

Part A: Commentary

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

This year's responses for both papers reflected a thorough understanding of most of the aspects of the tasks provided. Students demonstrated conceptual understanding through their answers and were generally consistent in their inclusion of evidence to support their responses. An area that still requires particular teaching focus and change is in the writing of viewpoints, values and perspectives. While some candidates wrote formulaic viewpoints as indicated in the clarification documents, many candidates provided nothing more than quotes. While this alone could not hold them back from gaining the standard, it is a very important part of Senior Social Studies and often lowered the overall judgement.

Many candidates provided far too much discussion and background information, rather than answering the tasks concisely. This was particularly evident in 91598 where students may prepare their responses prior to the exam. This meant that much of their writing was irrelevant or extraneous. This impacts heavily on their ability to answer both papers in the time allowed. As the quality of responses for 91598 continues to improve, the need for students to write concise and well developed answers throughout is increasingly important if they are striving to gain Excellence.

For the knowledge based standard, there were many candidate responses that were obviously learned by rote from a class/school model answer. This is of concern as it does not show the individual's understanding of ideologies influencing change in society. While it is expected that there will be some repetition of ideas on the same topic, it is to be encouraged that students write up their own model answers and incorporate different examples and points of view where they are able to.

Part B: Report on standards

1. Assessment Report for 91596: Demonstrate understanding of ideological responses to an issue

<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identified distinct responses and linked perspectives and impacts to these responses • used formulaic methods for writing perspectives as given in the clarification documents • identified specific evidence from the resource booklet in their response • were concise in their description of the issue • used ideologies other than those provided • lacked explanation of the links between specific responses and the ideologies that influenced them.
<p>Not Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • neglected to complete all aspects of part A (specifically perspectives and impacts) • confused ideologies with responses. Candidates would describe, for example, the humanitarian response without identifying the specific action the humanitarian group or individual actually took • did not use the resource booklet sufficiently. This included providing responses, ideologies and impacts that were not in the resource booklet as the basis of their argument rather than as supporting evidence • did not include any specific evidence.

Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly linked ideologies to the same responses they identified in part A selected two ideologies to focus on (rather than one or all three) did not just copy the definition of the ideology from the resource booklet but used it to assist their understanding and explanation – to make clear links between the response and the ideology that influenced it constructed a clearer argument by linking only one response to each ideology did not attempt, or provide sufficient understanding (supported with evidence) of the extent to which the ideologies have influenced the issue.
Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identified the strengths and weaknesses of each response considered the degree to which the ideology and its response(s) effected the issue compared the effect of the two ideologies made a judgement on which of the ideologies (through its responses) had the most impact on the issue made recommendations and considered the future effect of the responses not just on the issue but on society.
Standard specific comments	<p>Some candidates used their time in the exam effectively by writing paragraphs that clearly answered the question and included some, but not too many examples or too much supporting evidence. It is clear that many candidates came prepared to achieve a certain grade and were well aware of which sections related to these grades. Many students simply stopped writing after completing part A or part B.</p> <p>Many candidates spent too much time rewriting the definitions of the ideologies, particularly in Parts A and B. For Part A, no more than identification of the ideology that influenced the chosen response is necessary. In Part B, candidates need to unpack the definition and link key parts of this belief system to the responses identified, to show how these responses have been influenced by this ideology.</p> <p>There was improvement in the number of candidates that constructed relevant viewpoints and supported these with links to the individual or groups values and the perspective that had influenced their view. However, there were many who only provided quotes.</p>

2. Assessment Report for 91598: Demonstrate understanding of how ideologies shape society

Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identified a specific society, in terms of location and/or time described identifiable ideologies with details to support their description stated specific societal change(s) shaped by the ideologies working with social processes clearly identified valid social processes used a range of relevant specific evidence to support their generalisations identified more than one point of view, values and perspectives of individuals or groups in relation to the change used relevant social studies concepts.
Not Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> referred to a general or non-specific society used little specific, relevant evidence to support generalisations used points of view, values and perspectives about the ideology rather than the change in society failed to link the ideologies to social processes focused on historical details without answering the questions did not identify two or more points of view, values and perspectives provided quotes rather than describing points of view

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • described ideologies in a very general way or too briefly, that did not show a clear understanding of these ideologies • misidentified components, e.g. identified as ideologies components that were actually social processes or vice versa • wrote short, poorly constructed answers that did not include all components of the standard.
Achieved with Merit	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly outlined how and/or why the ideologies shaped the society studied, by providing reasons for how and/or why the society had changed • supported their response to this component with evidence such as statistics or names.
Achieved with Excellence	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluated the extent that the ideologies shaped the society studied • provided an evaluative judgement of the extent to which the ideologies had shaped society and supported this with evidence • evaluated the extent to which the ideologies shaped society by including positive and negative impacts, short and long term impacts, social, political and economic impacts • compared the extent to which one ideology shaped society with the other • included strong factual evidence to support their evaluation including statistics that could measure impact, specific events that reflected impact and evidence of changes to social behaviour.
Standard specific comments	<p>Candidates wrote about a wide variety of settings. Successful settings included Afghanistan, India, and some New Zealand settings.</p> <p>In most cases successful candidates used contemporary settings, though a few historic examples were also used including Communist China (1949 onwards) and Nazi Germany (1933-1945).</p> <p>A variety of ideologies were used successfully including: fundamentalist Christianity, moderate Hinduism, feminism, conservative Catholic, liberal Anglican, and capitalism.</p>