



New Zealand Qualifications Authority
Mana Tohu Matauranga O Aotearoa

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Assessment Report

Level 2 History 2016

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Part A: Commentary

Successful candidates applied their knowledge of an historical event to the requirement of the essay task.

A concern relates to those candidates who did not explicitly respond to the essay task, a number of whom produced rote-learned responses. Teachers and candidates must reflect that the essay task does change in each examination. Identifying and responding to the key words and to the focus of the essay task is critical. Thereafter, interweaving and signposting these key words through the discussion will aid clarity and relevance.

Using the planning page is encouraged. Generally, candidates who used the planning page fostered an organised and focused discussion.

A further concern relates to the wordy nature of some candidate responses, in particular for AS91233. Insight can be demonstrated concisely and within the bounds of the booklet. A focused, organised, balanced and concise discussion that signposts and sustains a relevant argument is encouraged and will be rewarded accordingly.

Teachers and candidates should reflect on appropriate events for Achievement Standards 91233 and 91234. For AS91233 some candidates are dealing with weighty topics and struggle to reflect wider causality, context and consequences. In relation to AS91234 the candidate must sustain their discussion by examining various impacts. This could be over time. Thus, the related preparatory course or study must consider events whose impact on New Zealanders is significant, and not too narrow or limited.

Both Achievement Standard 91233 and 91234 require candidates, as per the Assessment Specifications, to write their responses in a conventional essay format. Candidates are advised to comprehend and rehearse this skill. Excessive introductions and unbalanced or narrative discussions are discouraged.

Part B: Report on Standards

91231: Examine sources of an historical event that is of significance to New Zealanders

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- wrote short, straightforward responses, reflecting a basic understanding of the sources and question
- incorporated some direct reference to the sources in their response, without explaining them in detail. May have provided limited perspectives
- included some irrelevant information or generalisation(s). Sometimes this was the result of not reading and responding to the question
- relied too heavily on the source material, adopting a narrative approach and/or chunking quotes from the sources, without examination.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- wrote very brief responses, describing rather than explaining the information in the sources
- reflected limited comprehension of the historical concepts
- did not select or provide relevant supporting evidence
- quoted evidence from the sources without explanation or examination
- did not respond to the question or use keywords to guide their response. Thus, answers were sometimes vague, unspecified attempts at analysis.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- examined, in depth, material from the sources in the Resource Booklet. Reflected a thorough understanding. Wrote in their own words
- used direct and detailed supporting evidence accurately and appropriately
- examined two perspectives in depth
- used the keywords of the question resulting in a relevant and targeted answer that was not necessarily very long
- sometimes used their own knowledge to reflect understanding
- considered a range of sources and concepts in their response and used these accurately, making connections between sources.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the source material and the questions being asked of them
- used their own knowledge to convincingly show understanding beyond the immediately obvious and/or make links to wider contexts
- made insightful and perceptive connections between the source material
- wrote responses from the perspective of a historian, in their own words
- used relevant and accurate evidence from the sources to support their well-founded ideas
- demonstrated a strong understanding of the historical concepts, questioning the sources' usefulness, reliability and limitations.

91233: Examine causes and consequences of a significant historical event

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- wrote a formulaic narrative, discussing causes, event and consequences in chronological order
- provided description without significant explanation of ideas and evidence
- understood their event, to a point where they presented appropriate evidence and explanation to examine causes and consequences
- wrote in an essay structure, including an introduction, ordering the main body paragraphs in a logical manner, and a concluding statement.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not identify, or clearly define, a significant historical event
- did not provide evidence to support one of the two parts to the essay task
- did not complete one of the two parts to the essay task
- did not attempt to examine two causes and consequences
- did not refer to the components of the essay task, or achievement standard
- made major historical errors that detracted from the validity of the essay
- did not write in an essay structure, e.g. material was presented in lists.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- provided a direct response to the essay task
- provided detailed, specific evidence that was accurate and convincing, aiding their argument
- demonstrated superior understanding, for example through evaluation or incorporation of key concepts associated with their event
- made clear links between causes, event and consequences.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- examined the importance of the causes/consequences and the event with clarity and insight
- demonstrated profound understanding of key ideas, factors and wider context related to the respective event
- demonstrated insight through use and examination of a range of evidence
- wrote succinctly, making connections with analysis and evaluation.

Standard-specific comments

Candidates are reminded that they must thoroughly read and process the essay task before planning a response, or writing their paper. Successful candidates can adapt their knowledge and understanding to the essay task. Some responses were narrative, and did not overtly discuss causes and consequences of an event. Explanation needs to establish causality and consequence relative to the nominated event. Often, candidates who presented an argument were able to demonstrate insight.

91234: Examine how a significant historical event affected New Zealand society

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- examined an appropriate historical event that linked to the essay task
- provided relevant ideas and generalisations, but used limited evidence to support their discussion
- reverted to, in parts, a narrative account of their chosen historical event
- did not respond directly to the essay task, examining the background and event with greater depth and coverage than the effect on New Zealanders
- wrote in an essay structure.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- selected a topic that was either not specific to New Zealanders or reflected limited reference regarding how their chosen event affected New Zealanders
- focused their discussion on the background to the historical event, providing limited discussion related to the effects on New Zealanders
- provided a narrative of an event, discussing causes and consequences
- did not provide accurate historical evidence to support their discussion
- made major historical errors that detracted from the validity of the essay
- did not write in an essay structure.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- chose a well-defined topic that allowed an in-depth response
- planned their response
- responded to the essay task, or key words, writing a paper with a background to the event and an in-depth examination of the effects on New Zealanders
- made direct links to more than one social, political, economic, military/strategic factor
- supported their ideas with detailed, accurate, and relevant historical evidence that sufficiently enabled them to examine the effects on New Zealanders
- wrote in a logical and well-organised manner, employing an effective essay structure.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- wrote an essay that reflected the weighting and focus of the essay task, namely the effect on New Zealanders
- planned their response
- clearly and comprehensively explained the links between their event and the effects on New Zealanders
- used a range of factors to demonstrate a comprehensive and insightful understanding of the effects that their chosen historical event had on New Zealand society
- often employed several specific named examples of effects relating to a factor, indicative of a comprehensive understanding
- effectively employed historical evidence. Often, this evidence was beyond the obvious, reflecting insight
- overtly reflected links beyond the immediately obvious, showing insight
- evaluated the effects and the significance of the effects
- wrote with clarity and cogency.

Standard-specific comments

The selection of a relevant and conducive event remains fundamental. Some candidates selected a topic that, at times, limited their ability to discuss the effects in depth. For example, their topic was too great in breadth. An event, like the Gallipoli Campaign, that can reflect the impact on New Zealand society over a period of time, worked well. Here, candidates were able to reflect the changing 'lens' or perspectives of society, commentators and academics through time. In relation to historiography, which is increasingly evident, this should be linked to the related discussion. Thus, merely adding historiography is discouraged, rather it must be integral and employed.

Candidates who used the planning page often wrote papers that clearly responded to the essay task in an organised, focused, and structured manner. Candidates must be prepared to apply their knowledge and understanding to the essay task. Some candidates were bogged down discussing the background to the event. Clearly, the focus for the essay task was the effect on New Zealand society.

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