

This assessment report is based on assessments for 2023. It may not reflect achievement standards that have been updated.

2023 NCEA Assessment Report

Subject: Religious Studies RAS
Level: Level 1
Achievement standard(s): 91918, 91919

General commentary

This was the third year that the new Level 1 Religious Studies achievement standards were offered. A larger number of schools took part in the new achievement standards than previously, almost all of their candidates being assessed for both external assessments.

Candidates were generally successful in their work for both externally assessed external achievement standards this year.

Candidates must address their question of choice for each of the two externals. Ignoring the question or simply including a response based on a question from a previous year will not allow for success.

Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of religious or spiritual ideas within their extended responses, and not just outline aspects from other areas of the Social Science curriculum.

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

Achievement standard 91918 : Demonstrate understanding of a characteristic of religious or spiritual traditions

Assessment

The assessment had three questions. Candidates were required to answer one question.

Commentary

Few candidates were able to make connections between the two religious or spiritual traditions. This was required to gain Achievement with Excellence. Of those who could make the connections, many were neither comprehensive nor perceptive.

Some candidate responses included minimal use of specific evidence, e.g., scripture references, specific examples, etc.

Some candidates relayed a pre-prepared extended response which did not address the chosen question. A number wrote about ritual instead of belief; this may have been because they prepared for a response on ritual and not narrative.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- provided a relevant example or context of a characteristic of two religious or spiritual traditions by describing the characteristic and its meaning in basic detail
- had an imbalance in information between the two religious or spiritual traditions; they may have described the characteristic in detail, but failed to describe the meaning sufficiently or in depth.
- produced responses that did not fully explain the characteristic, even though they stated the meaning and had some application
- responded with minimal evidence for characteristic description.

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

- explained an application of a characteristic of two religious or spiritual traditions using relevant evidence; their explanation gave some detail of both the meaning and application in both the religious or spiritual traditions
- produced responses with some minor inaccuracies, lack of specific detail, or in-depth reasons for meaning
- gave connections between two religious or spiritual traditions, but failed to develop the application with relevant evidence; some candidates attained a low Merit instead of a high Merit because there was an imbalance in relevant information for both religious or spiritual traditions; although application and connections were stated in both the religious or spiritual traditions, there were inaccuracies in the description and meaning relayed.

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

- examined the connections between the characteristic and its application found in two religious or spiritual traditions, using relevant evidence
- investigated both similarities and differences
- relayed specific evidence, but fell short of a high Excellence as perceptive conclusions and comprehensive information were not present; some candidates showed comprehensive understanding of the characteristic of two religious or spiritual traditions and were able to make connections and conclusions that were perceptive.
- wrote about the characteristic and were able to support statements or conclusions, with specific evidence that was relevant.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- provided insufficient relevant detail of a characteristic found in two religious or spiritual traditions
- gave some detail of a characteristic of only one religion or spiritual tradition; the second was not mentioned
- had intrusive inaccuracies of one or both religious or spiritual traditions; some candidate responses had no mention of the meaning of the characteristic being addressed by the question
- did not understand what was meant by narrative, material expression, and beliefs (as opposed to rituals).

Achievement standard 91919: Demonstrate understanding of a religious or spiritual community's perspective on an issue

Assessment

The assessment had three questions, each based on a different context. Candidates were asked to produce a report on one of these questions, based on their chosen context.

Commentary

For Question 1, there seemed to be a lack of understanding of the question for many candidates. This question was the least popular to answer.

In Question 2, unlike in the other two questions, the stance for the question was already given in the question. This was the most popular question to answer, with more than half of all candidates choosing it.

For Question 3, many candidates missed the requirement of the question and answered it about climate change. Some candidates wrote social science responses that lacked any links to religious or spiritual perspectives; these responses were not successful. This question was answered by about a quarter of the cohort.

Scaffolding and / or writing guides seemed to be used by some schools to help candidates write their answer. This was not always helpful to them in producing their report.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- gave a description of the principles and links to perspectives
- identified, or alluded to, a religious or spiritual community's perspective on their chosen issue
- identified, or alluded to, principles behind a religious or spiritual community's perspective on their chosen issue.

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

- provided reasons that informed the principles
- used suitable evidence to support their reasons, e.g., scripture, official teachings, groups, and people of authority from the religious or spiritual community
- applied directly, the reasons for how the principles inform the religious or spiritual community's perspective on the chosen issue
- identified clear ideas and made good links to principles, but at times lacked sufficient depth of detail to reach Excellence.

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

- could draw a range of suitable conclusions that placed the principles within a valid wider social context
- gave appropriate conclusions related to the scenario being addressed
- used suitable evidence to support or illustrate the wider social contexts
- gave detailed discussion around religious or spiritual principles, with examples of how these helped to form the religious community's perspective.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not adequately identify a religious or spiritual community
 - were unable to adequately identify principles
 - did not identify the scenario they were responding to
 - attempted to fit a pre-prepared response or a scaffold to the question
 - were unable to describe more than one (if any) religious or spiritual principle.
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