

# Assessment Report

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### Part A: Commentary

More candidates used their own business context in 2020. The strongest candidates were able to provide the depth of response needed for Excellence, including making the correct linkages in the given business context.

Candidates are reminded to avoid simply repeating resource material for their answers, and also to carefully consider other aspects of the business context and provide these insights in addition to direct links to the resource. Candidates who did not do well tended to write generic answers, often just definitions, and provided little or no context.

Candidates are also reminded of the need to read questions carefully and to be well prepared, across the whole curriculum, with a deep understanding of a business they have studied in class. It is important to remember that the context is a large (more than 20 employees) business that has significance on a regional or national scale. For example, Amazon is not a business operating in New Zealand – items purchased by customers are shipped in from overseas. Therefore, this would not be a valid context to use.

Candidates' understanding of the Māori concepts used in the examination was pleasing, with an increasing number of candidates using these frequently, including those not specifically mentioned in the exam resource.

Justifying answers to Excellence level continues to be an issue where no new information is provided, and where candidates do not compare and contrast solutions or provide positives and negatives for the solutions. Referral to the assessment schedule for each standard over the past few years should provide plenty of examples of what an Excellence answer could look like.

## Part B: Report on standards

### 90843: Demonstrate understanding of the internal operations of a large business

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- provided a (correct) rote-learned response without relating it to their chosen business or the context given
- explained the 'what' and gave reasons
- explained an advantage and a disadvantage of operating at maximum capacity without referencing the pūtake of the business
- could identify and explain a correct leadership style and organisational structure.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not use their chosen business
- could not identify a leadership style or organisational structure as prescribed in the Teaching and Learning Guidelines
- did not attempt all questions, or provided brief and incomplete responses
- confused leadership styles and organisational structure.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- clearly explained the impact of business decisions, using 'what', 'why', and 'how'
- linked the pūtake of the business to both advantages and disadvantages of a business operating at maximum capacity
- included examples from their chosen business or context given to show in-depth understanding
- provided strong explanations of the benefits of corporate social responsibility with 'what', 'why', and impact on the business
- included features of an organisational structure such as span of control, levels of hierarchy, and chain of command in their response.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- justified by linking their response to context and/or the business
- integrated examples using the given context or chosen business.

### Standard-specific comments

Many candidates had technically correct responses (included business concepts) that were rote-learned. These candidates were excluded from Excellence and Merit, as their responses were not applied to something new (i.e. the context or a business, thus showing a comprehensive understanding).

Candidates need to be confident with the context given and/or their chosen business, and be prepared to apply business knowledge to all questions.

It is important for candidates to ensure they have a clear understanding of the business concepts as outlined in the Teaching and Learning Guidelines. Many candidates could not identify a leadership style or organisational structure.

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## 90844: Demonstrate understanding of how a large business responds to external factors

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- attempted to link responses to the case study information or their chosen business
- demonstrated some business knowledge, particularly when providing responses or reasons in the context of the case study or their chosen business
- understood the difference between unethical actions and illegal actions
- stated relevant Māori business concepts.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- used the case study as opposed to their own large business that they had studied to answer part (d)
- did not complete all parts of the task, in particular (b) and (d)
- demonstrated little business knowledge, e.g. the 90-day trial period restrictions or minimum wage law, or what a demographic group is
- provided an example of how the business might act unethically, but did not explain any consequences of this behaviour.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- provided linked examples from the case study information or their chosen business
- demonstrated good business knowledge and included appropriate business terminology/Māori business concepts - in particular, the concepts provided in the case study
- did not use new information to support their reasons when justifying their choice of solution or response, and/or repeated previous information.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- justified, by using new information and/or referring to other business concepts or ideas, why one solution is better than the other. This usually required explaining an advantage of the chosen solution and a disadvantage of the alternative solution
- provided detailed, explicit, linked examples from the case study information or their chosen business, which showed a clear understanding of the operations of that business

- demonstrated extensive business knowledge and consistently used appropriate business terminology/Māori business concepts, particularly when integrating the chosen Māori business concepts from the case study.

### Standard-specific comments

Some candidates could not distinguish between ethical and legal actions - e.g. paying a living wage is ethical, while paying the minimum wage is a legal requirement. Similarly, the provision of single-use plastic bags is now illegal rather than merely undesirable (or unethical), and discrimination towards employees and customers is also a legal issue, not an ethical one.

Candidates sometimes discussed unethical actions performed by an employee, as opposed to actions performed by a business.

Responses to issues facing the business must be realistic, legal, and actually resolve the issue being addressed. For example, paying staff under the table to avoid paying the minimum wage is not legal, and therefore not an appropriate response. Nor is it appropriate to reduce the wages of full-time and experienced staff to continue to employ graduate staff.

Any justification should refer to both responses/solutions, explaining the relative benefits of one response/solution over the other.

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## 90845: Apply business knowledge to a critical problem(s) in a given large business context

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- answered most questions
- were very descriptive in their answers
- referred to the case study, but did not use the material well
- used some business terminology in their answer.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not answer all parts of the task

- did not refer to the case study or copied a lot of information from the case study
- did not understand the questions
- could not identify correct solutions/strategies
- repeated the same solutions/strategies across different parts of the examination
- gave vague answers and used incorrect business terms, demonstrating little business knowledge.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- answered all questions fully
- set out their work clearly
- identified correct solutions/strategies in their answers
- linked their answers to achieving business and stakeholder objectives
- used information from the case study
- used correct business terminology in their answers
- displayed sound business knowledge.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- answered all questions
- set out their work very clearly, identifying points as they went and using paragraphs
- made sure they addressed all aspects (bullet points) of the question
- identified correct solutions/strategies and explained these fully, using correct business terms and demonstrating knowledge
- incorporated information from the case study
- linked their answers to achieving business and stakeholder objectives
- justified their answers, using new material.

### Standard-specific comments

A number of Merit candidates produced excellent answers, but misinterpreted at least one part of the task or question and therefore were not eligible for Excellence. Some candidates re-wrote the resource material instead of displaying their own business knowledge.

Some candidates wrote similar answers, repeating the same information across different parts of the task or question, e.g. discussions about social media and influencers. Many candidates struggled with identifying realistic and suitable short-term solutions in part (d).

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### Previous years' reports

[2019 \(PDF, 349KB\)](#), [2018 \(PDF, 124KB\)](#), [2017 \(PDF, 48KB\)](#), [2016 \(PDF, 224KB\)](#)