

Visual Arts

SUBJECT EXPERT GROUP RESPONSE TO THE SECTOR

The Visual Arts Subject Expert Group (SEG) would like to thank those who took the time to review the Visual Arts products. We received 35 responses to the questionnaire, of which 91% were from teachers.

Feedback was generally positive with requests for further clarification about the Achievement Standards and the associated assessment materials.

Theme One

Concern about word use and syntax.

Response

We will be providing definitions of many of the words that respondents identified as potentially unclear. These will be included in a glossary within the Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLAG) which will be published on NCEA.education later this year.

The mini-pilot for the Trial and Pilot subjects in 2021 will provide further clarity when student exemplar work is captured.

The format of the explanatory notes in the new design of Achievement Standards has been refined (see *Questioning of step ups* section below) so may not offer total clarity on their own but when read alongside other support material a clearer picture should emerge.

Our use of one particular term 'authentic context' was not seen as quite right by some respondents. We intended it to be interpreted widely i.e. the widest possible scope of this art making convention. However, we will define the term more thoroughly in the TLAG so it can be more clearly understood. Student exemplars and support materials that are to be developed to support the mini pilot will also help guide people to understand the expectations.

Some of the feedback provided us with particularly valuable suggestions. For example, respondents questioned the change of sentence structure for excellence in the 1.2 explanatory notes and suggested to keep to the same sentence structure as achieved and merit. We took this advice on board and made the necessary amendment.

Theme Two

Questioning the step-ups

Response

We received a number of comments regarding the limited explanatory notes of the Achievement Standards, especially the lack of bullet points for the excellence criteria. In all new Achievement Standards, criteria will be based on 'step-ups' so that the criteria for Achieved also apply for Merit, and criteria for Achieved and Merit also apply to Excellence.

The bullet points will not repeat criteria because they are written cumulatively. We will include a clearer note to ensure people reading this in the future know about this deliberate change.

Theme Three

Assessment mode and credits

Response

The Ministry is working with NZQA to develop the assessment specifications for all the externals assessments. For some standards, there are suggested new external assessment modes which represent a shift from traditional modes of external assessment.

The practicalities of these changes are still in development. Piloting these subjects with selected schools in 2021, and with a larger number of schools in 2022 will allow us to test and refine assessments, including externals.

Theme Four

Loss of Art discipline

Response

A number of responses questioned the research component of the Achievement Standard 1.1(AS 1.1) and whether this is appropriate for Visual Arts. This standard marks a move away from formal research to practice-led research. This means that gathering information is not limited to just words and we hope this encourages teachers to consider this is an art investigation - not a social science enquiry. This is currently recognised as best practice in the art industry. The mini-pilot will provide a further opportunity for the Ministry to determine how it can best support teachers to apply this new approach.

There were also a number of comments regarding the extent of Māori content in both AS 1.1 and in the internal assessment activities. The SEG would like to reiterate that an understanding of Māori art and culture and its conceptual underpinnings are integral to understanding art in New Zealand and to understanding the place of art in NZ society, but that from that context students have a great deal of flexibility to explore art.

Theme 5

Workload issues

Response

One of the Ministry's objectives in the RAS is to reduce workload. We expect this will become possible due to a reduced assessment load - although there will be some initial 'heavy lifting' as schools and departments update their learning programmes.

It was noted that many of the assessment activities involve class trips which consume too much time. We would like to emphasise that the assessment activities are suggestions only and that it is expected that schools will adapt these assessment activities or write their own to reflect their local contexts and what works best for their students.

Work throughout the year is integrated so timings should not necessarily be calculated on a sequential 10 week per standard basis; timings can and should be integrated in a refined course. Any preparatory building work associated with 1.4 may be used in 1.2 or 1.3. However, an exception is the 'resolved art work' itself cannot be integrated.

