- Phone 0800 697 296 (NZQA Contact Centre).

8. Physical submissions

NZQA will send a pack of submission materials to all schools with NCEA Levels 1 - 3 and/or NZ Scholarship DVC entries between 12-16 October 2026. This pack will be addressed to the Principal's Nominee.

Please ensure entries are flagged correctly as digital or physical submissions.

8.1 Materials sent from NZQA

The school must ensure that each candidate is correctly entered as either digital or physical submission. Only candidates entered for physical submission by **1 September 2026** will receive personalised materials.

The DVC submission materials pack for schools will include:

- **Personalised envelopes**
Note: Candidates entered to submit digitally will not receive personalised envelopes.
- **Personalised performance summary cards** for candidates who have entered the NZ Scholarship Performance standard 93602, by 1 September 2026.
- **Non-barcoded envelopes** for candidates with late entries (made after 1 September 2026).
- **Non-barcoded performance summary cards** for candidates with late entries into standard 93602 (made after 1 September 2026).
- **Green Scholarship stickers** to be applied on submissions intended for combined NCEA Level 2/3 and NZ Scholarship or NZ Scholarship only submissions.

- A set of cartons in which to place DVC portfolios. Refer to [Cartons](#) in the guide on the quantity per carton.
- A roll of tape to assemble and seal the cartons.
- A set of clear A3 plastic bags for combined NCEA Level 2/3 and NZ Scholarship submissions only.
- Orange courier bag(s) - **only applicable only for some schools and for specified standards.**

If these materials have not arrived by 3.30pm Friday 16 October 2026, please contact the **Examinations team** on 0800 697 296.

If extra 'spare' non-barcoded envelopes/performance summary cards OR packing materials are required, contact **NZQA Logistics** on 0800 697 296 or email the logistics team on logistics@nzqa.govt.nz stating what additional materials are required.

8.2 Preparing candidate physical submissions

The following process of organising the material for submission must be strictly adhered to.

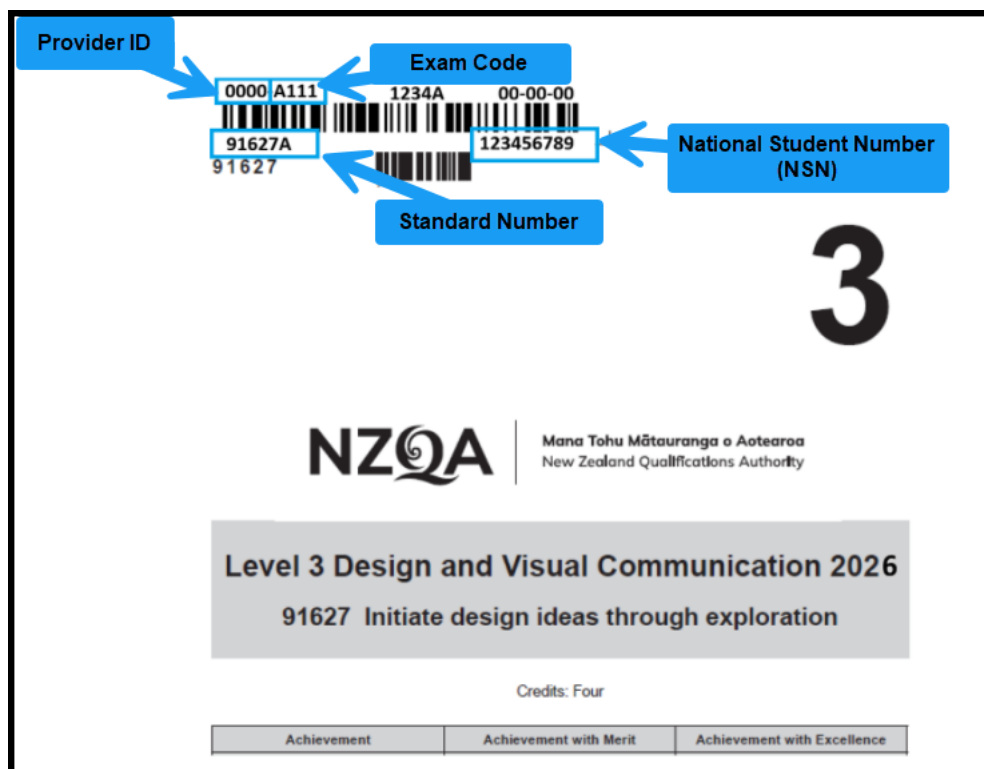
To prepare each candidate's physical submission for **each standard**, the school/teacher must:

1. Ensure candidates have access to their National Student Number (NSN).
2. Use the online attendance rolls to determine which envelope belongs to which candidate.
3. Check the exam code (e.g., D115) and standard number on the attendance roll matches the barcode on the envelope.
4. Instruct the candidate to:
 - read and follow the instructions on the envelope cover
 - select the envelope with the correct standard number
 - place their portfolio in the envelope with the NSN face up (any pages larger than A3 must be folded to fit in the envelope)
 - tuck in the envelope flap to secure the portfolio.
5. Check that each candidate has:
 - hand-written their NSN correctly onto the envelope in the Instructions box provided
 - signed the declaration (in the case of unavoidable absence, the teacher may sign for the candidate).
6. Keep a secure copy of all digitally submitted work for assessment until the NCEA results release in January 2027 and NZ Scholarship results release in February 2027.
7. Complete the online [Attendance Roll](#).

If candidates do not submit their work, **do not send or re-use their personalised envelope.**

Dispose of the personalised envelopes after the submission date. These candidate entries will be marked as Standard Not Attempted. Mark these candidates on the attendance roll as did not submit.

For combined NCEA Level 2/3 and NZ Scholarship submissions, refer to [NZ Scholarship submissions](#) for further details.



8.3 NZ Scholarship submissions

All candidates with entries into NZ Scholarship DVC 93602, as of 1 September 2026, will receive a personalised NZ Scholarship Performance Summary Card and a **green** 'Scholarship' sticker.

Where candidates are submitting work for **NZ Scholarship only**, schools must pack the work into:

- the A3 clear zip lock bag
- with the performance summary card placed **on top** and the barcode displayed
- the **green** 'Scholarship' sticker must be applied on top of the clear A3 zip lock bag.

All work submitted in the A3 clear zip lock bags must be placed at the top of the carton (once packed).

8.4 Combined NCEA Level 2/3 and NZ Scholarship submissions

Work submitted by candidates for combined NCEA Level 2/3 and NZ Scholarship must be placed into the candidate's NCEA envelope with a **green** 'Scholarship' sticker applied and packed into the A3 clear zip lock bag provided **with** the performance summary card.

Please ensure the **performance summary card is placed on top** of the NCEA envelope inside the clear bag.

Note: it is important the **green** 'Scholarship' sticker and performance summary card are visible to ensure the submission is sent for NCEA Level 2/3 **and** NZ Scholarship marking.

Failure to do so may result in the candidate's submission not being marked by the NZ Scholarship marking panel.

As NZ Scholarship portfolios are only accepted as physical submissions. Only physical NCEA Level 2/3 submissions are eligible for combined submission.

8.5 Non-barcoded physical submissions

NZQA will only provide personalised materials for physical submissions where entries have been made by 1 September 2026.

Spare envelopes (for each NCEA Levels 1 - 3 standard) and performance summary cards (for the NZ Scholarship standard) without barcodes will be included with the materials.

These are to be used if the candidate submitting a portfolio does not have a personalised barcoded envelope or performance summary card.

If so, they may only use the relevant:

- Non-barcoded NCEA Levels 1 - 3 envelopes.
- Non-barcoded performance summary cards.

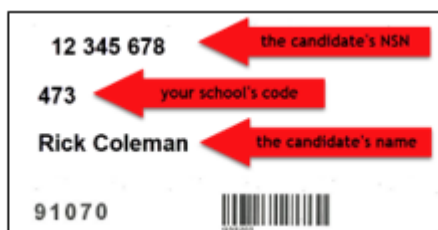
An updated entry must be sent to NZQA immediately.

Do not use an absent candidate's barcoded envelope or performance summary card.

Do not photocopy a barcoded envelope or performance summary card.

Schools must clearly write the **NSN, school code** and **candidate's name** in the top left-hand corner of each spare envelope/performance summary card, then continue the process set out in the previous section.

NZQA will cover this information with a personalised, barcoded label before the envelope is sent to a marker.



- Unused 'spares' are to be retained by the school.
- Absent candidates' barcoded envelopes/performance summary cards must not be used for a late entry; these **must** be destroyed after the submission date.
- When packing non-barcoded envelopes or performance summary cards into the cartons, **please place these on the top of all other candidate portfolios**. These will be extracted and processed with a personalised barcoded label and then scanned to record receipt.

9. Packing the portfolios for physical submission

9.1 Cartons

Each carton is to contain the number of envelopes as specified in the table below. **Please ensure each carton does not exceed 7kg in weight.**

Level/standard	No. of envelopes per carton
Level 1: 92003	20
Level 2 91337, 91338, 91339 and Level 3 91631	35
Level 3: 91627	15
Combined NCEA Level 2/3 and NZ Scholarship OR NZ Scholarship 93602	10

9.2 Orange courier bags

If orange courier bags are included in your pack of materials, these must be used for **one standard**, as specified on the letter enclosed with the materials (only applicable to selected schools).

9.3 Sending submissions to NZQA

NZQA has contracted NZ Couriers for **one pick up on Wednesday 28 October 2026** of all physical DVC submissions.

Please do not make any further courier bookings. Take the DVC cartons to the school office/courier pick up point before **9.30 am on Wednesday 28 October 2026** for collection.

If the courier has not collected the cartons by **3.00 pm on Wednesday 28 October 2026**, schools must contact NZQA Logistics on 0800 697 296 immediately.

Please provide the following information to the NZQA Logistics team:

- school office hours
- contact person and number
- number of items uncollected and for which subjects(s).

If the cartons are **not ready for collection** when the courier arrives, the school must make their own arrangements to send the cartons to reach NZQA by **Friday 31 October 2026**. The school must inform NZQA Logistics on 0800 697 296 or logistics@nzqa.govt.nz of any submissions not collected on 28 October 2026.

10. Late submissions

Late candidate submissions (**after 28 October 2026**) can only be made if:

- an email is sent to examinations@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 28 October; 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 – Design and Visual Communication**'.

Please check that candidate(s) are entered for the standard being submitted. If there are no current entries, the candidate(s) will not be able to submit their work.

NZQA will acknowledge the request and provide further instructions where applicable.

11. Attendance rolls

Attendance rolls for DVC are now digital and must be completed and submitted online.

To ensure the submissions received by NZQA correctly reflect what schools submitted on behalf of candidates, please follow the process below. PNs must complete online attendance rolls from their [Provider log in](#).

Accurate completion of the rolls is important for tracking, reconciliation and recording of candidates who did not submit work.

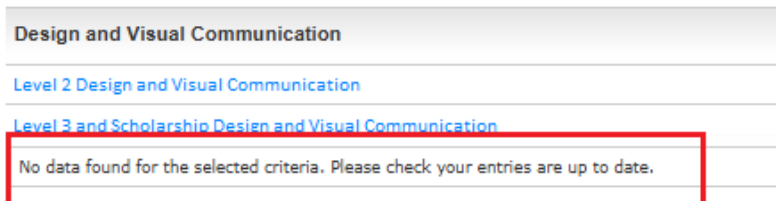
Online attendance rolls need to be completed and submitted by 5.00 pm 30 October 2026.

- **D** (Digital): Indicates the submission for this standard has been uploaded digitally to NZQA.
- **P** (Physical): Indicates the submission for this standard is a physical work placed in a provided A3 envelope to NZQA.
- **DNS** (Did Not Submit): for any candidates that have chosen not to present work for a standard, tick this column. These entries will be marked as Standard Not Attempted.
- **Combined NCEA Level 2/3 and NZ Scholarship:** Indicates the physical submission is for a combined NCEA and NZ Scholarship marking.

11.1 Completing attendance rolls online

1. From the Provider log in screen, click on 'Reports.'
2. Click on the 'Submitted Subject online attendance rolls' link. A list of submitted subjects where online rolls are required will show in this window. The current entry numbers will be displayed on the right-hand side of the window.

If there are no entries, it will display the message below:



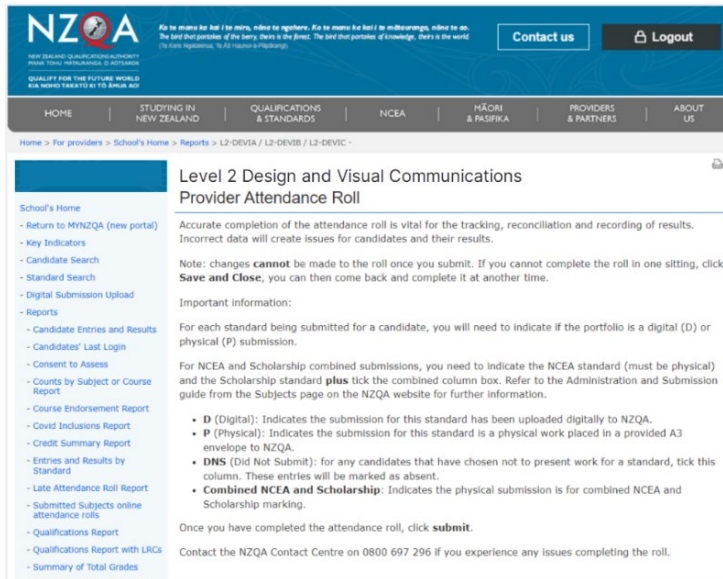
3. Click on the DVC level to enter the 'attendance' (e.g. Level 2 or Level 3 and NZ Scholarship)

Reports > Submitted Subject online attendance rolls

The screenshot shows the 'Submitted Subjects Attendance Roll' page. The left sidebar has a menu with 'Reports' highlighted, and 'Submitted Subjects online attendance rolls' selected. The main content area shows a table of subjects with their respective entry counts. A green callout box points to the 'Current candidate entries will show here.' text. A red box highlights the 'Level 2 Design and Visual Communication' and 'Level 3 and Scholarships Design and Visual Communication' rows.

Subject	Count
Design and Visual Communication	
Level 2 Design and Visual Communication	31
Level 3 and Scholarships Design and Visual Communication	18
Scholarship Drama	
S-DRAM	8
Scholarship Music	
S-MUSI	18
Visual Arts	
L3-VISU	56

- A new window will open for the level selected with instructions on how to enter 'attendance' of the candidate submissions.



- For each candidate, click the appropriate box for each standard to indicate how the work was submitted.

e.g. for standard 91337

- click **D** if the candidate submitted work digitally
- click **P** if the candidate submitted a physical portfolio in the envelope provided
- click **DNS** if the candidate is not submitting any work to be marked for that standard.

Complete the above for each standard the candidate has entries for.

If the candidate does not have entries for a standard the boxes will be greyed out.

- If the candidate is submitting work for combined NCEA and NZ Scholarship (must be a physical submission), click the box in the 'Combined NCEA and Scholarship' column **as well as** the NCEA standard

The screenshot shows the '2026 Provider Attendance Roll' page. The table below is a simplified representation of the data shown in the image:

Candidate No.	NSN	Standard 91337		Standard 91338		Standard 913		Combined NCEA and Scholarship?
		Submission Method	Submission Method	Submission Method	Submission Method			
Candidate A	100000001	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Candidate B	100000002	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Candidate C	100000003	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Candidate D	100000004	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Candidate E	100000005	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Candidate F	100000006	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Candidate G	100000007	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> DNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Annotations on the screenshot include:

- Digital Submission:** Points to the 'D' box for standard 91337.
- Physical Submission:** Points to the 'P' box for standard 91338.
- Candidate Did Not Submit work for marking:** Points to the 'DNS' box for standard 913.
- Tick this box to indicate the submission is for combined:** Points to the 'Combined' box.
- Click to save incomplete roll and close the window. This takes you back to the submitted subjects list.** Points to the 'Save and Close' button.
- Submit the completed online roll (all Candidate attendance has been recorded)** Points to the 'Submit' button.

In the example below

Candidate A: has submitted digital work for 91337, and physical portfolios for 91338 and 91339.

Candidate B: has submitted physical portfolios for 91337 and 91338 and did not submit work for standard 91339.

Candidate C: has submitted digital work for 91337 and a physical portfolio for 91338 with this being a combined NCEA and NZ Scholarship submission and has no entry for 91339 (grey boxes).

Candidate Name	NSN	Standard 91337			Standard 91338			Standard 91339			Combined NCEA and Scholarship? Green sticker
		Submission Method			Submission Method			Submission Method			
		D	P	DNS	D	P	DNS	D	P	DNS	
Candidate A	100000001	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Candidate B	100000000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Candidate C	100000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>