



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

National Qualifications Framework Levels 1–3, 2004

Media Studies

National Moderator's Report

National Moderator's Report

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 bulk of this report is concerned with achievement standards at Level 3.

There has been considerable improvement in assessment to the national standard at Level 2. Generally speaking, knowledge of the national standard at Level 3 has been more consistent in 2004 than that for Level 2 in 2003.

AS 90600: *Explore the language of a medium and various readings of texts within a medium*

Most material submitted used moving image texts as a basis for the exploration of the language of a medium. Most activities separated assessment of the two achievement criteria. It should be pointed out that this is not required by the standard and it would be possible to assess both criteria in one response. For example, it would be feasible for a candidate to complete several readings of two films, supporting their readings with explanation of how meaning is created by elements of media language.

The question of sufficiency often arose. In most activities, a candidate was asked to explain how a certain number of elements of media language contribute to meaning. They were then asked to complete two different readings of two texts. Generally speaking, the appropriate grade for the work was the level at which the bulk of the responses were completed. For example, if a candidate had *explained* language and described readings sufficiently for most, but had *analysed* one element of language or explained one or two readings, then Achievement was appropriate. Conversely, if a candidate had *analysed* most of the elements of language and *explained* sufficiently three of the four readings (the others being descriptions) then Merit was appropriate. However, a candidate who had completed responses, half of which were at Achievement level and the other half at Merit level, was given Achievement. It may be appropriate to allow such candidates a chance to rework material to achieve the higher grade.

AS 90603: *Investigate a media issue*

This standard was not widely assessed, and caused some difficulties for candidates. The main issue for many was in maintaining focus and coherence in the face of an often bewildering amount of detail and evidence. It is recommended that candidates spend considerable time refining their issue to a manageable form before embarking on the investigation.

AS 90604: *Develop a concept and treatment for a media product*

Consistently appropriate work was submitted for this achievement standard. It is worth noting that the best responses were often from those candidates who developed a clear understanding of their specific audience's profile and needs. For candidate produced work, this was most often a local community-based audience.

AS 90606: *Create a media product using appropriate media technology*

The two achievement criteria were most often assessed as part of one production activity. In the case of moving image production, this was often a small group production. A number of issues were raised by this practice. The standard requires that individuals use two or more types of technology to perform tasks in the creation of a media product. A sufficient performance would be one where the candidate had completed a significant amount of technology use in that production. Larger groups occasionally proved to be problematic, given the need to share technology use roles amongst all individuals. It would not, for example, be sufficient for a candidate to complete half a dozen shots in a film and participate in a group edit of the film. Whilst it is difficult to quantify exactly how much is a sufficient performance given the range of production contexts possible, for any film production it would be unlikely that more than two candidates could complete sufficient camera operation to allow sufficient technology use for one technology. Furthermore, particular care needs to be taken when assessing editing, given candidates' (appropriate) desire to edit collaboratively. For technology use, the candidate must actually be controlling the editing interface, not just contributing ideas to the edit process. It would be appropriate to require candidates to take turns at controlling the interface. Alternatively, it may be appropriate to require candidates to complete independent edits of the same material.

It is recommended that group sizes be limited to two (or three at the most on major projects). It is certainly quite possible for candidates to receive different overall grades for the same finished product if their respective use of technology was skilful or not.

The question of what constitutes a polished product was not always appropriately determined. The wide range of elements that can contribute to polish in any media text has been considered elsewhere and a number of resources have been published to help assessors with this question. It is important to note that the level of polish required for this standard should be significantly higher than that required for achievement standard 90765. For candidates to be creating a polished product for 90606, one would expect them to have had significant experience in using the specified technology in creation of media texts, either during the year or in previous courses. Rapid advances in technology, (and price reductions), have brought powerful media technologies within the reach of secondary school candidates and it is certainly the case that the 'polished' product of five years ago might not be considered as such today. However, polish is also concerned with story, ideas, characterisation, personality, and other aspects, independent of technology. A careful judgement is necessary to weigh up the relative qualities of any text in arriving at a final judgement concerning polish.

There was also variation in what constituted a 'publishable' media text. Given the local audiences that most texts were published for, it is not appropriate to consider publishable in industry terms. However, recent technology advances have 'raised the bar' somewhat in terms of what can realistically be expected of a media production in a school. Much like 'polish', 'publishable' can also refer to other elements not related to technology – language use, appropriateness, story, ideas etc. (For example, a text might not be publishable if the story was incoherent or undeveloped, or the ideas inadequately communicated.) It would be appropriate to consider the three terms 'publishable, polished, integrated' as a quality continuum where all qualitative aspects of the text (carefully weighed) contribute to the final grade.