

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2014 Assessment Report

History Level 3

- 91436 Analyse evidence relating to an historical event of significance to New Zealanders**
- 91438 Analyse the causes and consequences of a significant historical event**
- 91439 Analyse a significant historical trend and the force(s) that influenced it**

COMMENTARY

It was pleasing to note the increasing numbers of candidates who were able to demonstrate an understanding of the particular demands of the verb 'analyse'. While some candidates continue to determinedly answer a prepared question rather than the examination question, significant numbers are able to successfully respond to questions which require a process of evaluation and an understanding of the complexities of the past. Such an understanding leads candidates and teachers away from a narrative of the past, multi-stranded as it can be, towards an awareness of the interconnectiveness of events and issues and an appreciation of how the past continues to shape their lives.

STANDARD REPORTS

91436 Analyse evidence relating to an historical event of significance to New Zealanders

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- understood the sources and context
- described two causes and two effects of the Highland Clearances
- could describe the historical concepts of 'general and specific' in context
- assessed the reliability and or usefulness of at least one specified source
- referred to the sources in their responses accurately.

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 sources or context or consistently misinterpreted the sources
- identified, rather than described the causes and effects of the Highland Clearances
- lacked evidence in their responses
- regurgitated the sources instead of answering the questions
- reproduced prepared answers, especially about reliability or usefulness.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- referred to the sources specifically and regularly in their responses
- placed responses accurately in context
- used visual and statistical sources as well as textual to support their responses
- explained in detail their response to the question
- used evidence accurately, concisely and appropriately.

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:

- categorised, compared or contrasted the causes and effects of the clearances
- compared the Clearances to the colonisation of other countries, particularly New Zealand, using the ironic example of John MacKenzie
- explained the complexity of events and their interconnectedness and dependency
- reviewed the sources thoroughly and pointed out any flaws, generalisations or omissions in statements made in the sources
- identified trends, continuity and change in the historiography of the Clearances
- contrasted historiography with popular culture
- understood in detail the historical concepts contained in the questions and fully utilised the evidence in their response
- examined the nature and purpose of sources in their response
- referred to sources not specifically mentioned in the questions to show their understanding.

OTHER COMMENTS

Many candidates are still confusing the ideas of reliability and usefulness. Simplistic comments that primary sources are reliable/useful were common.

Candidates who understood what is meant by the term 'Analyse' did well in this examination. Candidates who could not develop their answers past the 'Identify-Describe-Explain' level found it more difficult to fully develop their responses.

91438 Analyse the 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:

- analysed or explained the causes of a significant historical event by making links between the causes and the event
- analysed or explained the consequences of a significant historical event by making links between the consequences and the event
- covered both causes and consequences, even though the coverage might not be equally balanced
- demonstrated some understanding of the most important underlying and immediate causes as well as of the short term and long term consequences
- provided some evidence in support of the causes and the consequences, typically attempting an essay structure that included an introduction, a series of linked paragraphs and a conclusion.

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 a narrative or description rather than an analysis of the causes and consequences of a historical event
- neglected to cover both causes and consequences, often describing one them generally and without specific supporting detail
- demonstrated little understanding by making repeated and concerning errors about the context of the event
- neglected to identify or clearly define the significant historical event they had selected.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- analysed in depth the causes and consequences of a significant historical event on the lives of people
- demonstrated sound understanding by making clear and reasoned explanations of the links between the causes and consequences and the event
- evaluated the prioritisation of causes and consequences with some attempt at justification of their relative significance
- provided appropriate evidence in support of the causes and the consequences, typically in an essay structure that included an introduction, a series of linked paragraphs and a conclusion.

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:

- analysed comprehensively the causes and consequences of a significant historical event on the lives of people
- demonstrated understanding of the complexity of the causes and consequences by making persuasive explanations of the links between them and the event
- evaluated with well-considered judgements that weighed up the relative significance of the causes and consequences
- provided detailed evidence in support of the causes and the consequences, typically in an effective essay structure, including an introduction, a series of linked paragraphs and a conclusion.

OTHER COMMENTS

Candidates are advised to ensure they select a well-defined, specific and significant historical event and analyse rather than simply describe its causes and consequences.

Some events selected were simply not significant enough to analyse and evaluate causes and consequences to the depth required for a level 3 standard. Candidates who tried to write an answer with material from internal assessments held earlier in their year or the previous year without modifying the information to answer the set question for this achievement standard tended to struggle to reach the achievement criteria.

Candidates for this standard were commonly very well prepared and wrote quite extensive answers. There was clear evidence of significant events having been analysed comprehensively in preparation for the examination, and candidates were able to write confidently about the complexity of events within political and economic contexts.

Overt reference to causes and consequences, long term and short term, political and economic throughout the essay did help candidates to ensure that their answers were targeting the question and to clarify their own thinking. The causes and consequences need to be explicitly linked to the event and substantiated with supporting evidence. That increasing numbers of candidates are able to demonstrate this reflects excellent classroom practice.

91439 Analyse a significant historical trend and the force(s) that influenced it

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- answered both parts of the question but with uneven emphasis - usually favouring a discussion of forces and very little discussion on how the trend changed peoples lives
- examined forces but did not develop an argument as to which force was the key force that influenced the trend
- discussed changes to peoples lives in a basic or general manner with little or only some supporting evidence
- used a basic structure to discuss key points.

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:

- answered one part of the question only
- wrote a narrative account of an event rather than examine a trend (failed to answer the question directly)
- made broad generalisations that were not supported by specific supporting evidence
- wrote a substantial portion of their answer with inaccurate content
- presented ideas and information in a muddled manner with little 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:

- answered both components of the question and provided fairly balanced coverage of both components of the question
- showed evidence of planning that engaged with both components of the question
- used structure well to develop writing: e.g. an introduction that briefly answered the question, topic sentences that linked to the question, logical sequencing of paragraphs

- analysed the key force that influenced the trend, relative to other forces and developed a convincing argument that was supported by relevant evidence
- discussed changes and/or continuities to peoples lives with clear and valid connections to the trend
- developed a sustained argument that examined changes to peoples lives or undertook an evaluation that demonstrated understanding of how the trend changed people's lives.

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:

- undertook a comprehensive planning process prior to writing, directly linking planning to all of the key components of the essay question including examining continuity
- wrote fluently, persuasively, and with perception and insight
- showed breadth and depth of understanding when evaluating the key force, relative to other forces, that influenced a trend,
- made judicious/well considered judgments as to the supporting evidence that was included to support key arguments
- presented well considered evaluations/perceptive measurements of the significance of changes and continuity to peoples lives as a result of the trend
- allocated a significant portion of writing time to the development of a persuasive argument as to the changes and/or continuities to peoples lives
- scope ...
- used historiography in a seamless manner that did not detract from the overall evaluation/or did not substitute historiography for independent well developed conclusions.

OTHER COMMENTS

It is clear that some candidates had been very well prepared for this standard and they achieved well. Regrettably, it is also evident that some candidates are still writing answers to last year's question, or even more regrettably, responding to a question that was last asked in an expired standard. Also, some candidates did not include the words 'force' or 'trend' in their responses. Instead they used words like 'causes' or 'effects' or 'consequences'. These scripts were able to be gain an Achieved grade at best despite the fact that it was clear to markers that the candidate was well informed about events but failed to link this to the question being asked. It is important that candidates have knowledge of appropriate essay construction techniques, and in particular focus on emphasising the skill of essay question deconstruction. Capable candidates were able to argue why a particular 'force' was 'key', demonstrating their understanding of a number of different 'forces' and their relative importance.