

New Zealand Qualifications Framework Levels 1 – 3, 2010

Computing

National Moderator's Report

National Moderator’s Report for Computing

Specific resources to guide teachers in best practice in assessment can be found on the NZQA website at www.nzqa.govt.nz/computing

The website includes:

- Clarifications of standards
- Assessment of Generic Computing levels 1 to 4 (including examples of tasks and expected responses)
- Computing terms
- National moderator newsletters (published each term)
- Past national moderator reports
- Links to the technology subject area
- Updates on the digital technologies achievement standards.

Planning

Many of the standards that ask students to create a digital outcome (eg US 2784, 2786, 2787, 2788, 2789, 256.. series) include a requirement for a plan to meet the needs of a brief.

This can either be their own or a given brief. When an element of a standard calls for a plan it is expected that a student plan will include a list of steps they will follow to fulfil the brief.

Many tasks, and therefore student evidence, miss this vital performance criterion. Guidance on the requirements of planning across all levels can be found in the resource Assessment of Generic Computing levels 1 to 4 [<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/assessment-and-moderation/assessment-of-standards/assessment-of-generic-computing-levels-1-to-4/computing-process/#plan>].

It is acceptable practice, in many of the standards, for this evidence to be collected orally. However, for the moderator to be able to verify the teacher’s assessment decision there must be some record of the student response. Teacher notes or annotations on the student’s script and/or the assessment schedule can provide this.

Evidence at different levels

The NZQF levels document [<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand/nzqf/nzqf-levels>] gives an indication of progression and complexity required in the student evidence for the skills and knowledge standards.

Tasks must be of sufficient rigour to allow students to demonstrate the level of skill required. Using a template, from within an application, for assessment beyond level 1 will not allow students to achieve the standard.

When a standard requires students to demonstrate knowledge by explaining or describing or justifying, the task must be such that it allows for this. For example, it is not appropriate for the assessment to be multi-choice or ‘fill the gap’ questions. Teacher generated templates that have a limited space for students to answer questions and demonstrate knowledge, can also constrain and disadvantage students. This is particularly so where analysis is required at Level 3. When students are describing or explaining they must write about the topic in detail.

When justifying they must give reasons, eg why a tool or method is/was used. It is not sufficient for students to describe what a tool was used for, there must be reasons given why a particular tool or method was chosen in preference to others.

Electronic evidence

There is an increase in the number of submissions that include electronic evidence. This form of evidence is essential for all programming, presentation and web design standards. Evidence for other standards can also be submitted electronically and this can assist the moderator to verify teacher assessment decisions, especially in spreadsheet, database and image creation units. However, if a standard calls for a print outcome, the hardcopy of the student evidence must also be included.

Evidence for more than one standard

A growing number of providers are adopting an integrated approach when assessing more than one standard within a unit of work or project. It is expected that more teachers will adopt this process with the introduction of the new digital technologies achievement standards. This is considered good practice as it can result in increased student focus and sophisticated outcomes. When developing these integrated assessments it is important to ensure that students are aware of the evidence required for each standard. This will require a task which clearly unpacks the standards being assessed. Issuing students with a copy of the unit standard/achievement standard only, does not provide sufficient guidance.

Student evidence should be clearly annotated to indicate the standard the evidence relates to. Annotations to assessment schedules and individual student evidence can also assist the moderator to understand how judgments were made.