NCEA Review and Maintenance Programme – 2026 updates

Review and maintenance work has been undertaken for all three levels of NZC NCEA for 2026. This pdf document contains the updated Achievement Standards for **Design and Visual Communication Level 3**. In January 2026 the NCEA website will be updated with these changes for Level 1, and the pdf version will be removed as it will no longer be necessary. For Levels 2 and 3, NZQA will update their website with the registered standards in December. For external assessment specifications, refer to the NZQA website.

Subject: Design and Visual Communication Level 3

Standard	What's changed?
AS3.30 92167	Explanatory Note 2: • 'authentic context' replaces experience(s) • 'starting ideas' replaces ideas • 'initial conceptual design ideas' replaces design ideas • 'purposeful' replaces insightful • 'reflect on' replaces analyse and identify an emerging train of thought • 'refine' replaces re-interpret • 'improve initial conceptual designs' replaces form design ideas • 'critically examine' replaces challenge thinking • 'design ideas' replaces ideas • 'conceptual designs' replaces design. Explanatory Note 3: definition clarified. Explanatory Note 5: definition clarified.

Number	AS91627	**Version**	4

Achievement Standard

Subject Reference		Design and Visual Communication 3.30	
Title		Initiate design ideas through exploration	
Level	3	**Credits** 4	**Assessment** External
Subfield	Technology		
Domain	Design and Visual Communication		
Status	Registered	**Status date**	September 2025
Planned review date	December 2028	**Date version published**	December 2025

This achievement standard involves initiating design ideas through exploration.

Achievement Criteria

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
• Initiate design ideas through exploration.	• Initiate design ideas through purposeful exploration.	• Initiate design ideas through extensive exploration.

Explanatory Notes

1   This achievement standard is derived from Level 8 of the Technology learning area in *The New Zealand Curriculum*, Learning Media, Ministry of Education, 2007; and is related to the material in the *Teaching and Learning Guide for Technology*, Ministry of Education at http://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz.

Further information can be found at http://www.technology.tki.org.nz/.

Appropriate reference information is available in *Safety and Technology Education: A Guidance Manual for New Zealand Schools,* Ministry of Education at Safety in Technology Education and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

This standard is also derived from *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.* For details of *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* achievement objectives to which this standard relates, see the Papa Whakaako for the relevant learning area.

2   *Initiate design ideas through exploration* involves:
   - using an authentic context to generate starting ideas
   - using visual communication strategies to interrogate and re-generate starting ideas to create initial conceptual design ideas.

   Initiate design ideas through purposeful exploration involves:
   - using visual communication strategies to reflect on and refine design ideas to improve initial conceptual designs.

   Initiate design ideas through extensive exploration involves:
   - using visual communication strategies to critically examine, extend, and transform design ideas to form conceptual designs.

3   Starting ideas are the initial creative responses that drive ideation to an advanced level of creativity. These ideas may be symbolic or expressive and expand design thinking in terms of meaning and semiotics.

4   Visual communication strategies (including 2D, 3D, and 4D modes) that support the interrogation and re-generation of ideas may include, abstraction, re-combination, tessellation, exaggeration, rotation, inversion, translation, translocation, deconstruction.

5   An authentic context is meaningful to the student and reflects their unique experiences, values, or perspectives. Examples include natural and/or built landscapes, media clips, music extracts, photography, social and/or environmental concerns.

6   Assessment Specifications for this achievement standard can be accessed through the Technology Resources page found at http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications- standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/.

Replacement Information
This achievement standard replaced AS90734.

Quality Assurance

1   Providers and Industry Training Organisations must have been granted consent to assess by NZQA before they can register credits from assessment against achievement standards.

2   Organisations with consent to assess and Industry Training Organisations assessing against achievement standards must engage with the moderation system that applies to those achievement standards.

   Consent and Moderation Requirements (CMR) reference   0233