

2015 NCEA Assessment Report

History Level 2 91231, 91233, 91234

Part A: Commentary

Comment on the overall response of candidates to 2015 examinations for all achievement standards covered by this report.

Candidates who were prepared, and importantly applied their knowledge and understanding, performed well.

Candidates and teachers are encouraged to reflect on appropriate events for Achievement Standards 91233 and 91234. Some candidates became bogged via a hefty description of a substantial topic, for example World War One. Instead, they would be better-placed focusing their discussion on an event within a topic, for example the Gallipoli Campaign. Further, students are encouraged by a teaching programme that keeps a breast of contemporary writing and commentary and allows them to incorporate this into a degree of insight for Excellence. This also allows students to examine, as all three standards require, even for achieved.

A sustained concern relates to candidates who do not consider, or respond to, the essay task. Successful candidates apply their knowledge of an historical event to the requirement of the essay task. However, a number of candidates continue to produce rote-learned scripts, sometimes with terminology applicable to the previous year's essay task. Thus, learning that the question changes remains critical. The course must offer throughout their academic year the opportunity for students to apply their knowledge to a range of tasks, prompts or questions. Further, the learning should reinforce that the expectation or requirements of the respective essay task does change.

It is both important and timely to reflect that comprehensively examining, required for Excellence, does not necessarily warrant wordy or lengthy scripts. Concise, succinct, cogent and balanced papers that meet the requirements for Excellence are encouraged. Indeed, candidates who sustain an argument are often able to demonstrate insight. Reflecting a deeper understanding of the context, making connections, evaluation and offering a clear and supported explanation all reflect insight at Level 2.

Both Achievement Standard 91233 and 91234 require candidates, as per the Assessment Specifications, to write their responses in a conventional essay format. Again, teachers should ensure candidates comprehend and rehearse this skill. Excessive introductions and unbalanced or narrative discussions are discouraged. While not mandatory, some students may benefit through using the planning page, fostering a structured and relevant discussion about the question.

Part B: Report on standards

1. Assessment Report for 91231: Examine sources of an historical event that is of significance to New Zealanders

Achieved	Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • included some irrelevant information • relied too heavily on the source material, adopting a narrative approach.
Not Achieved	Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • quoted evidence from the sources, without explanation or examination.

Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • were able to explain their ideas with reference to the sources • sometimes used their own knowledge to reflect understanding • considered a range of sources and concepts in their response, and used these accurately.
Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the source material and the questions being asked of them • used their own knowledge to convincingly show understanding beyond the immediately obvious • made insightful and perceptive connections between the source material • wrote responses from the perspective of an historian • used relevant and accurate evidence from the sources to support their well-founded ideas • demonstrated a strong understanding of the historical concepts, questioning the sources usefulness, reliability and limitations.
Standard specific comments	<p>The 2015 paper included less secondary, and incorporated a greater range of, sources. Further, it focused on a specific event, the 1975 Māori Land March. The intention was to encourage candidates to think and examine evidence like an historian, hence the increased focus on primary sources. It is intended that this will continue. The paper directed students to particular sources, aiding accessibility.</p>

2. Assessment Report for 91233: Examine causes and consequences of a significant historical event

Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not clearly respond to the essay task, categorising their consequences as short or long-term • wrote a formulaic narrative • provided description without significant explanation • provided a response in which either the causes or, more often, the consequences do not meet the criteria to achieve at a higher level • understood their event, to a point where they presented appropriate evidence and explanation to examine causes and consequences • wrote in an essay structure, including an introduction, ordering the main body paragraphs in a logical manner, and a concluding statement.
Not Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not identify, or clearly define, a significant historical event • did not provide evidence to support one of the two parts to the essay task • did not complete one of the two parts to the essay task • did not refer to the components of the essay task, or achievement standard • made major historical errors that detracted from the validity of the essay • did not write in an essay structure.
Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided a direct response to the essay task • provided detailed, specific evidence that was accurate and convincing, aiding their argument • responded to the essay task, offering explanation and examination of consequences as short and long-term • examined links between the causes and consequences of their event.

Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offered clear, specific and insightful explanations, well-supported by valid and detailed evidence, reflecting superior understanding • examined the 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 • explained significance • wrote succinctly, making connections with analysis and evaluation.
Standard specific comments	<p>Teachers are reminded that candidates must thoroughly read and process the essay task before planning their response, or writing their paper. Successful candidates are able to adapt their knowledge and understanding to the essay task. A number of essays were narrative, and did not overtly discuss causes and consequences of an event. Revolution in Russia, conflict in Vietnam and the Nazi Party's rise to power remain popular. Candidates must consider that long responses do not necessarily equate to a higher grade. Candidates who presented an argument were often able to demonstrate insight.</p>

3. Assessment Report for 91234: Examine how a significant historical event affected New Zealand society

Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examined an appropriate historical event that linked to the essay task • provided a mostly narrative account of their chosen historical event • provided relevant ideas, but used limited evidence to support their discussion • examined a topic that, at times, limited their ability to discuss the effects in depth • examined the background and event with greater depth and coverage than the affect on New Zealanders • wrote in an essay structure .
Not Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selected a topic that was either not specific to New Zealanders or made little or no reference how their chosen event affected New Zealanders • focused their discussion on the background to the historical event, providing limited discussion related to the affects on New Zealanders • did not provide accurate historical evidence to support their discussion • made major historical errors that detracted from the validity of the essay • did not write in an essay structure.
Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chose a well-defined topic that allowed an in-depth response • responded to the essay task, writing a paper with a detailed background to the event and an in-depth examination of the affects on New Zealanders • made direct links to more than one social, political, economic, military / strategic factor • supported their ideas with detailed, accurate and relevant historical evidence that sufficiently enabled them to examine the affects on New Zealanders • wrote in a logical and well-organised manner, employing an effective essay structure.
Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wrote an essay that reflected the weighting and focus of the essay task, namely the affect on New Zealanders • clearly and comprehensively explained the links between their event and the affects on New Zealanders • used a range of factors to demonstrate a comprehensive and insightful understanding of the affects that their chosen historical event had on New Zealand society

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often employed several specific named examples of affects relating to a factor, reflecting a more comprehensive understanding • effectively used historical evidence. Often, this evidence was beyond the obvious, reflecting insight into the candidates thorough understanding of their topic • overtly reflected links beyond the immediately obvious, showing insight • evaluated the affects and the significance of the affects • wrote with clarity and cogency.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>Candidates produced a range of responses to meet the qualitative criteria of the Achievement Standard 91234. Further, a wide range of topics was presented. Selection of appropriate events remains a factor. Candidates who selected specific events, within a larger topic, appeared better-placed to comprehensively examine the affect on New Zealanders. Candidates must be prepared to apply their knowledge and understanding to the essay task. Some candidates were bogged down discussing the background to the event. Clearly, the focus for the essay task was the affect on New Zealand society. Further, some candidates had prepared responses related to the previous year's essay task. Some candidates applied the language of AS91233, or causes and consequences. Using the wording of the essay task is encouraged to focus the candidate's discussion.</p>