

## 2025 NCEA Assessment Report

<b>Subject:</b>	Psychology
<b>Level:</b>	3
<b>Achievement standard(s):</b>	91876

### Report on individual achievement standard(s)

#### **Achievement standard 91876: Analyse a significant issue in psychological practice**

##### Assessment

The assessment consisted of a main task divided into sub-parts, all based on three case studies provided in the resource booklet.

##### Commentary

In general, candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of a significant issue in psychological practice. Successful responses addressed all components of the three tasks and effectively explained how the issue was evident in both the selected case study and psychological practice.

Responses that focused solely on description of the significant issue were limited; stronger responses analysed how the issue impacted the validity of psychological practice. For example, discussion of the extent to which findings from animal research can be generalised to human behaviour, or how gender or cultural bias affects research outcomes and / or psychological practice for specific groups (e.g. indigenous communities or women), allowed for deeper analysis.

Thoughtful selection and evaluation of psychological evidence (e.g. theories, studies) supported analysis of the significant issue. Responses that relied on familiar research (e.g. Zimbardo, Asch, Milgram) without evaluation were limited. For example, references to Zimbardo's (1971) study often noted the use of only male participants but did not consider the implications for validity or generalisability. In contrast, Kohlberg's (1958) research allowed for more effective analysis when evaluated in relation to research methodology and Gilligan's (1982) critique of his conclusions about gender differences in moral reasoning.

Candidates may consider incorporating more gender-diverse perspectives (e.g. Cameron & Stinson, 2019) to demonstrate a more contemporary and inclusive understanding of gender bias. Māori perspectives, such as Kaupapa Māori research (e.g. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's work) and Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā, can also support a more localised analysis of cultural bias.

Candidates were encouraged to structure responses clearly using paragraphs, prioritise analysis over description, and avoid unnecessary repetition, particularly when recounting details from the selected case study.

##### Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- explained how a significant issue was evident in their selected case study and psychological practice
- accurately defined and applied subject-specific terminology (e.g. validity, universalism, alpha bias, beta bias) to the case study and psychological practice
- included general and / or vague descriptions of psychological evidence (e.g. studies, theories), which tended to lack the depth of analysis required for higher grades.

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

- explained, in detail, how a significant issue was evident in their selected case study and psychological practice, accurately using subject-specific terminology throughout their response. Analysis of the case study tended to show insight and detail
- thoughtfully selected and analysed at least two examples of psychological evidence (e.g. studies, theories), with an explanation of how the issue is demonstrated. Additional commentary or evidence may have been included as counterarguments (e.g. contrasting Western and Indigenous approaches to mental health practice)
- attempted to discuss solutions to address the issue, although these were often described with limited depth or detail.

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

- provided a comprehensive, well-integrated analysis, clearly explaining how a significant issue is evident in the selected case study and psychological practice, while consistently and accurately using subject-specific terminology.
- thoughtfully selected and analysed at least two examples of psychological evidence (e.g. studies, theories), with detailed discussion of how the issue is demonstrated. Additional commentary or evidence was sometimes included as counterarguments (e.g. contrasting Western and Indigenous approaches to mental health practice)
- discussed at least two distinct, realistic, and specific solutions to address the issue in psychological practice, with explicit links to psychological concepts, research and / or theory; at least one solution was clearly linked to the selected case study
- may have considered the limitations and / or potential consequences of the proposed solutions.

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

- did not clearly or accurately define the significant issue (e.g. gender bias) demonstrated in the selected case study
- demonstrated limited understanding of subject-specific terminology or applied terms incorrectly
- made little or no reference to the case study; responses may have directly quoted information without further explanation or analysis
- made little or no reference to how the issue is demonstrated in psychological practice.