

The following report gives feedback to assist assessors with general issues and trends that have been identified during external moderation of the internally assessed Earth and Space Science standards in 2019.

It does not clarify specific standards but provides further insights from moderation material viewed throughout the year.

Awarding Excellence

When making judgement for Excellence, it needs to be ensured that all indicators of the Excellence criteria in the standard have been fully addressed. These are outlined in the Explanatory notes. The quality of evidence provided should also reflect the curriculum level. If the evidence demonstrates that the Excellence criteria have been only partially met, then the grade awarded cannot be Excellence. This is critical in distinguishing between high Merit and Excellence.

Consideration also needs to be given to the overall submission, such as succinctness and clarity.

In Earth and Space Science, Excellence has been appropriately awarded where students show justification, elaboration, integration, and/or analysis of the Earth and Space Science ideas related to the given context.

Collecting evidence

Opportunities are encouraged that allow students to collect evidence through different modes, such as blogs, video clips, etc. Such opportunities allow students to have agency on how best to demonstrate what they know.

Additionally, where students are guided in how to present their evidence succinctly, the quality of their responses improves. When students are aware of the concept that quantity is not an indicator of quality, this also helps to reduce workload pressures.

In Earth and Space Science, student work can be collected in a variety of different modes. External moderation is starting to show a wider range of modes being used to collect evidence, especially evidence collected on field trips.

Student wellbeing

Where students are guided in how to achieve concise presentation of assessed materials, the quality of their responses tends to improve. When students realise that quantity is not an indicator of quality, this helps to reduce workload pressures.

In Earth and Space Science, most samples of assessed materials are concise in their presentation. Students researching 91415 tend to write far more material than required for Achieved.

In terms of student wellbeing, it is also timely to consider the importance of positive contexts and guidance regarding potentially 'dark themes' or inappropriate material. While the need for self-expression and realism is not disputed, the mental and physical wellbeing of students in their learning and assessment should be a significant consideration in programmes.

Dark themes have not been seen in external moderation of Earth and Space Science.

Assessor Support

The Best Practice Workshops (online and face-to-face) offered by the Assessment and Moderation Team continue to be viewed by the sector as significantly contributing to improved assessor practice:

"The workshop helped to review my own knowledge, and great to share ideas."

"It was great having time to challenge my thinking in assessment."

Based on the success of the 'on request' model and the ability to have targeted support, the Assessment and Moderation Team will continue delivering this support model in 2020. Workshops or presentation slots can be requested to provide targeted support to regional or national audiences.

Additionally, we will continue to run the generic Transforming Assessment Praxis Programme, an online programme which helps assessors learn about re-contextualising assessment resources and collecting evidence in different ways to better meet the needs of their learners.

More detailed information, including how to request or register for a workshop, can be found on our Best Practice Workshop pages or by emailing workshops@nzqa.govt.nz.

Communications

Outcome statements in external moderation reports

In 2017, moderation report outcome statements changed from '**Confidence**' statements to '**Consistency**' statements, as explained in an NZQA [Circular](#) at the time.

The previous **FOUR** 'Confidence' statements were changed to **THREE** Consistency statements. This reduction in the number of categories of statement has, in some cases, resulted in moderation report outcomes previously noted as 'Confident' now being noted as 'Not Yet Consistent'.

It is important to recognise that 'Not Yet Consistent' does not imply major issues on the part of the assessor, but that the aspects highlighted can be easily addressed through the advice given in the report.