

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship History 2018

Standard 93403

Part A: Commentary

This was an examination that was accessible to all candidates. Few candidates appeared to find the structure of the paper confusing or misleading, and the range of sources allowed the majority of candidates the opportunity to demonstrate thinking and writing at Scholarship level.

Candidates were generally well-prepared for this exam and its particular context. It was pleasing to see the increasing ability and willingness of many students to integrate their own knowledge and understanding of a range of New Zealand historical contexts into their argument. The importance of responding to the set question **within a wider historical concept**, and an awareness of all the skills that are assessed, should continue to be part of preparation for the demands of this examination.

Part B: Report on Performance

Candidates who were awarded **Outstanding Scholarship** commonly:

- planned their response using the planning pages provided to signal the key idea(s) they intended to develop in each of their paragraphs, the sources they intended to refer to in these paragraphs, and the historical narrative(s) that were most appropriate (usually their planning demonstrated higher level understanding of the historical context, the question, and a highly-developed and lucid argument)
- clearly understood the scope of the question posed and wrote a balanced response to the question rather than a pre-learned response to the context that was outlined in the Assessment Specifications
- communicated a very strong understanding of the historical context of the examination through their explanation of the historically significant ideas relevant to this context
- argued their case in a sophisticated, convincing, and coherent way
- presented a clear, accurate, and sustained argument evident in each paragraph
- synthesised the sources and their own detailed knowledge of historical content and contexts in a balanced and highly effective manner
- wrote with perception, originality, and flair
- structured their response in a highly effective manner
- demonstrated their understanding of historical relationships by using detailed examples from their own content knowledge and/or from the sources
- evaluated historians' narratives in the sources, both from within the paper, and from their own knowledge
- judged the validity, reliability, and usefulness of source material in relation to the question and their argument (these judgements were accurate and based on their informed knowledge of the topic).

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- planned their response using the planning pages provided to outline the main idea for each paragraph, the sources they intended to use in that paragraph, and the historical narrative that was appropriate (their plan demonstrated an obvious understanding of the context, the question, and a considered argument)
- understood the scope of the question and wrote a clear response to that question
- communicated a clear understanding of the context of the examination through their explanation of key ideas relevant to this context – this was most clearly evident when candidates attempted to write a response to a question on

national identity, despite this not being the question set in the paper

- made direct reference to the key words/phrases in the question
- wrote clearly, including an introduction, a substantiated argument, and a conclusion
- argued their case strongly throughout their response.

Candidates who were **not** awarded Scholarship commonly:

- took a narrow focus in response to the set question, e.g. “identity”
- ignored the planning page provided
- failed to write a clear introduction that presented their own argument
- addressed the context signalled in the Assessment Specifications in a very general manner without direct reference to the question posed
- responded to ideas that were not explicitly demanded in the essay question
- wrote a narrative or descriptive response based on the source material with little or no awareness of the need to present an argument in relation to the question asked, or to include knowledge from historical contexts they had studied
- communicated a very simple and/or superficial argument and did not support this with evidence from the sources provided and/or their own knowledge
- did not effectively balance their own content knowledge with content and ideas from the sources
- used quotes and theories about myths in history that they appeared to have rote-learned, and therefore had insufficient understanding of, in order to integrate with the sources in the paper and/or their argument
- tended not to integrate content knowledge from topic(s) they had actually studied and had a good understanding of
- showed less ability to read sources and summarise key ideas accurately
- demonstrated fewer skills in unpacking sources, especially basic analysis such as source details, and the ability to use these in their discussion/argument
- showed little genuine understanding of the nature of history and/or the role of a historian as opposed to a journalist or a novelist
- demonstrated an inability to explain and develop key ideas related to the historical contexts they had studied
- lacked understanding of the key historical arguments related to their topic and were unable to apply the historical arguments to their individual response
- did not comment on the usefulness and reliability of sources in the paper
- did not utilise the titles and references of the sources in the resource booklet to help them understand key ideas from those sources
- relied on pre-prepared judgements of evidence such as “paintings are unreliable” or “primary sources are better than secondary sources”.

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Previous years' reports

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