

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2014 Assessment Report

Geography Level 3

- 91426 Demonstrate understanding of how interacting natural processes shape a New Zealand geographic environment**
- 91427 Demonstrate understanding of how a cultural process shapes geographic environment(s)**
- 91429 Demonstrate understanding of a given environment(s) through selection and application of geographic concepts and skills**

COMMENTARY

There was a marked improvement in the quality of answers in the 2014 examination which was reflected in the higher number of students gaining Merit and Excellence grades. The questions proved straightforward and allowed candidates the opportunity to show what they understood about the standard.

Candidates who performed well wrote clear and concise answers that provided specific case-study evidence within the space provided. The lines given are an indication of the expected length of answer. Candidates should be aware that to gain Excellence they need to demonstrate “comprehensive understanding” which means they must use geographic terminology and concepts, and show insight in their responses, as well as integrating comprehensive case study evidence throughout their responses. Some candidates wrote full and detailed answers but did not achieve higher grades because they gave a prepared answer that did not address the actual question. Nearly all candidates included a map or diagram of a good geographic standard, for AS91426 and AS91427. While many of these were appropriately annotated some candidates failed to appreciate that the map/diagram was part of the same question and wasted valuable time by giving extensive notes on the diagram page that were then repeated in the written answer. There is a distinct difference between asking for diagrams to enhance a written answer and diagrams that are required as a separate instruction and students must be aware of this distinction.

STANDARD REPORTS

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

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- wrote answers that were focused on the distribution of features with an implied reference only to why it only occurs in this location
- wrote answers that were focused on the formation of a feature over a specified time limit rather than breaking this down into distinct stages
- suggested an implied understanding of how processes interact such as listing the processes responsible for the formation of a feature
- could provide a simple reason for the variations that occurred
- provided answers that used limited specific evidence on their geographic environment
- named processes but did not show how or why they operated.

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:

- misunderstood the term 'spatial variation' and wrote about the distribution of features within their geographic environment instead
- misunderstood the term 'temporal variation' but wrote about the general formation of a feature in their geographic environment instead with no reference to the specific time periods involved

- wrote about interacting elements or treated each process independently without any links between them
- wrote entirely descriptive answers with no reasons for the variations that occurred so did not meet the requirements for analysis
- wrote answers that were very short
- wrote everything they knew about the environment rather than answering the question.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- interpreted the key terms in the question and structured their answers accordingly around those key terms
- provided maps or diagrams that were appropriate to the environment but failed to show variations clearly
- wrote answers that focused on spatial variations by comparing different parts of the environment in terms of the processes and features or elements that occurred and gave reasons for this
- gave answers that focused on temporal variations by comparing different stages or time periods in terms of the processes and changes that occurred and gave reasons for this
- clearly explained the way that processes both operate and interact in this environment such as the sequence required or that the output of one process acts as the input of another.

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:

- wrote answers that were clearly well planned and flowed logically that focused on the question asked
- wrote answers that used geographic terms extensively
- showed technical understanding in the analysis of the operation of the interacting natural processes
- drew diagrams that clearly showed spatial variations through the use of annotated maps or temporal variations showing annotated cross sections of different time periods and the changes that occur
- used case study information effectively to enhance their answer
- referred back to their diagram/s and integrated them well in their written response.

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

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- managed to write about some patterns (e.g. linear, concentrated or dispersed) but missed the causes of the pattern

- provided a diagram that identified patterns but did not provide any details ie they drew a map but only labelled places/features
- demonstrated some understanding of how the cultural process operated and used some supporting case study evidence
- confused the ideas about location and accessibility with the operation of the cultural process, wrote a description with little analysis, and described variations without including causes
- described the changes over time but did not include the factors that had led to these variations
- described the impacts on people and the environment but did not include factors that led to the impacts.

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:

- provided little supporting case study evidence about their chosen setting
- used very limited geographic terminology and ideas/understanding e.g. wrote “Rotorua CBD is at the bottom of Lake Rotorua” instead of writing that it is south of Lake Rotorua
- did not describe what the spatial/temporal patterns were or where they were
- did not describe what the impacts on people and/or the environment were
- did not analyse the way the process operates
- provided rote-learned responses.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- drew a diagram that identified patterns and included annotations to describe the pattern
- included detailed supporting case study evidence
- analysed in detail how the cultural process operated to cause these variations
- used case studies that had enough breadth to provide opportunities to show their understanding
- wrote about specific dates, place names, businesses
- showed understanding of spatial or temporal patterns
- used specific information about their chosen setting
- gave detailed supporting evidence about their chosen setting.

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:

- were able to annotate the maps or diagrams with additional information or explanations
- expanded on the spatial/temporal variations with specifics and referred to the map
- integrated comprehensive supporting case study evidence throughout the answer
- comprehensively explained how the cultural process operated to cause the impacts and shaping of environments

- provided a comprehensive diagram that clearly identified the patterns and included specific and accurate annotations to describe and explain the pattern
- effectively incorporated case study material into responses
- clearly understood how the cultural process operated and how this shaped and impacted the geographic environment
- used a variety of examples and gave well-reasoned conclusions
- linked explanations to wider economic, social and political factors, showing a depth of understanding
- gave explanations that linked more than one idea, often encompassing geographical concepts
- analysed the extent of impacts on the chosen geographic environment.

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

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- understood the basic conventions of graphing
- interpreted the resources with a degree of accuracy
- described natural and cultural environments in general terms
- demonstrated the ability to interpret resources and could recognise and apply skills and knowledge around the concept of environment
- identified the issues facing the island and made a partial critical evaluation of the perspectives and future for Great Barrier Island
- identified and provided some appropriate detail from the given resources
- did not draw a conclusion based on their evaluation.

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:

- lacked understanding of the command terms 'explain' and 'analyse'
- graphed the data using an inappropriate method of presentation
- wrote brief answers that copied resources directly
- wrote answers without including details
- transferred information directly from the resources and did not interpret or evaluate the information to relate it to the question.

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 the environment with some detail
- graphed with a degree of accuracy
- analysed the future issues

- wrote detailed answers throughout the paper
- demonstrated the ability to interpret the questions and select and use the appropriate skills and resources, using some specific evidence
- demonstrated the ability to apply their knowledge and skills to the given resources
- demonstrated good geographic knowledge of the concepts of characteristics and environments.

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:

- fully understood the terms 'explain', 'analyse' and 'critically evaluate'
- demonstrated precision in using the topo map to explain the environment
- graphed with precision and accuracy
- wrote logical responses to question 3 that demonstrated full understanding of 'perspectives'
- fully justified their conclusion
- used valid and specific examples consistently throughout their script
- interpreted and discussed visual and topographical maps accurately and with detail
- selected and applied geographic skills accurately
- fully understood the need to provide specific and accurate information from multiple resources in their responses.