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**Student assessment during COVID-19**

NZQA is helping schools to develop effective plans for assessment and NCEA qualifications for students affected by COVID-19.

We will support your efforts to manage students’ learning programmes and meet assessment requirements, considering the disruptions they are experiencing.

Our focus is to support all schools to provide students with a fair opportunity to complete assessments that may have been disrupted by Covid-19 in 2021.

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| **Options available**  The flexibility of the NCEA qualification enables a range of options.  Students can be assessed against fewer standards than planned for in a normal school year, and still meet the requirements for NCEA.  NZQA can provide schools with advice and guidance on programme planning.  This includes reducing the assessment load without compromising curriculum and programme integrity, or the students’ ability to gain qualifications.  NZQA will liaise with schools directly about pending Managing National Assessment reviews for 2021. | **Internal**  For students in self-isolation or at home for a period of time, internal standards can be assessed using remote assessment conditions.  A simplified process is available for teachers to collect evidence for internal assessment.  Teachers can use a template to record that they have sighted evidence of achievement for both unit and achievement standards for the purpose of awarding grades.  This will save valuable teaching and learning time by reducing the need for formal assessment. | **External**  Schools are required to use the Unexpected Event Grade process to report results as a back-up in cases where a student cannot sit examinations.  The process is based on the collection of evidence of student achievement from class work, tests or other preparation for external assessment.  Schools can use the same template approach to collect evidence for external achievement standards as for internal standards. This could provide an alternative to practice examinations. |
| **Communications and support**  NZQA School Relationship Managers are maintaining regular communication and contact with schools. This allows NZQA to provide personalised support and timely response for school personnel.  Guidance and templates for collecting evidence are available for all teachers through the school’s NZQA secure login, and subject pages. We will provide additional support to assist schools with entries, results, transferring students, and other data submission issues. | | |

**Remote Assessment of Standards - Credible Assessment Practice**

Schools can continue assessing students against standards and reporting results, providing they maintain credible assessment practices. Reported results must be valid, authentic and verifiable.

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| **Validity**  Schools must collect sufficient, valid and standard-specific evidence in the remote environment. This could include evidence that is naturally occurring in the teaching and learning process, and/or in written, digital, photographic, audio-visual and portfolio formats  Schools must continue to apply policies for resubmissions, further assessment opportunities, appeals and breaches of the assessment rules.  Performance criteria in a standard could be achieved at different times of the year. | **Authenticity**  In the remote environment authenticity of student work can be easily compromised, therefore:   * Schools can only assess and report results using their provider code for students enrolled with them. A student cannot subsequently be enrolled for the sole purpose of assessment. * Teachers’ knowledge of their students is a fundamental tool for maintaining authenticity in the remote environment. * Existing Memoranda of Understanding or subcontracting arrangements may continue, including the service level agreement with Te Kura. * The assessment opportunity must be part of a coherent programme of learning and assessment and not a one-off event. This allows teachers to professionally judge when students are ready to be assessed. * Your school should have authenticity strategies for assessment in place, including the use of digital tools. | **Verification**  Internal moderation of student assessment activities and work should continue.  This can include:   * Witnessing actual physical or digital evidence * Checking a record showing that the teacher has seen or heard sufficient evidence using the ideas below.   These are sufficient for future external moderation purposes.  Some ideas are to:   * Create a tracking system, such as a spreadsheet, where you can record the evidence gathered against the criteria for the standard. * Ensure you are familiar with the evidence requirements of the standard and check benchmark and NZQA exemplars. |
| **Reporting results**  If a student has an adequate assessment opportunity, a result must be reported. Where possible, schools should report results through their School Management System or use the web entry facility on the NZQA website. | | |
| **Communication**  Teachers, students and whānau need clear and accurate information to support remote assessment practice. Please ensure everyone is aware of authenticity requirements, deadline expectations, and evidence that can collected. | | |

**Evidence Gathering:**

**Templates for Internal and External Assessment after an Unexpected Event**

Templates to help you record evidence of achievement for internally and externally assessed standards are available through the subject pages of the NZQA website.

NZQA has developed these templates to record evidence of student achievement when more formal assessment has not been feasible. The templates can be used to establish a grade for learner achievement at the achievement criteria or element level. Their use is optional and may be adapted by teachers to better suit their needs.

Evidence may be sourced from a range of formal and informal assessment types, including evidence from the learning process, prior learning, naturally occurring evidence and teacher professional judgement.

The collection and collation of evidence is not required but may be useful if students leave your school. The template and a portfolio of evidence could accompany them to their new school.

**Frequently asked questions**

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| **Can teachers rely on just professional judgement when awarding a grade for a standard?** | No. There must be standard-specific evidence, but formal assessment does not have to take place and all other sources of evidence, partial evidence or similar evidence can be considered. |
| **Does the performance need to be repeated, if required by the standard?** | Teachers must be confident that in their professional judgement, sufficient evidence supports their observation/s that the student has met the requirements of the standard. |
| **Do I need to assess each explanatory note or performance criteria?** | No, as long as you have confidence, based on the evidence gathered at the achievement criteria or element level, that the standard has been met. |
| **Can I gather standard-specific evidence of achievement from work undertaken across a range of other standards?** | Yes, if it meets the criteria for the standard being assessed, you may gather evidence from any valid and authentic work completed by the student. So, for example, if students have collected evidence for another assessment in another course, you may use the standard-specific evidence gathered from that course about a student’s ability to write a hypothesis and begin your assessment by providing them with a hypothesis already framed for them. |
| **Do I need to complete a template for every student?** | No, but you need to track that you have seen the evidence for every student. It may be more practical to do this on a spreadsheet or a mark book. |
| **Can these templates be used for remote assessment opportunities?** | Yes. The templates can be used to record evidence that is naturally occurring as part of teaching and learning or from assessment activities. |
| **How do we manage standards with a practical or performance requirement?** | Refer to the remote learning matrices on the subject pages of NZQA’s website. |