

# **National Certificate of Educational Achievement**

## **2014 Assessment Report**

### **History Level 2**

- 91231 Examine sources of an historical event that is of significance to New Zealanders**
- 91233 Examine causes and consequences of a significant historical event**
- 91234 Examine how a significant historical event affected New Zealand society**

## COMMENTARY

Generally, candidates who were prepared and applied their knowledge and understanding across the three external achievement standards performed well. Pleasingly, the overall performance at Level 2 continues to track upward.

In relation to Achievement Standard 91233 and 91234, candidates must thoroughly consider, and respond to, the essay task. It was pleasing to note that successful candidates applied their knowledge and understanding to the requirements of the task. Consequently, it is important that candidates have the opportunity in class to use and apply their knowledge to a range of essay tasks, or questions.

It is anticipated that candidates for Achievement Standards 91233 and 91234 provide a context for the respective event. By adding context via a description of the event – for example dates, statistics, key people and organisations – the candidate affords a foundation for their essay, aiding its framework and depth. The description of the event, highlighted in the introduction, could occur in the first paragraph or as a bridging paragraph, for example between discussion around causes and consequences.

Comprehensively examining, required for Excellence in Achievement Standards 91233 and 91234, involves providing a clear explanation. Insightful understanding at this level should reflect a high level of comprehension between causes and consequences and / or significance, offer a clear, supported, and specific explanation, and examine the respective links in their discussion with clarity and comprehension. An Excellence candidate may make valid reference to historiography, and differentiate between – and evaluate the relative importance of – long and short-term causes and consequences. Alternatively, insight may be reflected whereby the candidate explains and evaluates the event and its effects in a wider context.

Both Achievement Standards 91233 and 91234 require candidates, as per the Assessment Specifications, to write their response in a conventional essay format. Consideration is warranted around ensuring candidates understand, and rehearse, this skill. For example, excessive introductions and unbalanced essays should be discouraged. Concise and balanced essays are encouraged.

Candidates and teachers should consider appropriate events for Achievement Standards 91233 and 91234.

## STANDARD REPORTS

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

#### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They commonly:**

- wrote short, straight-forward 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.

## **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They 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.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit commonly:**

- wrote balanced, detailed and convincing responses
- referred directly and accurately to a variety of sources
- incorporated sources to support their arguments and explanations
- analysed the sources to show depth of understanding.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:**

- demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the source material and the questions being asked of them
- wrote with clarity, comprehension and cogency
- looked beyond the immediately obvious, reflecting an ability to consider the significance and meaning of evidence and/or sources
- made insightful and perceptive connections between the source material
- drew perceptive conclusions about the event from the sources
- demonstrated a strong understanding of the historical concepts, questioning the sources usefulness, reliability and limitations
- used contemporary commentary and historiography related to their Level 2 course, or the events studied.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

As per the 2013 paper, the intention of Questions One and Two was to encourage candidates to access and incorporate sources applicable to their ability, comprehension and understanding. Candidates were directed to a source for Question Three. Many candidates showed their understanding of a wide range of historical skills. In particular, reference to the Achievement Standard, explanatory notes 4 and 5. Further, when discussing perspectives (Question Two) candidates are encouraged to clearly identify and examine each perspective before making final summations.

## **91233 Examine causes and consequences of a significant historical event**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They commonly:**

- identified/defined the significant historical event related to their essay, affording some details connected to the historical context
- explained, and thus gave reasons for, at least two causes of a significant historical event. The links between the causes and the event was explained
- explained, and thus gave reasons for, at least two consequences of a significant historical event. The links between the event and the consequences was explained
- provided evidence in support of the causes and the consequences of the event
- neglected discussion related to the importance of the respective cause or consequence, as per the question
- wrote in an essay structure, including an introduction, ordering the main body paragraphs in a logical manner, and a concluding statement.

### **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They commonly:**

- did not identify, or clearly define, a significant historical event
- reflected limited understanding of the background and the context of the event
- selected events where the causes or consequences were limited in scope, or were too broad
- did not complete one of the two parts to the essay task
- did not provide evidence to support one of the two parts to the essay task
- used evidence that was too broad, thus neither descriptive or explanatory
- described causes and/or consequences but did not explain, or link, these to an event
- wrote a chronological narrative of an event, without identifying causes and consequences
- made major historical errors that detracted from the validity of the essay
- did not write in an essay structure.

### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit commonly:**

- explained in detail at least two causes of a significant historical event. A clear and reasoned explanation of the links between the causes and the event was made
- explained in detail at least two relevant positive or negative consequences of a significant historical event. A clear and reasoned explanation of the links between the events and the consequences was made
- responded to the question, examining the importance of the cause or consequence
- provided detailed, specific evidence that was accurate and convincing, aiding their argument.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:**

- explained insightfully, or comprehensively, at least two causes of a significant historical event. A thorough explanation of the links between the causes and the event was made
- explained insightfully, or comprehensively, at least two consequences of a significant historical event. A thorough explanation of the links between the events and the consequences was made
- offered clear, specific and insightful explanations, well supported by valid and detailed evidence, reflecting superior understanding
- examined importance of the causes/consequences and the event with clarity and insight
- included crucial, or fundamental, factors to an understanding of the causes and consequences of the respective event
- demonstrated insight through use and examination of historiography
- wrote with clarity, organisation and cogency.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Candidates should thoroughly read and think about the essay task before planning their response. Candidates are encouraged to use words and terms from the essay task, ensuring their discussion is focused. Successful candidates adapted their knowledge and understanding to the essay task. Candidates must give consideration to appropriate events for Achievement Standard 91233. The historical event must be significant, not too broad in scope, or cumbersome. Similarly, the event should not be too narrow. Insightful papers were often succinct. While historiography is not expected in the mass of candidates' essays, it is pleasant to read about contemporary writing and commentary such as the post-Soviet and post-Cold War era historiography.

## **91234 Examine how a significant historical event affected New Zealand society**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They commonly:**

- examined an appropriate historical event that affected New Zealand or New Zealanders
- gave basic coverage of the two parts of the essay task
- referred to either short or long-term effects
- provided supporting evidence, albeit at times limited
- did not answer both parts with the same detail, namely more focus was on the background to the event
- wrote in an essay structure.

## **NOT ACHIEVED**

**Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They commonly:**

- did not identify, or clearly define, the significant historical event upon which the essay appeared to relate to
- wrote on an event that was irrelevant
- had a poor understanding of the context of the event
- did not respond to the task, or examine the effect on New Zealand society
- did not provide accurate evidence to support their discussion
- made major historical errors that detracted from the validity of the essay
- did not write in an essay structure.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit commonly:**

- responded to the essay task, making reference to both short and long-term effects that were significant to New Zealand society
- explained in detail one or more feature. For example, political, economic, social or military
- supported ideas with detailed, accurate and relevant historical evidence
- presented their discussion in a logical manner
- employed as a framework an effective essay structure.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE**

**In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:**

- understood and responded to the essay task, providing adequate background and then comprehensively examining the short and long-term effects of their chosen event on New Zealand society
- offered clear and specific explanation and evaluation, well-supported by valid, accurate and detailed evidence
- included evidence that was often beyond the obvious. This could include, but was not limited to, contemporary debate, commentary and analysis
- demonstrated insight by explaining and evaluating their event and its effects in a wider context, often reflecting on New Zealand society in the Twenty First Century
- wrote comprehensively and cogently on both the short and long term effects of their chosen event, under the broad context of social, economic, political or military/ strategic features
- overtly reflected links beyond the immediately obvious, showing insight
- wrote with clarity, organisation and cogency.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Candidates produced a range of responses to meet the qualitative criteria of the Achievement Standard 91234. Further, a wide range of topics were selected. Topics that worked well include, but were not limited to, New Zealand's involvement in the Vietnam War, New Zealand women gaining the vote (as the specific event), the Waihi Strike, the Waterfront Dispute and the Save Manapouri Campaign. Selection of an appropriate event, or context, is critical. The event must enable a clear and convincing discussion, including relevant evidence, around the significance to New Zealand and/or New Zealanders. Apparent was a number of candidates discussing a force or movement. This is problematic. Candidates and teachers must give consideration to appropriate events for Achievement Standard 91234 enabling comprehensive examination of significance to New Zealanders. The historical event must not be too broad in scope, or narrow. Some topics that work well at Level 1, without sufficient revision, do not afford the warranted depth for success at Level 2.

Signalled in the 2013 Examiner's Report, and indicative of the criteria related to Achievement Standard 91234, the task and assessment schedule was weighted toward how the historical event affected New Zealanders. The intention is for this to continue.