

2025 NCEA Assessment Report

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

General commentary

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

Successful candidates were able to craft a response to their choice of question or issue that demonstrated their understanding within two different religious or spiritual traditions or communities.

Candidates who were able to explain carefully selected ideas with detail performed better than those who provided many ideas without adequate depth.

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

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

Assessment

The assessment consisted of three questions. Candidates were required to answer one question by referring to two religious or spiritual traditions.

Commentary

Successful candidates were able to show understanding and answer all parts of the selected question.

Candidates generally performed better when they clearly answered the question and were succinct in their response. Excessive length did not equate to higher quality and often obscured the key evidence needed for higher grades.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- identified and described at least one characteristic within one or two religious or spiritual traditions
- provided a basic explanation of the meaning of the characteristic within a tradition, often briefly and with limited depth
- included examples of the characteristic, though these were frequently named rather than explained
- demonstrated either description or application reasonably well, but not both
- lacked sufficient evidence (such as specific terms, beliefs, or references) and were often unbalanced between the two traditions

- described characteristics without explaining how they were applied within the traditions.

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

- explained an application of the characteristic within two religious or spiritual traditions, usually with supporting detail
- demonstrated a clearer understanding than Achievement-level responses, though the balance between traditions was sometimes uneven
- used examples to show how the characteristic operated in practice, but often stopped at explanation
- compared the two religions rather than examining the characteristics themselves
- did not link the application of the characteristic back to foundational beliefs, or explore wider personal or societal implications.

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

- met all Merit requirements, clearly explaining the application with relevant and well-selected evidence
- examined connections between belief, characteristic, and application, demonstrating a perceptive understanding of both traditions
- explicitly linked foundational beliefs, characteristics, and practice, showing how beliefs shaped application
- discussed wider personal or societal implications of the characteristic
- wrote succinctly and purposefully, selecting evidence judiciously rather than including excessive description.

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

- failed to meet basic requirements by writing about only one religious or spiritual tradition
- confused characteristics, particularly social organisation versus organisational structure, or substituted ritual practices where social action or organisation was required
- named examples without explaining their meaning, application, or relevance to the characteristic
- focused heavily on one tradition, with only token or irrelevant reference to the second
- provided lengthy but unfocused responses containing irrelevant material that did not address the characteristic or question requirements.

Achievement standard 91919: Demonstrate understanding of perspectives of different religious or spiritual communities on an issue

Assessment

The examination requires candidates to respond to a task, using relevant evidence from the resources provided, as well as their own knowledge of their studied religious or spiritual community.

Commentary

Some candidates only referred to the resources given in the examination. This was not sufficient to meet the requirements of the standard. In addition to utilising information from the provided resource, candidates need to be prepared to describe perspectives of a studied religious or spiritual community in relation to one of the issues identified in the 2025 Assessment Specifications.

Successful candidates were able to use their own knowledge about a religious or spiritual community, together with key information from the resources provided, and apply these to the issue they had selected.

Candidates' responses were stronger when they explained ideas clearly and in more detail, as opposed to listing ideas.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- identified and described the perspective of a religious or spiritual community on either the cost of living crisis or climate refugees, using information from the resource booklet
- applied their own knowledge of a different religious or spiritual community to identify and describe that community's perspective on the same issue
- provided relevant examples in their descriptions, often including quotes from relevant sources.

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

- explained the principles behind the perspectives of different religious or spiritual communities on the issue.

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

- discussed in depth how the principles informed the perspectives of different religious or spiritual communities on the issue, with reference to the wider social context.

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

- only wrote about one religious community
- interpreted the information provided in the resource booklet successfully, but did not identify or describe the perspective of a religious or spiritual community they had studied in class
- did not write about each religious community's response to an issue.