

2025 NCEA Assessment Report

Subject:	Business Studies
Level:	2
Achievement standard(s):	90843, 90844, 90845

General commentary

Candidates who held a thorough understanding of their own case studies performed particularly well. High-achieving candidates applied their case study directly to the questions asked. Candidates with a range of business case studies came across as more prepared in their responses.

It is critical that candidates refer to the business name and its operations within their response. Generic responses led to vagueness and a lack of understanding of the question.

Candidates would benefit from linking business terminology and concepts to the impact on the business – for example, the impact of a business investing in new technology on the expenses, sales, and profits of that business. Candidates who understood these specific links tended to achieve highly.

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

Achievement standard 90843: Demonstrate understanding of the internal operations of a large business.

Assessment

The assessment consisted of one question split into four parts. Candidates were required to respond to all parts. As per the 2025 Assessment Specifications, a business context was provided for the examination. Where applicable, candidates could use a large business they had studied to answer any part of the question, if they did not choose to use the business context provided in the examination. There was one part of the question where candidates were expected to refer to an actual business they had studied.

The assessment covered the following business knowledge areas and concepts:

- The difference between policies and procedures, the importance of implementing policies and procedures, and how this could impact a business.
- Advantages and disadvantages of leadership styles, and how this might have an impact on employee motivation, brand reputation, and maintaining standards.
- Why financial reports aid managers in their decision-making, causes of unfavourable variances and how a business could correct these to ensure profitability.
- Advantages and disadvantages of operating at capacity, how a disadvantage could negatively impact the business, and the importance of efficiency to maintain competitiveness and profitability.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- showed a limited or surface-level understanding of the case study
- used a case study minimally, with few details
- mentioned business concepts with weak or unclear connections to business impacts
- explained knowledge with partial, vague, or descriptive only responses.

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

- showed a general understanding of the business/case study
- applied the case study to the question well
- referred to business terminology with some accuracy
- partially explained links to impacts
- responded to all parts of the question with variable detail or clarity.

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

- demonstrated a thorough understanding of their chosen business/case study
- applied the case study directly and consistently to all required parts of the question
- used specific business names, operations, and details
- integrated business terminology and concepts accurately, with clear links to business impacts
- showed clear, logical reasoning when explaining how concepts affect business
- responded fully to all parts of the assessment.

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

- provided generic responses
- did not identify the business name or context
- applied terminology incorrectly
- did not address all parts of the question.

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

Assessment

The assessment consisted of one question split into four parts. Candidates were required to respond to all parts. As per the 2025 Assessment Specifications, a business context was provided for the examination. Where applicable, candidates were able to use a large business they had studied to answer any part of the question, if they did not choose to use the business context provided in the examination.

The assessment covered the following business knowledge areas and concepts:

- positive and negative impacts of new technology on a business
- why businesses comply with laws about the management of resources and how this compliance has an impact on a business and its business relationships with stakeholder groups

- methods of industrial action that may be taken by employees and how management can respond to these actions
- benefits, challenges, and examples of how businesses demonstrating rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga to meet society's expectations.

Commentary

Nearly all candidates appropriately chose a 'large business' that had 20 or more employees and/or had a significant national or regional significance. It is clear that Air New Zealand and Fonterra have been studied in depth by many schools.

There were a number of candidates who explained the negative impact of not complying with laws, as opposed to the negative impact of complying with laws. Some candidates identified the industrial action, but did not explain the action, which limited their responses. Nearly all candidates explained a cost or challenge that a business might face when demonstrating rangatiratanga or kaitiakitanga, but many found it more difficult to provide specific examples, using their own business case studies.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- explained the 'what' and gave reasons – for example, they identified and explained a method and/or business action
- 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 – for example, candidates understood a potential challenge or cost a business might face when demonstrating rangatiratanga or kaitiakitanga to meet society's expectations
- answered one part of a question, but not the subsequent second part required for Merit.

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

- were specific and deliberate about including a business in their answer, and provided linked examples from the case study information or from their own chosen business
- demonstrated business knowledge and included appropriate business terminology and/or Māori business concepts
- explained the impact and/or consequences by stating the 'what' and the 'why', and linked the impact of how this would affect the business, in particularly when addressing the impacts of a business investing in new technology
- did not use new information to support their reasons when justifying whether complying with laws about the management of resources improves a business relationship with stakeholders/justifying whether the benefit of a business demonstrating rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga outweighs the cost involved.

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

- integrated the relevant business knowledge to answer the question and applied it specifically to the business being discussed
- provided new information to further support their explanations from earlier parts of the question
- explained two impacts on a business when it complies with laws about the management of resources, and justified whether complying with these laws improves the business's relationships with two different stakeholders

- explained two examples of how a business demonstrates rangatiratanga or kaitiakitanga to meet society's expectations, and justified whether the benefit of a business demonstrating these concepts outweighs the costs involved.

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

- stated 'what' the answer is without expanding on reason(s) 'why' that is the case or creating further links
- provided brief or partially completed answers that showed little understanding of the business concepts and impacts being asked, in particular when explaining the impact of investing in new technology
- identified a business action or method, but did not explain it
- used an international business or the case study business provided in part (d) of the question, as opposed to using a large business operating in New Zealand.

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

Assessment

The assessment was one question split into four parts; candidates were required to respond to all parts. As per the 2025 Assessment Specifications, a business context was provided for the assessment, and candidates were expected to respond to this and the additional resource material provided.

Candidates were required to explore the critical problems or issues presented, and their causes and effects, and apply their business knowledge to provide a range of possible solutions and recommendations for the problems or issues presented.

This assessment covered the following critical problems and issues that could threaten the ability of a business to uphold its tikanga and continue in operation:

- factors that influence the entry of competitors into the market, how the emergence of new competitors could impact a business' sales and profitability, and strategies to respond to this emergence of new competitors
- the reasons for, and consequences of, offering performance-based bonuses that could lead to unethical practices by employees, and management solutions to avoid such practices.

Commentary

Candidates who performed well in this standard referenced the resource material thoroughly, and combined this material with their own business knowledge when providing solutions to the issues presented. Candidates who answered all parts of the question achieved well and showed application of their business knowledge to the context provided.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- explained the 'what' and provided reasons when discussing causes, impacts, or solutions, and when discussing threats and opportunities arising from the emergence of new competitors, and the response to performance-based pay leading to unethical practices by employees

- provided valid solutions to respond to the threat of the emergence new competitors
- provided valid solutions that management could implement to avoid unethical practices
- referred to the given context in their responses
- stated some business knowledge, terminology, and concepts where relevant.

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

- provided an in-depth response to the threat of the emergence of new competitors AND provided in-depth solutions to address this threat
- provided a detailed response as to how using performance-based pay may lead to unethical practices by employees impacting business brand reputation, AND provided solutions that management could implement to avoid these practices
- provided varied and insightful answers to each question, in order to give as much evidence as possible
- included correct business terminology and showed sound business knowledge in their answers.

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

- provided comprehensive explanations in their response to the threat of the emergence of new competitors, AND in-depth solutions to address the issue, AND justified the best solution
- provided comprehensive explanations as to how unethical practices of employees could impact the brand reputation of the business, AND provided solutions that management could implement to avoid these practices, AND justified the most effective solution that would uphold the business' tikanga
- referred to the given context when applying information from the resource material
- integrated correct business terminology and showed sound business knowledge in their answers.

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

- provided limited or no responses
- used little or inappropriate business terminology
- incorrectly interpreted or did not refer to the provided resource material in their responses
- did not provide causes, impacts, or solutions when referring to the emergence of new competitors
- did not provide causes, impacts, or solutions when referring to unethical practices.