



National Qualifications Framework Levels 1–3, 2007

History

National Moderator's Report

NATIONAL MODERATOR REPORT FOR HISTORY

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

The moderation of internally assessed achievement standards and unit standards in History continues to be an effective way of promoting national consistency of assessment materials and assessor judgements.

Most assessors continue to use assessment materials from the TKI website, although some are still not making the necessary modifications, such as adding specific assessment conditions and contextualizing assessment schedules where appropriate. An increasing number of schools are writing their own assessment activities and the best examples are those which follow closely the format of the TKI website samples. Where original activities are used, assessment materials issued to learners must make clear the criteria requirements of the higher performance levels of Achievement with Merit and Achievement with Excellence. These requirements should be included in the activity instructions, in preference to simply giving learners a copy of the standard.

There continues to be a major problem with assessment materials, especially where some commercial activities are used, not reflecting the requirements of the current version of the registered standard. Assessors are reminded that both the activity instructions and the assessment schedule must match the criteria of the current version of the standard to enable accurate assessor judgements to be made and to avoid confusion for learners. Careful checking of all assessment materials against current standards, before these materials are used with learners, is strongly recommended.

On some occasions, moderators have noted the use of unaltered task sheets, which have obviously been designed for pre-NCEA assessment purposes. These need to be altered to reflect the requirements of the achievement criteria of the standard being assessed against.

As was stated in last year’s report, assessors are urged to refer to the most up to date versions of the TKI website activities as these have been updated to reflect the current versions of the standards and in response to moderation experience.

When developing their own materials for achievement or unit standards assessments, assessors are again reminded that assessment schedules must include examples of learner responses that suit the context of the activity. These should also clearly reflect differences in performance levels of Achievement, Achievement with Merit and Achievement with Excellence where there is a gradation for a particular criterion. Some assessors are still not submitting assessment schedules for moderation purposes even though this is a requirement of the moderation system. The standard itself, or a summary information sheet issued to learners, does not constitute an assessment schedule to enable accurate assessor judgements to be made.

Careful consideration of the explanatory notes of standards is recommended when making judgements of learners' work, especially for the higher performance levels. Some assessors continue to make inflated judgements at these levels, which are not consistent with the national standard.

AS 90209: Carry out an historical investigation

This standard continues to cause little concern. Assessors need to be reminded again, however, that learners can meet the requirements of the fifth evaluation criterion in a variety of ways; some assessors are still restricting the way learners approach this criterion by requiring them to just comment on the relevance of selected evidence to the focusing questions. Explanatory Note 5 of the standard gives guidance on the scope of possible *evaluative comments*.

AS 90210: Communicate historical ideas

There has continued to be a marked improvement in consistency of judgements with this standard, although assessors are again reminded that both criteria of the standard should be given equal weighting when making assessor judgements. Some assessors are still tending to base judgements mainly on the second criterion *format and/or style* requirements and are ignoring the intent of the first criterion to *Identify relevant key ideas*.

AS 90465: Plan and carry out an historical inquiry

This standard is generally well understood and moderators noted again that most judgements were consistently at the national standard.

Some assessors, however, do not seem to have recognized that for the current version of the standard there is a clear differential across the performance levels for the second criterion *Plan the inquiry* and that there are clear expectations of more detail for Achievement with Merit and Achievement with Excellence. In some cases this second criterion requirement has been ignored completely even though this is clearly indicated in the standard's title, *Plan and carry out an historical inquiry*.

Assessors are also reminded that a research diary or log of activities carried out during the inquiry process does not constitute *a plan* as required by the standard. Explanatory Note 5 clarifies the intent of the second criterion for assessors.

AS 90466: Communicate historical ideas to demonstrate understanding of an historical context

As was the case with 90210, some moderators have noted that the main issue with this standard is where assessors are putting too much emphasis on *format and/or style* requirements and have struggled to grasp the intent of the first criterion, which is clarified in Explanatory Notes 3 and 4.

As has been mentioned in previous reports, learners would benefit from direct instruction on what constitute *key historical ideas* and how these can be *communicated clearly* within the mode of communication, other than an essay, which is being used.

AS 90468: Examine perspectives and responses of, and demonstrate empathy for, people in an historical setting

Assessors continue to have a very good understanding of this standard and are using a variety of interesting and original assessment activities.

On occasions, some assessors have missed the intent of the first criterion to *describe and explain responses of people* in addition to the more obvious *perspectives*. Explanatory Note 6 lists the ways by which *responses* could be conveyed by learners.

AS 90654: Plan and carry out independent historical research

Most assessors are now offering valid assessments and making accurate judgements of this standard.

The main concerns, however, where noted by moderators, involve the first and second criteria. Assessors are reminded that to meet the requirements of the higher performance levels of Achievement with Merit and Achievement with Excellence, learners must devise more sophisticated *focusing questions* than those required to gain Achievement. Learners should also be made aware of Explanatory Notes 5 and 6 to help clarify this distinction.

For the second *Plan the research* criterion learners must provide a sufficient amount of detail in line with Level 3 expectations. As was the case with 90465, a research diary, or log of activities carried out during the research process, does not constitute *Planning the research* as clarified in Explanatory Note 7.

Assessors are again reminded that to reach the Achievement with Excellence performance level for the fifth *evaluation* criterion, the areas indicated in Explanatory Note 13 must be covered, in addition to the requirements of Explanatory Note 12.

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

While more assessors now have a better understanding of the intent of this standard, there is still a need for careful consideration and unpacking of the elements of the first criterion so that these can be made transparent to learners. It is evident that the best learner work and most accurate assessor judgements occur when learners are given clear directions, including examples, on what constitute *key historical ideas* and how these can be *communicated explicitly, with accurate supporting evidence* in a particular mode

of presentation other than an essay. Explanatory Notes 3,4 and 5 need to be referred to for guidance when assessing against this standard.

Unit Standards

There was an increasing number of unit standards submitted for moderation. Many of these were at Level 3 as an alternative to the externally assessed achievement standards. Most assessors using them had few difficulties, although it was noted that in some cases activity instructions did not make clear to learners the requirements of all performance criteria.