



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

National Qualifications Framework Levels 1–3, 2006

Social Studies

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 judgments 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 learner the opportunity to meet the requirements of the standard
- have an assessment schedule that gives evidence of appropriate learner responses and clear judgments 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 – a brief summary

The moderation of internally assessed achievement standards in Social Studies has shown that there is an increase in the number of assessors who are writing their own material along with an increase in the accuracy of interpretation of the internal achievement standards generally.

The quality of assessment activities and decisions is much improved at level one. At level two and level three assessors are heavily reliant on published TKI assessment materials. However, an increased number of schools are adapting these activities to suit the specific needs of the achievement standards, and the particular needs of their teaching programme. Schools using adapted published materials need to critique adapted assessment activities and assessment schedules, prior to use, to ensure they allow learners to meet the requirements of the achievement standard.

Evidence statements need to be developed for assessment activities to enhance the transparency of the assessment process. Many of the assessment activities presented for moderation either had no evidence statements or had inadequate evidence statements and have therefore failed to give adequate guidance for the assessor to follow when making assessment decisions.

Teacher Guidelines and Student Instructions are also essential to the development of a clear understanding of the requirements of the assessment activity. Many of the activities presented for moderation had inadequate teacher guidelines and student instructions.

Moderation has provided evidence that assessors have adapted assessment materials to reflect the understandings contained in the March 2006 Ministry of Education (TKI) ‘Guide notes: Assessment of the Perspectives in Senior Social Studies’. As a consequence it appears that there has been a marked improvement in the understanding of the complexities of the use of Social Studies perspectives within assessment materials at all levels of internal achievement standards.

90217: Conduct a social studies inquiry

This standard focuses on the skills required to develop, with direction, a framework for a social studies inquiry, the communication of relevant information, the drawing of conclusions based on the information and the evaluation of the process.

There is general satisfaction with the standard of activities presented. Assessors are reminded that the focus for the inquiry must be derived from the level 6 SSNZC Achievement Objectives. Once this requirement is incorporated within the activity learners will have the opportunity to gain achievement with excellence.

90218: Examine differing values positions

This achievement standard focuses on the development of why people hold differing values positions and the consequences of these.

Evidence gathered during the moderation process tends to suggest that more learners than in the past are being given the opportunity to demonstrate a clear understanding of Social Studies concepts thus allowing them to reach the excellence level of achievement.

90219: Decide on social action(s) in relation to a social issue

This standard focuses on the development of a variety of social actions that could be undertaken in relation to a social issue, the likely consequences of each action and the identification of preferred actions.

Generally, the activities that learners are being given do not provide the opportunity to meet the requirements of “in-depth” and hence achieve with excellence. (Refer to Explanatory Note 6).

90273: Conduct an advanced social studies inquiry

This standard focuses on the development of an advanced social studies inquiry and the reporting of its findings.

All components of the inquiry are required to be included in an advanced social studies inquiry if students are to meet the requirements of this standard. Assessors need to develop assessment activities to ensure learners are provided with the opportunity to provide evidence, which complies with the requirements of Explanatory Notes 9 and 10.

90274: Describe responses to values position(s)

This achievement standard requires the examination of ways people can respond to values position(s) and analysis of possible reasons people choose particular responses to values position(s).

The capacity of the learners being required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of one of the listed perspectives underpins the development of the explanation. (Explanatory notes 4, 5 & 6).

Most assessment activities and schedules have required the learner to identify values but have failed to recognise that the achievement standard requires the student to respond to a values position through the perspective of other groups and individuals.

Moderation has identified that concepts and ideas which assessors are identifying as being focussed on within the assessment often do not link to the Social Studies in the New Zealand Curriculum (SSINZC), and the SSINZC level 7 achievement objectives. When designing assessment activities care must be taken to extract concepts and ideas from the relevant level of achievement objectives in the SSINZC.

90275: Plan social action in relation to a social issue

This achievement standard focuses on the development of a plan of social action in relation to a social issue, and analysis of social action and its likely consequences.

Assessors generally need to modify activities to ensure learners are provided with the opportunity to meet the requirement for achievement with excellence. Refer to Explanatory Note 5.

90691: Conduct an advanced social studies inquiry independently

This standard involves the development and use of a framework to conduct an independent social studies inquiry focused on a significant idea about society.

There are three criteria that need to be addressed in this standard. The process (criteria one) is the means through which the valid conclusions which are relevant to the inquiry focus, are drawn (criteria two) and the evaluation of the inquiry (criteria three) is a reflection tool.

Learners must clearly demonstrate that the inquiry process is complete as set out in Explanatory Note 6 and that the conclusions are relevant to the inquiry focus that is imbedded within the process. Moderation has identified that the focus of the inquiry is frequently lost within the process resulting in the conclusions being unrelated to the stated focus of the inquiry.

90692: Explain a values system

The standard involves analysing relationships between aspects of a values system and explaining the significance of these related aspects for society.

Assessors have relied on published materials. These materials require further development to meet the requirements of achievement with Merit.

It is most important that the assessor selects an appropriate values system for consideration within the activity. For example - Religious Fundamentalism.

90693: Examine social action(s) in relation to a social issue

This standard involves analysing social actions in relation to a Social issue, examining the consequences and evaluating the effectiveness of the action.

Generally assessors have relied on published materials. These materials require further development to meet the requirements of the achievement standard. In particular note should be taken of Explanatory Notes 6, 8 & 9.