

Assessment Report

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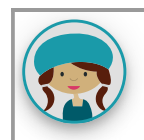
Part A: Commentary

A common indicator of success across all three standards was evidence of planning. Candidates who planned a response accurately responded to the question, used relevant evidence to support their generalisations, and were able to sustain their analysis or argument across their entire response.

In the two essay standards, the choice of topic was also very important and is discussed further in the standard-specific comments.

There were fewer extremely long responses this year. However, some candidates are still treating the essays as a 'data dump'. These responses usually accompany a lack of planning, and in some instances, feature a poor choice of event or force.

Part B: Report on standards



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

Examinations

The assessment specification indicated that this examination would cover aspects of race and gender in nineteenth-century Aotearoa. The examination focused on the life of Hēni Te Kiri Karamū, a Māori wāhine, who was involved in several significant historical events in Aotearoa/New Zealand's history.

There were three historical concepts that were assessed using this context: general and specific, past and present, and usefulness and reliability. As in previous years, these concepts are among those listed in the Achievement Standard.

The questions required candidates to apply their understanding of the historical concepts to the information contained in the supplied historical sources and use evidence selected from the sources to support an analytical response.

Observations

Candidates seemed to find Te Kiri Karamū's life an interesting and engaging topic. There was a mix of photographs and written sources provided in the resource booklet. Many candidates relied exclusively on the written sources; those who also engaged with the visual sources often provided better analysis.

It is noticeable that some candidates are engaging with the sources sequentially, essentially summarising or listing evidence from the sources that is relevant to the question. This technique usually prevented Merit or Excellence grades being reached.

To demonstrate thorough understanding of the historical concepts, and to reach Merit and Excellence level, candidates needed to carefully read all of the sources, plan a response to each question, and carefully select the most relevant evidence, e.g. in response to Question One, Merit and Excellence responses identified two or three general ideas about the life of women in colonial Aotearoa and then examined how well Te Kiri Karamū's life met those generalities. Those responses addressed each general idea in turn, using evidence from multiple sources to examine the general (life of colonial women) and specific (Hēni Te Kiri Karamū's life) in detail. Less well-planned answers tended to extract evidence from Source A, then Source B, and so on.

It was clear that some candidates are using mnemonics to help their analysis of each source. Mnemonics such as PLONK (Purpose, Limitations, Origins, Nature, and Knowledge), often allowed candidates to more deeply analyse the sources. It should be noted that these tools are applicable for more than just the reliability and usefulness question.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- understood the historical concepts and were able to apply them in a general manner to the sources
- interpreted the sources accurately, although often in a simple or superficial manner
- extracted evidence from the sources in support of their responses to the questions.

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

- did not respond to all questions
- misinterpreted the sources
- did not understand the historical concepts being assessed
- did not use evidence in their responses.

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

- understood the historical concepts and were able to accurately apply them to the sources
- interpreted the sources accurately, in both their content and context
- provided several ideas that addressed the question and supported those ideas with relevant evidence
- wrote responses that were more than just narrative or a sequential run through of the sources.

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

- understood the ideas contained in the sources and how they supported or contradicted each other

- understood the historical concepts and could thoroughly explain how the sources illustrated these concepts
 - demonstrated a high degree of engagement with the sources
 - used carefully selected evidence to support an argument
 - wrote responses that began with generalisations and supported this generalisation with specific examples from the sources.
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91438: Analyse the causes and consequences of a significant historical event

Examinations

As indicated in the Assessment Specifications, the 2021 examination did not require candidates to write about both the causes and consequences of a selected historical event. The question asked candidates to evaluate the most important causes of their chosen historical event.

Candidates responded to the stimulus in an essay format, using a historical event of their own choice as the context. An evaluation of the causes of the chosen event was required, with candidates arguing which of the causes of their chosen event was the most important and supporting their argument with relevant historical evidence.

Observations

Well-prepared candidates provided thoughtful and engaging responses.

Overall, there was significant improvement in event choice, although some candidates are continuing to choose events that are not suitable for this Level 3 standard, or are not lifted to the complexity required for a 6-credit essay at Level 3.

It should be noted that how candidates label their event is critical and some examples of how this can prove problematic include choosing:

- the Second Indochina War as the event, suggesting it started in 1964, whereas a more appropriate event choice would have been the Gulf of Tonkin

incident or the USA's decision to escalate their involvement in the Second Indochina war

- the French Revolution, whereas a more convincing argument may have been developed if the event had been narrowed to the Storming of the Bastille or the Tennis Court Oath.

As in previous years, events that are too broad or vague make it difficult for candidates to write a comprehensive, yet concise argument. Candidates find it hard to successfully argue which cause was the most important with a broad event that stretches into years or decades, such as Prohibition, the Holocaust, and Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa. Candidates would be better able to meet the requirements of the standard by choosing one narrower aspect of those topics, e.g. instead of Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa, choosing the outbreak of the Waikato War (1863) or the Dog Tax Rebellion (1898) and focusing on the unique causation for that specific conflict.

It appears that some candidates are using their internal assessment research topic or perspectives assessment as the basis for their event. It is critical that candidates are able to modify their event to the requirements of the 91438 external standard. It is particularly notable when candidates use their 91437 internal as the basis for formulating their response to the 91438 question, as they tend to put forward alternate historians' views rather than directly answer the question. Some candidates who have used the 91434 internal as the basis for their essay are choosing events that are not suitable for the 91438 standard, such as family history or murders. These are not suitable as they are rarely historically significant.

Historiography is not a requirement of this standard and the decision to include it should be considered carefully. Candidates would do well to write to the essay topic and only use historiographical evidence when it specifically supports (in this year's case) an evaluation of the relative importance of the causes of the chosen historical event.

It would be helpful for candidates to understand the difference between comprehensive detail and the requirement of comprehensive analysis of the chosen important causes. Candidates should be encouraged to be selective about causation and to be selective about the best supporting evidence that will make their argument convincing. The standard requires a discussion of the complexity of causation. One possible method could be using the concept of 'contingency' as an analytical tool. Furthermore, candidates should be encouraged to develop in-depth analysis by evaluating the importance of causes,

i.e. weighing the importance of each cause by justifying its significance, as required by the 91438 standard.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- chose an event that was clearly defined
- discussed two causes but did not address the specific question in terms of evaluating important causes
- showed sound understanding of their chosen event and the selected causes, although some causes selected were questionable in terms of importance or relevance to the event
- selected predominately accurate basic facts and evidence to support explanations
- provided unnecessary detail that did not enhance the overall discussion
- explained a causal link between each cause and the event; some explanations were weaker than others
- lacked clear prioritisation of the causes in their overall response.

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

- did not have a clear or suitable historical event
- had no clear structure to their response
- contained only one relevant cause
- chose causes that did not lead to the event
- did not develop their analysis beyond a brief description of their causes
- discussed only consequences instead of causes
- discussed a narrative account of the event with no analysis of the causal factors
- showed little knowledge of the event and how their chosen causes led to the event
- did not establish any causal links
- did not include sufficient direct evidence

- made broad, unsubstantiated generalisations.

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

- carefully planned a response to ensure that the response was addressing the examination question
- selected a well-considered, significant historical event that was suitable for Level 3
- had a clear structure with understanding of historical chronology
- chose only important causes as required by the question, thus demonstrating a depth of understanding
- provided depth of analysis through selection of accurate and relevant evidence and examples (although not all may have had the same depth of analysis)
- developed an argument as to why the chosen causes were important or critical in relation to causing the event
- attempted to prioritise their causes by assessing their importance to the event, or gave equal weighting to causation, or clearly prioritised their causes, but the argument was unconvincing.

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

- carefully planned a response to ensure that the response was addressing the question
- selected a well-considered significant historical event that was suitable for Level 3
- established a clear argument and sustained this throughout the response
- demonstrated discernment in their choice of two to three important causes out of the many possible
- showed a strong understanding of the complexity of their chosen causes and wove this understanding throughout the argument
- showed insight as to the complexity of causes by discussing such things as context, conditions, and contingency
- supported their argument by the inclusion of well-considered, relevant evidence and examples

- structured their response in a cohesive manner, often dedicating a paragraph to developing an argument as to which cause was the most important
 - prioritised and justified the most important cause clearly, relative to the other causes
 - wrote concisely about their choice of historical event.
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91439: Analyse a significant historical trend and the force(s) that influenced it

Examinations

As indicated in the Assessment Specifications, the 2021 examination did not require candidates to write about both the forces that influenced a trend and the effects of the trend. The question asked candidates to evaluate the forces that led to a significant historical trend.

Candidates responded to the stimulus in an essay format, using a historical trend of their own choice as the context. An evaluation of the forces that led to the chosen trend was required, with candidates arguing which of the forces that led to the trend was the most important and supporting their argument with relevant historical evidence.

Observations

Many candidates responded well to the essay topic and wrote engaging essays that indicated a thorough knowledge of their chosen trend and the forces that influenced it. Some responses were far too broad in scope, covering 200 plus years of world history (some covered over 2000 years). These were often not successful, as the analysis demanded by such broad topics was too complex for a one-hour assessment.

Historiography can be used effectively in this standard but, particularly with Aotearoa / New Zealand history, some candidates relied heavily on 50-year-old historiography and ignored more modern arguments, diminishing the effectiveness of this analytical tool.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- focused on the question and selected forces/trends
- incorporated rote-learned evidence to support their responses
- used a limited range of historiography
- treated the forces as independent rather than as interconnected.

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

- wrote brief responses that did not meet the requirements for Level 3
- wrote a simplistic response that did not establish a relationship between trends and forces
- narrated a history rather than respond to the essay topic
- focused on a person/event rather than a force.

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

- focused their response to analyse forces that led to their chosen trend
- utilised a clear structure in their essay
- showed a clear understanding of trend and forces
- showed a limited understanding of the interconnectedness of the forces that influenced the trend
- incorporated some relevant evidence and historiography
- showed a sound understanding of the chosen historical period.

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

- wrote a concise response that focused on two or three forces
- used carefully chosen, relevant evidence to support their argument
- established an argument and sustained that argument throughout the essay in a logical manner
- made clear connections between the forces and the trend
- showed insight and perception in the evaluation of the forces
- demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the historical period.

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