

2023 NCEA Assessment Report

Subject:	Geography
Level:	Level 3
Achievement standard(s):	91426, 91427, 91429

General commentary

Candidates should read all parts of the question in the examination papers carefully before starting their responses.

Candidates that utilised the planning page to map out their response tended to obtain higher grades as their response covered all aspects of the question and demonstrated insight in their approach. Their responses were more organised and logically structured, covering a wider range of ideas overall.

Report on individual achievement standards

Achievement standard 91426: Demonstrate understanding of how interacting natural processes shape a New Zealand geographic environment

Assessment

The question asked of candidates was 'How do interacting natural processes shape a New Zealand geographic environment?' Candidates were able to choose how they responded to the question and could analyse spatial and/or temporal variations that shape the environment over a range of periods of time, and establishing this from the outset ensured their responses were focused.

Commentary

The question was clear, and many candidates reworded it in their first paragraph, indicating how they were going to analyse the interacting natural process to demonstrate how the environment has been shaped. Those that did this wrote a more focused answer on the question being asked, which enabled them to achieve. Those that did not achieve had a lack of detail in their answers. Diagrams in general could have been more detailed, and more annotated, and this would have helped some candidates move to a high Merit or Excellence level.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- addressed all aspects of the question, interaction, and operation of different processes that shape an environment
- included some specific evidence about the interacting processes and the shaping of the environment.

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

- addressed the question, and did so fluently
- wrote complete responses, with a good level of case study detail
- demonstrated sound understanding of the interaction of processes, and the shaping of the environment
- annotated a diagram or map to further develop the written response.

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

- showed a comprehensive understanding of the environment
- included clear evidence of insightful analysis in their response
- linked geographic ideas and concepts to a specific context
- included a high level of specific detail in their response
- annotated diagrams with supporting case study evidence
- wrote fluent responses with connected points and paragraphs
- explained how processes interacted, using geographical terminology and concepts.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- lacked specific case study information
- demonstrated little understanding of shaping an environment
- wrote responses that did not address the questions; particularly they wrote around the formation of their chosen environment
- wrote incomplete responses
- did not describe the interaction between processes
- wrote brief responses
- did not annotate their map
- labelled their map with names of features and locations.

Achievement standard 91427: Demonstrate understanding of how a cultural process shapes geographic environment(s)

Assessment

The assessment consisted of one question that required candidates to include a map or diagram to support their written response. It required candidates to analyse how the operation of a cultural process shaped their chosen geographic environment. The question allowed candidates to accurately show their understanding and could be interpreted to encompass a range of the aspects included within the achievement standard, which allowed them to demonstrate a holistic understanding of their cultural process and environment. Candidates were required to integrate supporting case study evidence that would demonstrate their geographic knowledge and understanding of a specific geographic environment and a cultural process that shapes it.

Commentary

The overall calibre of responses attempting this standard was high. Tourism Development was by far the most commonly selected cultural process.

Candidates that appeared to write pre-learned responses typically were restricted to lower grades as their answer was not tailored to the focus of the question. Responses that were targeted to the question allowed candidates to more clearly convey their key ideas in a concise, technical, and detailed way.

While there was not a specific question in relation to the maps and/or diagrams, those provided needed to be relevant to the question answered. For example, it was inappropriate to provide one locational map, not supported with annotations, that showed understanding of either the operation of the process and/or described the shaping of the environment. If diagrams/maps did not provide annotations, then reference must be made to these within the written response for them to be useful and valid.

Candidates who skilfully showed understanding of the operation of a cultural process explained how elements within a process affected one another, and how external factors impacted a process. Consequently, this allowed candidates to clearly identify the elements involved in the operation of the process.

Some cultural processes lent themselves better to the requirements of this achievement standard than others. Elements of a process must clearly be identifiable for it to be possible to provide an insightful analysis of the links between the elements of the cultural process, and in order to draw meaningful conclusions. Candidates who demonstrated this were able to meet the standard at high Merit or Excellence level.

Responses that contained technical detail such as the use of models like the Butler model, cumulative causation, bid rent theory and geographic terms like allocentric/psychocentric, agglomeration, showed a higher level of understanding.

Shaping of the environment encompasses impacts on the cultural and natural environment as a result of the operation of the process, spatial patterns created by the operation of the process and/or changes in the environment over time due to the operation of the process.

The broad nature of the question did lead to some confusion from candidates about where best to focus their response. Consequently, this sometimes led to responses that showed a breadth of understanding but lacked sufficient levels of depth in their analysis for the highest marks.

High-level responses tended to combine different aspects of the standard in a meaningful way to answer the question. Low-level responses tended to select one aspect and regurgitated a seemingly rote-learned response.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- named a cultural process and a clearly defined geographic environment
- demonstrated a basic understanding of the operation of their selected cultural process in either their visual or written response
- focused more on how the cultural process operated without providing some links to how this shaped the environment; this could have included impacts, spatial patterns or temporal changes

- provided some simplistic reasoning that linked the operation of their selected cultural process to impacts or spatial or temporal variations in their environment
- described, or partially described the shaping of a geographic environment but did not analyse with any depth.

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

- named a cultural process and a clearly defined geographic environment
- constructed a relevant map or diagram in the space provided or within their written response that demonstrated detailed understanding of the operation of their process OR impacts OR temporal changes OR variations over space
- demonstrated a detailed understanding with some geographic terminology and an in-depth analysis of how a cultural process operates to shape a selected geographic environment
- linked the operation of the process and the shaping caused in the geographic environment; this could include impacts, spatial patterns or temporal changes – some were explained more in depth than others but outcomes were clear
- provided detailed case study evidence relating to their selected geographic environment to back up answers.

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

- named the cultural process and a clearly defined geographic environment
- constructed a relevant diagram or map that demonstrated detailed understanding of the operation of their process OR impacts OR temporal changes OR variations over space
- provided a comprehensive analysis of how shaping of a geographic environment was created as a result of the operation of the cultural process in a geographic environment
- incorporated aspects that demonstrated an integrated understanding of temporal changes, spatial patterns and /or impacts on the natural and /or cultural environment with a clear focus on 'shaping'
- included the links between elements of the cultural process with them clearly connected to the outcome of shaping in the environment
- integrated supporting case study evidence throughout
- integrated correct geographic terminology / geographic models within their response to demonstrate insight
- expressed ideas logically and fluently, often evidenced through the use of the planning page as an organisational tool.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not name a cultural process or a clearly defined geographic environment and the selection of a process or environment was not evident in the written response
- wrote descriptive answers that listed facts, described impacts, spatial patterns or provided a history of the environment without any links to how the operation of the cultural process caused these
- misinterpreted the question and wrote a response which was all about impacts caused by the operation of the process with no links to variations over time or space
- only inferred reasons for shaping of the environment

- did not demonstrate a sufficient range of shaping examples explained (i.e. more than one)
- showed limited understanding of how their cultural process operates
- wrote brief responses, which did not provide enough analysis.

Achievement standard 91429: Demonstrate understanding of a given environment(s) through selection and application of geographic concepts and skills

Assessment

This was a case study that many candidates appeared to be able to easily make sense of, and used the provided resources to competently answer the questions given. Candidates who were able to connect specific evidence from the resource booklet to their responses (as opposed to putting all evidence in one part of the answer), were more likely to achieve with Merit or Excellence.

Commentary

Candidates appeared more often able to access the questions this year, perhaps due to the simplified language used. While the questions were more accessible to all learners, this didn't necessarily correspond with higher level of response. Again, perhaps due to the simpler language used, some candidates did not write detailed responses in earlier answers, despite proving high-level understanding and insight in part (c). Candidates who utilized the resources provided to demonstrate their geographic skills did well. This included using specific information from graphs and maps to show location, distance, or to provide specific details.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- referred to the topic and area in general terms, using little specific geographic information
- repeated information from the resources like a list rather than constructing an argument
- focused mainly on Bangladesh in part (a), sometimes referring to India but rarely referring to the whole of south-east Asia
- wrote excessively (two pages) for part (a) and appeared to run out of time to provide a detailed response for part (c)
- wrote about the features of the environment in part (b), instead of addressing the causes of flooding
- wrote broad answers for part (c) narrowing down the ability to say why their chosen impact was more important than others
- referred to an impact being the 'most significant' but did not explain why
- wrote little, or wrote a significant amount but their answer was regurgitative and did not show careful reading of the resource booklet
- outlined one significant impact of flooding without further analysis of the various social, economic, and environmental impacts
- did not provide a clear judgment and justification.

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

- wrote with some depth of understanding, and reasonable inclusion of specific detail throughout all three sections
- explained why their chosen impact was significant without clearly comparing or contrasting with other impacts
- implied their justification in part (c)
- explained the natural and cultural causes of flooding in Bangladesh, but did not generally include specific evidence to support their explanations
- named specific features of the environment, e.g. naming the rivers in Bangladesh
- focused mainly on south-east Asia in general terms in part (a) with little focus on any specific named countries
- provided detail from the resource booklet but failed to integrate this throughout their answer
- considered a wider variety of causes and impacts than those at Achievement level
- provided an overall good response but included inaccuracies in terms of geography terminology, skills, and facts.

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

- used geographic evidence to point out why citizens in south-east Asian countries, and not just Bangladesh, were disproportionately exposed to the effects of flooding when compared with other global regions
- demonstrated commendable understanding and application of geographic skills and appropriate evidence in addressing the issue outlined in part (a)
- clearly made connections between the natural geography of the Himalayas, seasonal weather patterns and large volumes of precipitation which increased sediment loading, which in turn reduced channel volumes of the major rivers, which increased the likelihood of them bursting their banks
- provided a detailed explanation of both the natural and cultural causes of flooding in Bangladesh and effectively linked these causes to the issue
- integrated evidence from the resource to support their explanations
- demonstrated critical analysis of the impacts of flooding on Bangladesh, presenting supporting evidence and making a clear judgment and justification of the most significant impact
- provided detail from the resource booklet and integrated this throughout their answer
- referred to both positive and negative impacts, or both long- and short-term impacts
- had a clear layout of an introduction, body and conclusion and separate paragraphs for discussing different impacts in part (c)
- showed evidence of own thinking rather than just copying the resource materials
- used geographic terminology throughout with accuracy.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- completed parts (a) and (b), but not part (c)
- included insufficient material to demonstrate understanding of the topic
- focused only on Bangladesh in part (a)

- did not demonstrate any understanding of the idea of 'significance'
- appeared to confuse the terminology 'cause' and 'impact' in their answers
- wrote off-topic, signalling the resources had not been read or understood clearly
- appeared to confuse 'natural' and 'cultural' causes in their answers
- did not demonstrate geographic skills in their responses to parts (a) and (b)
- wrote responses that were too brief throughout.