



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

# **National Qualifications Framework Levels 1–3, 2004**

## **History**

### **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 student 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 History is effectively establishing a national consistency of assessment materials and assessor judgements. Most assessors are continuing to use activities from the TKI website and recognise the need to adapt these to suit their particular purposes. However, some assessors continue to hand out web activities to students without making any necessary adaptations. It is pleasing to see an increasing number of assessors who are now confident enough to design their own assessment materials, although there are some isolated instances where these do not meet the requirements of the achievement criteria. Most assessors are making accurate assessor judgements in terms of the achievement criteria, although there is less consistency for Achievement with Excellence, especially at Level 3.

### AS 90209: *Carry out an historical investigation*

There is considerable consistency and accuracy of assessor judgements with this Achievement Standard and assessors seem to be finding the revised criteria easier to work with. There are still some instances where no evidence is being provided for moderators of the first criterion, *Identify possible sources*, which is a requirement of this standard.

As was the case in last year's report, assessors are also reminded of Explanatory Note 7, which indicates that focusing questions should be provided to students, unlike for levels 2 and 3.

While there has been a significant improvement from the last two years, some assessors still do not seem to be instructing students on the correct procedures for *Record details of sources accurately*, as outlined in Explanatory Note 6.

### AS 90210: *Communicate historical ideas*

While more consistency by assessors is now evident for this Achievement Standard, there is still a tendency by some assessors to ignore the requirements of the first criterion, *Identify relevant key ideas*. A distinction needs to be drawn between simply recording facts in the form of historical narrative and showing an understanding of relevant key ideas, which clearly requires higher level thinking skills on the part of students. Certainly, for Achievement with Merit and Achievement with Excellence, as was stated in last year's report, students should be more explicit in the way in which they identify these ideas.

It would be helpful for students if assessors instructed them more specifically on what is meant by a key idea, and included examples of these in the activity instructions handed out.

Assessors should check carefully, and where required, make the necessary adaptations to activities to ensure that students understand the particular requirements of this Achievement Standard

**AS 90465: *Plan and carry out an historical inquiry***

A much greater degree of consistency by assessors is now evident for this Achievement Standard, although there is still a need for assessors to carefully consider the Explanatory Notes, especially with regard to helping students formulate and refine focusing questions (Explanatory Note 8) and planning the inquiry (Explanatory note 4).

Assessors are reminded, as was done in last year's report, that a suitable degree of planning must be evident for Level 2, and this should not be written retrospectively by students.

Some students are clearly being 'penalised' by the narrowness of their focusing questions, especially where there has been no apparent assessor intervention early on in the inquiry process.

Assessors also need to note that there should be a higher expectation of evaluation at this level, to meet the requirements of the fifth criterion. Where templates are provided to students for writing their evaluations, there must be sufficient space to allow the requirements for Achievement with Excellence to be met. In some instances, it was apparent that students were not being given the opportunity to meet these requirements.

**AS 90466: *Communicate an understanding of historical ideas***

More accuracy and consistency by assessors was evident for this Achievement Standard but, as was the case with AS 90210, instructions to students needed to make the requirements of the first criterion clearer in a number of instances. Examples of *relevant key historical ideas* in activity instructions would be useful in this regard, to enable students to avoid simply providing historical narrative with little understanding of these key ideas. Assessors also need to clearly instruct students on what sort of supporting evidence is expected at this level.

Assessors are reminded that the second criterion refers to *appropriate historical format and/or style* and, where a particular resource is designated in an activity, such as a textbook for junior students, this should be considered when judgements are being made for this criterion.

**AS 90468: *Examine and demonstrate empathy for the perspectives of people in an historical setting***

As was the case in last year's report, it was noted that assessors are continuing to design original and interesting assessment activities for this Achievement Standard. Most assessors seemed to clearly understand the intent of this standard and a consistency of assessor judgements was evident from the work sighted by moderators.

No particular issues have emerged with this Achievement Standard.

**AS 90654: *Plan and carry out independent historical research***

While some outstanding student work was sighted by moderators, a number of issues emerged about how assessors were interpreting the requirements of the achievement criteria for this Achievement Standard, especially for Achievement with Excellence.

Assessors need to carefully consider Explanatory Note 3 when assessing against the first criterion. Simply identifying a topic is not sufficient for *Identify and define an area for historical research*. Assessors are also reminded that it may be useful to consult exemplar material provided for Level 3 training in 2003, to clarify the intent of this criterion.

There is a need also for assessors to be clear about expectations for *significant and discerning focusing questions*, which are required for Achievement with Excellence for the first criterion. TKI assessment schedule exemplars have examples of what is expected to meet this requirement, but assessors need to incorporate their own examples into assessment schedules where they are designing original assessment activities.

Many research plans sighted by moderators were not sufficiently detailed for Level 3 and often had clearly been completed retrospectively rather than being used as a basis for the research. Explanatory Note 4 details a number of requirements for *Plan the research*, which seem to have often been ignored by assessors.

While the intention is for independent research, Explanatory Note 10 suggests some initial conferring between assessor and student should take place before the actual research is undertaken. The nature of some focusing questions and research plans indicated that this had not been the case in a number of instances; consequently students were at a disadvantage.

Assessors are reminded that to meet the requirements for Achievement with Excellence for the third criterion, students must *demonstrate initiative and select and record relevant and important evidence from a range of sources*. There needs to be more evidence of some form of initiative, as specified in Explanatory Note 9. At Level 3, it is also expected that students go well beyond simply relying on web based sources and that reference books, primary documents, museums, and so on, are also consulted, where appropriate, as outlined in Explanatory Note 5.

The third criterion also requires students to *organise selected, relevant and important historical evidence ...in accordance with the focusing questions*. This means a distinction needs to be drawn between selecting and organising, which are separate skills students must demonstrate. Highlighting and annotating are methods of selecting evidence, but evidence must also be provided that this selected evidence has been organised *in accordance with the focusing questions*, as the criterion states.

At Level 3, students should be able to record details of sources with a high degree of accuracy, and they are expected to go well beyond simply recording the title and author or URL of a web based source. Clear guidance needs to be given to students of what is expected to meet the requirements for *Record details of the sources accurately*.

Explanatory Notes 7 and 8 need to be more carefully considered by some assessors when making judgements against the fifth criterion. On a number of occasions, evaluations seemed to be very general and lacked the specificity that the criterion demands. It was noted that, in some cases, evaluations regarded as at Achievement with Excellence level displayed much less rigour than in student work submitted at Levels 1 and 2.

### **AS 90655: Communicate and present historical ideas clearly to show understanding of an historical context**

A wide range of excellent and interesting student work was evident from that submitted for moderation although, as has been the case for Levels 1 and 2, more guidance needs to be given to students of what constitutes *relevant key historical ideas* and how these can be communicated in suitable form for assessment. Students need to be instructed on the difference between a relevant key historical idea and the simple recording of an historical fact or event.

Discussion with students of what is regarded as *significant supporting evidence*, as required for Achievement with Excellence, would also make the first criterion more transparent for students. It is expected that supporting evidence in the form of visuals, quotes, primary documents, and so on, be provided by students at this level, rather than just a narrative of events to meet the requirements of this criterion.

Some assessors seem to be interpreting the requirements of the second criterion too loosely and are not insisting on *features of the appropriate historical format and/or style*, which are spelled out clearly in Explanatory Notes 6 and 7. Bursary style essays do not reflect the intention of this Achievement Standard and assessors should note that *flair and impact* is a requirement for Achievement with Excellence. This seemed to be ignored by some assessors when making judgements on student work and when designing assessment schedules for original activities.

As a general comment, assessors are reminded that for Achievement with Excellence at Level 3, a high standard is expected, as is reflected in the more demanding achievement criteria, and that the best student work within a particular institution may not necessarily meet the requirements of the criteria for Achievement with Excellence.