



The following report gives feedback to assist assessors with general issues and trends that have been identified during external moderation of the internally assessed standards in 2024. It also provides further insights from moderation material viewed throughout the year and outlines the Assessor Support available for Dance.

Insights

91936: Compose a dance sequence in response to a brief

Performance overview:

This standard involves composing a dance sequence that responds to a brief. At this level of the curriculum, composition should demonstrate the ability to communicate ideas clearly through the selection and development of dance movements and purposeful variation of the dance elements in ways that are relevant, and which enhance the creative communication of the ideas. For example, using contrasting body shapes and levels and varying groupings and formations to help show the ideas as appropriate. In 2024, evidence of cohesion was often seen with a well-developed motif used creatively and purposefully throughout the work.

Students had greater success with demonstrating the requirements of the standard when the brief they were responding to had clear links to ideas that could be successfully explored and communicated through movement. Using a visual pattern, such as a tapa cloth or a kōwhaiwhai pattern, often allowed for clear responses to that brief. Another successful brief was about communicating ideas of ‘meeting and parting’. Focus on the communication of one succinct idea often proved to be more attainable for Level 1 students than trying to communicate many ideas within a 45 second sequence.

Equitable assessment practices were seen in moderation when the supporting evidence of the Statement of Intention was provided in written, oral, and/or teacher conferencing. This allowed second language speakers and reluctant writers (for example) to be able to verbalise or communicate what their intended choreographic intention was in multiple successful ways.

Practices that need strengthening:

The Statement of Intention must be submitted with the evidence for this standard in order for moderators to be able to accurately ascertain whether the criteria of the standard have been met. These are not assessed, but provide the context for assessment to occur. A judgement around whether ideas have been communicated clearly can only be made if the ideas are known to the moderator and the assessor.

It is important that the criteria of this new standard are understood. Communication of ideas is a key criterion of the standard. How to successfully use and vary dance movements and incorporate dance elements to help communicate ideas is a crucial aspect that students will need to have knowledge of to have success with this standard.

To reach Excellence, clear communication of ideas is required. This means the idea is communicated consistently throughout the sequence with movements that have been specifically developed to link to the idea. Transitions and elements need to be creatively varied to enhance the choreography and support ideas.

Excellence also requires the composition to be inventive. This might be seen in inventive movement, inventive combinations of movement, inventive ordering of movements, or the application of the dance elements in inventive ways (e.g. unexpected body parts, variation in proximity and groupings, contrasting use of energy qualities) which work together to communicate ideas clearly.

For the higher levels of this standard, focusing on the idea, selecting elements and movements to communicate the idea, developing and varying movements using selected dance elements to communicate or abstract the idea, and editing of selected movement is expected.

91937: Perform dance sequences

Performance overview:

This standard involves students performing two dance sequences demonstrating control and fluency. The use of performance energy to express the purpose is also a crucial aspect of this standard.

In 2024, students who performed work that had been specifically taught for this standard tended to have more opportunity to succeed at higher levels. Comparatively, students who instead performed work they had choreographed themselves did not have as much opportunity to focus on the performance aspects, as they were more focused on the choreography.

When understanding of the key criteria of this standard was evident (i.e. students had been taught and understood what the purpose of the sequence was, and what clarity and fluency looked like for that specific sequence), students performed at a higher standard.

Sequences that were focused, purposeful, and not too long in length allowed students to more readily demonstrate and sustain the required criteria for success.

Practices that need strengthening:

Group performance work is an appropriate context for this standard. However, it is important that enough information is provided for the moderator to confidently identify the student in both sequences. Submitting clearly labelled screenshots, use of arrows on the video footage, as well as clear descriptions and timecodes are helpful ways to identify students. It is also useful to know if the information is referring to the right or left of the 'screen/audience', or if it is stage right or left (i.e. from the dancer's point of view).

A short purpose statement must be included for each sequence submitted for moderation. In some cases, this might already be included in task materials. This is not an assessed component, but will support assessor judgement and moderation. This statement should identify the purpose of the sequence and may be submitted by the student, the assessor/teacher, or choreographer. This is needed to confirm if the purpose of the sequences has been supported, expressed, or embodied as per the standard criteria.

The statement must describe the reasons for the performance and not just be a choreographic intention, i.e. not just explanations of what the dance was choreographed about, but rather the reasons why it was performed. This might have been to express the choreographic intention, but there may be other more relevant purposes. For example, to socialise, to entertain, to compete, to share cultural traditions, to show understanding of a style and its technique, etc. This purpose must be explicitly taught to the students for them to

have the best possible opportunity to demonstrate support for, and expression of, that purpose.

In 2024, it was noticed there can be a significant difference in quality and accuracy between a student interpretation of the purpose and one provided in the task by the assessor or choreographer. An accurate purpose statement that is clear and succinct, and which accurately matches what the students perform, allows them more opportunity to show the purpose. These purpose statements are an essential part of this standard, and consideration must be given to how these are best constructed to support students' work.

A further point of consideration for this standard is that to meet the criteria to achieve, two sequences must show that the student is able to present each sequence as required by the choreography. This means the movements must be performed with some sense of completion and commitment and are not suggested or indicated. Focus and support for the purpose of each sequence must also be evident. If this is only seen for one sequence, then the criteria of the standard will not have been met.

91588: Produce a dance to realise a concept

Performance overview:

To meet this standard, individual students are required to produce a dance that realises a concept using complex choreographic principles. This involves choreographing and presenting a dance supported by relevant and available production technologies. The result should be overall cohesion, i.e. design aspects working together with choreographic choices to communicate the ideas of the dance.

In 2024, tasks that were specific, detailed and related to themes that could be interpreted through movement more readily allowed students to achieve success. Excellence level work typically used a concise movement vocabulary where movement ideas were explored in depth, e.g. through the use of purposeful repetition and development of movement using devices such as motif and variation. This also helped ensure all movement looked like it belonged to the same dance, contributing to the overall choreographic cohesion.

Other successful ways cohesion was achieved in the choreography was using complementary movements and shapes throughout the dance, as well as thoughtful and creative use of phrasing and effective use of space, partnering and groupings. Using non-unison, contrasting unison and varying groupings helped develop movement beyond large group exact unison, which further enhanced the communication of the concept.

Communicating one idea clearly was often more successful than trying to fully realise many ideas within a 3-minute work. Ordering movement by introducing the main idea/concept then reinforcing and extrapolating from the main idea allowed students more opportunity to reach the higher grade levels of this standard than using a narrative structure. Broad intentions were more difficult to clearly communicate in movement.

Practices that need strengthening:

If only snippets of Excellence criteria are seen in the work, e.g. a few unusual and engaging movement sequences, it is not enough to award Excellence at Level 3. Differences in quality within the work are likely to mean the work is not cohesive, which is the essential criteria of Excellence for this standard.

It was noticed that some students appeared to have submitted collaborative work for 91588. This standard is not intended to be a collaborative piece of work. Each student must show

evidence that they have selected, applied and reflected on choreographic principles, processes and design choices, and made informed and final choices about the work. As with all NCEA standards, unless the Conditions of Assessment state students can work collaboratively (as for 91589), then it is expected that students will individually provide the evidence for this standard.

Careful consideration must be given to the topics and issues that students choose to explore for their choreography. It is vital to consider the importance of using positive contexts. Clear guidance should be given to students who are considering using potentially 'dark themes' or inappropriate material. While the need for self-expression is not disputed, the mental and physical wellbeing of students in their learning and assessment should be a significant consideration in programmes. Teacher discretion as to whether the topic is suitable for a dance should be used, and intended audiences' perspectives also need to be considered.

91592: Perform a repertoire of contrasting dances

Performance overview:

This standard assesses sustained performance skills over time and the ability to hold the movement of a three-dance repertoire and reproduce it as required for different purposes, audiences, venues, etc. Successful task design and material for this standard reflects this intention, and clearly indicates to students the occasions the dances in the repertoire will be performed, e.g. dance showcase over three nights, school production, assemblies, Polyfest events. It is not appropriate for this standard to be awarded based on only one performance of each dance.

Practices that need strengthening:

For moderation purposes, one recording of each of the three dances must be submitted. However, it is not necessary to send video evidence of multiple performance opportunities – this should instead be clear in the task materials.

It is important that students are clearly identified in each of the three dances, for moderation purposes. This is especially important in group dances where information on clothing, appearance, features, positioning on stage or a combination of these may assist the moderator to accurately confirm grades. Students on left/right sides of the stage should be further described, i.e. clarify the dancer's position from the perspective of viewer or performer. Time codes can also help locate the student and their work within the performance.

Assessor Support

NZQA offers online support for teachers as assessors of NZC achievement standards. These include:

- Exemplars of student work for most standards*
- National Moderator Reports*
- Online learning modules (generic and subject-specific)**
- Clarifications for some standards*
- Assessor Practice Tool for many standards**
- Webcasts*

*hosted on the NZC Subject pages on the NZQA website.

**hosted on Pūtake, NZQA's learning management system. Accessed via Education Sector Login.

We also may provide a speaker to present at national conferences on requests from national subject associations. At the regional or local level, we may be able to provide online support.

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