



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

National Qualifications Framework Levels 1–3, 2004

Geography

National Moderator's Report

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General Guidance for Assessors of Achievement and Unit Standards

The purpose of external moderation is to provide reassurance that assessor judgements are at the national standard and are made on the basis of assessment materials that are fair and valid.

All assessment materials are expected to:

- give the student the opportunity to meet the requirements of the standard
- have an assessment schedule that gives evidence of appropriate student responses and clear judgements at all levels.

The Ministry of Education contracted subject experts to write assessment resources for achievement standards. These are not pre-moderated. The intention is that they are modified to suit teaching programmes and learner needs. They do not provide 'rules' but suggest different ways of assessing to the nationally-registered standard.

General Overall Comment

The moderation of internally assessed achievement standards and unit standards in Geography continues to be effective in providing national consistency of assessment materials and assessor judgements. Most schools have used activities from the TKI website, although an increasing number are writing their own, particularly at Level 3.

Evidence and judgement statements must be consistent with the information given in the explanatory notes as well as the achievement criteria. The explanatory notes in all standards, especially those that define terms, provide essential information to maximise student success. The terms '*global scale*', '*justification*', '*consultation*' and '*evaluation*' are particularly important.

In all standards, holistic judgements can be made within a single criterion, but not across more than one.

Where the two Level 3 achievement standards 90703 and 90705 were assessed separately, their differing focuses and requirements were emphasised, and students met with greater success than they did when assessment of the two standards was combined. '*Consultation*' is not part of achievement standard 90703, however achievement standard 90705 is done '*in consultation*', which is defined in Explanatory Note 4. When the two achievement standards are assessed using a common task, assessors need to make it clear to students what parts of the assessment are achievement standard 90703 (where guidance is inappropriate), and what parts are achievement standard 90705 (where guidance can be given). Providing/seeking guidance where it is not appropriate, and not providing/seeking it where it is, can impact on the ability of a student to achieve either standard. Many assessors may find separate assessments preferable until they are thoroughly familiar with both standards.

Level 1

AS 90206: *Carry out and present directed geographic research*

The third criterion

'*Evaluate the research process*' requires judgements about the strengths **and** weaknesses of the research process (Explanatory note 4).

AS 90207: Examine a contemporary geographic issue and evaluate courses of action

The third criterion

Because the third criterion '*Evaluate courses of action*' requires students to make judgements about the strengths and weaknesses of courses of action, assessment material that includes several courses of action advantages students at all levels of achievement.

At Achievement with Merit level, students are required to make a '*justified recommendation*' by including '*evidence/arguments*' to explain why the recommendation they have chosen is the best.

At Achievement with Excellence level a '*fully justified recommendation*' must also include a comparison of the chosen recommendation with the other alternatives that indicates clearly '*why it is better*'.

Familiarity with Explanatory Note 5 provides good definitions of the relevant terms.

AS 90208: Examine a global geographic topic

Modifying assessments to reflect version 2 of this standard – specifically the removal of the criterion about characteristics – makes the standard more accessible to students.

The first and second criteria

For many students, combining the tasks for the first two criteria '*Describe the pattern(s) of the global geographic topic*' and '*Examine the process(es) responsible for the pattern(s)*' was helpful.

The third criterion

Tasks for the third criterion that emphasised the global nature of the topic – that is they related to '*regions or nations across different continents or different hemispheres*' – enabled students to achieve. Tasks confined to one area or region do not meet the requirements of the standard, and assessors are reminded that valid evidence must be consistent with the explanatory notes as well as the achievement criteria.

Level 2

AS 90335: Conduct guided geographic research

Teachers should be proactive in guiding the students to make suitable topic selections, to ensure that the topic is firstly '*geographic*', and secondly provides ample opportunity for the students to carry out '*collection of data from the field*', as specified in Explanatory Note 2. This has generally been defined as fieldwork, but increasingly there are opportunities for the use of internet technologies. The material collected through whatever technologies must be of a similar nature to that collected from fieldwork. Students can be disadvantaged by topics in which it is difficult to carry out '*collection of data from the field*'.

AS 90336: Examine a contemporary geographic issue

The third criterion.

Assessors are reminded that for assessment of the third criterion '*Evaluate, in detail, courses of action and make a justified recommendation*', the courses of action can be given to the students, as they are only required to evaluate them.

AS 90337: Explain a global study

The first criterion

'Describe the characteristics of the global study' has been removed in version two of this standard as it is contained within the second criterion *'Explain the patterns and processes within the global study'*.

The second criterion

Tasks for *'Explain the patterns and processes within the global study'* that combined explanation of both patterns and processes in a single task, provided better opportunities for students to achieve than those which separated patterns and processes.

The third criterion

Tasks that related to *'regions or nations across different hemispheres'* – that is they emphasised the global scale of the study – enabled students to achieve. Tasks confined to one area or region do not meet the requirements of the standard, and assessors are reminded that valid evidence must be consistent with the explanatory notes as well as the achievement criteria.

Level 3

AS 90703: Analyse the role of geography in planning and decision-making

When this achievement standard was assessed separately, not in conjunction with other achievement standards, there was greater successful completion of all criteria by the students.

The second criterion

'Analyse the planning and decision-making process that relates to the issue' requires students to carry out an analysis of the methods of the planning process itself (including methods, constraints, alternatives and implications), and not analyse their own research methods as this is not part of this standard.

The third criterion

'Analyse the contribution of geography to the planning and decision-making' requires students to provide evidence of an understanding of people and their place in the environment, and how the planning issue under analysis is an example of an understanding of people and their place in the environment. A discussion of relevant geographic ideas is not, in itself, sufficient to meet the requirements of the criterion.

AS 90705: Carry out geographic research with consultation

When this achievement standard was assessed separately, not in conjunction with other achievement standards, there was greater successful completion of all criteria by the students.

'Consultation' is defined in explanatory note 4. It is if tasks contain clear instructions to indicate when learners can appropriately *'consult'* on the methods and/or processes of their research. Hypotheses cannot be given, as this is Level 1 *'direction'*.

The first criterion

'Use appropriate procedures to carry out and present geographic research with consultation' requires students to complete a number of tasks. Activities must define a focus for research and allow for collection of sufficient data for processing.

For Achievement with Merit and Achievement with Excellence, a clear definition of what constitutes ‘accuracy’ for the activities is needed.

The third criterion

‘*Evaluate the research*’ requires both the process **and** the findings to be part of the evaluation. Assessors are advised to separate the two tasks out, so that students cover both.

AS 90706: Analyse a contemporary geographic issue and evaluate courses of action

Where schools assessed this achievement standard separately, not in conjunction with other achievement standards, there was greater successful completion of all criteria by the students.

The first criterion

‘*Analyse the geographic nature of a contemporary issue*’ is clarified in the Explanatory Note 5, evidence and judgement statements must be consistent with these definitions.

The third criterion

‘*Evaluate courses of action and make a justified recommendation*’ allows the courses of action to be given to the students, as they are only required to evaluate them. ‘*Evaluate*’ at Level 3 is interpreted as strengths **or** weaknesses, which is not the same as Levels 1 and 2 where it is strengths **and** weaknesses. Evidence and judgement statements should reflect this difference.

‘*Justified*’ for Achievement, Achievement with Merit and Achievement with Excellence requires a comparison with the alternative courses of action. Instructions to students need to reflect this requirement for all three levels.

AS 90707: Analyse a geographic topic at a global scale

Students must satisfy the requirement to ‘*analyse*’ patterns, processes, and significance for people. This is defined in Explanatory Note 4 as ‘*to examine and explain component parts*’. Tasks that contain instructions to ‘describe’ do not meet this requirement, and disadvantage students.

The first and second criteria

The first criterion ‘*Analyse the pattern(s) within the geographic topic on a global scale*’ and the second criterion ‘*Analyse the process(s) within the geographic topic on a global scale*’ have a degree of cause and effect, and the best activities combined both, giving students the opportunity to provide evidence for both criteria in a single task.

The third criterion

Tasks based on the third criterion ‘*Analyse how the geographic topic on a global scale is significant for people*’ need to emphasise the ‘*global*’ nature of the topic. Explanatory Note 4 defines ‘*global scale*’ from ‘*regions or nations across different hemispheres*’. Tasks confined to one area or region do not meet this requirement. Assessors are reminded that evidence must be consistent with the explanatory notes as well as the achievement criteria.

UNIT STANDARDS

Very few unit standards were submitted for moderation. Teachers using them have a well-established practice and knowledge of them.