Teacher Guide Notes for
External Assessment for Cook Islands Māori, Korean and Lea Faka-Tonga

Assessments, Marking and Verification

These guide notes are intended to provide advice to teachers who are teaching and preparing students for external assessment in these three learning languages.

1  **The Common Assessment Task (CAT)**
   
a. NZQA develops common assessment tasks for Levels 1-3. Schools administer the assessment in September of each year and mark the assessments. NZQA verifies the marking of a sample of marked assessments in Term 4.
   
b. These standards and assessments are intended for second language learners.
   
c. The language level of questions and resource texts is aligned with the NZ Curriculum level (6, 7, or 8).
   
d. Topics should be of interest and relevance to teenagers, their aspirations and pathways, avoiding sensitive topics e.g. politics, religious beliefs, death.
      i. Level 1: topics of immediate relevance
      ii. Level 2: familiar matters
      iii. Level 3: concrete and abstract matters that may develop a line of argument
   
e. Each task involves a range of text types and has three questions. Each question is awarded one grade at A, M, or E.
   
f. Candidates should not have to guess an answer based on their general knowledge. The assessment tests understanding of the written or oral text.

2  **Assessment Schedule**
   
a. The schedule contains examples of possible evidence that would lead to A, M or E grades for each question. Candidates may write other answers which also meet the criteria.
   
b. The quality of responses is what determines A, M and E – not the number of points made. We are judging the success of reading or understanding the text, not the language used in the response.
c. Candidates need to show their understanding, and not simply their ability to translate or copy texts. While they may answer in a mix of English, target language and/or te reo Māori, they risk not showing their understanding sufficiently if they quote parts of the text.

d. Obtaining Excellence requires candidates to show they understand the meaning behind the text – any nuances or what is inferred by the text i.e. ‘What can reasonably be assumed from the text’. Adding in their own ideas and thoughts beyond this is not required for excellence.

3 Conducting the assessment in school

a. To ensure valid assessment, the text resources or similar texts must NOT be used in class beforehand. Keep assessment materials secure before and after the assessment.

b. Candidates must sit the task individually, not as a group. Check that candidates’ papers have their correct NSN numbers on the front cover (not candidate names).

c. Do not make changes to the task and ensure candidates sit at the stipulated time and date.

d. Candidates have three hours in which to answer questions in both external standards.

4 Marking

a. Plan to have the papers marked, check marked, and ready to be sent away for verification by the first day of Term 4.

b. Follow the approved schedule carefully, and do not alter it in any significant way. You can allow for other candidate responses beyond the sample evidence in the schedule.

c. Mark in red pen, not pencil, and use lines to ‘contain’ (or circle) all candidate work, including any use of pencil and twink.

d. Give only ONE overall grade for each whole question, and then use the overall sufficiency statement to determine the grade to be awarded for the whole assessment.

e. It is important that someone else check marks a sample of papers to ensure consistency across the group and consistency with the schedule and standard

5 Verification and final results
a. The verifiers will check that candidates have been assessed fairly against the standard and may change grades on candidate scripts. They will explain their reasons in the report to schools or clusters.

b. If any grades have changed during verification, you must take note of the reasons and re-mark any other papers that were not included in the submission. It is important that all candidates are marked consistently.

c. All teachers: please check with your Principal Nominee that all final grades have been confirmed for your candidates before you go on summer holidays.

6 References

Teachers need to be familiar with the following documents. The first three are found on the NZQA subject pages for Cook Islands Māori, Korean and Lea Faka-Tonga:

- External Assessment and Verification Process
- Assessment Specifications for each level
- Achievement Standards
- Teaching and Learning Guides for Learning Languages


To order hard copies of the Curriculum or Teaching and Learning Guides, contact the Ministry of Education Customer Services 0800 660 662, or email orders@thechair.miinedu.govt.nz

If you have any questions, please contact Gill McLean
National Assessment Facilitator
Secondary Examinations, NZQA
Gill.mlean@nzqa.govt.nz
Ph 04 463 4388