



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 2023. It also provides further insights from moderation material viewed throughout the year and outlines the Assessor Support available for Drama.

91515: Select and use complex performance skills associated with a drama form or period

This standard involves selecting and applying complex performance skills associated with a theatre form or period.

Evidence for the 'select' component includes an explanation of the use of the performance skill, and can be provided in written or verbal forms and/or via teacher conferencing. Evidence that met the standard included the description of specific performance skills that are integral to the theatre form and are visible in performance.

Examples of features that translate to visible complex performance skills:

Theatre of the Absurd

Performance features relate clearly to Existential themes. These can be exemplified by meaningless routine and repetition and pointless activity. Language includes long ineffectual pauses or distortion and breakdown into gibberish.

Elizabethan Theatre

This historical form is clearly linked to performance on a traditional thrust stage, so performance skills associated with a presentational style of acting can be selected. For example, playing to all sides of the audience and the galleries with exaggerated and stylised gestures. Use of heavily metred language such as iambic pentameter and other language devices are used as clues to motivation and subtext.

Physical Theatre

The performance feature 'ensemble movement' requires a selection of complex performance skills such as unison timing and contact work. The feature of 'balances' requires a selection of complex performance skills such as strength, stamina and lifting and carrying. Physical performance can be seen to extend or replace conventional naturalistic dialogue or staging.

In practice, it appears that the 91515 Achievement Standard has become confused with 91517 and 91512, where emphasis on effective performance overwhelms the key focus of showing period theatre skills and finding appropriate textual links to display them. The prime purpose of the 91515 standard is to provide opportunities for showing an understanding of theatre history.

Combining Assessment of 91515 and 91513:

Evidence seen in moderation that met the requirements of both standards embodied features integral to the theatre form and demonstrated the use of performance conventions of the drama form or period throughout the devised drama. For example, when physical or epic theatre forms were chosen to frame the devising work, performance skills associated with physical or epic theatre characteristics were prominent in the overall style of the dramas and not inserted 'now and again'.

Epic theatre proves an effective context for integrating 91515 with standard 91513 when performance skills are deliberately chosen to incite societal transformation. The devised drama is embedded with deliberate performance skills aimed towards creating a disconnect between the audience and emotional engagement. In practical application, content devised for standard 91513 which includes a distinct purpose for social change has demonstrated to be a suitable framework for assessing both standards effectively.

When combining standards, the individual statement of dramatic context for 91513 needs to also provide evidence of the selection of complex performance skills indicative of the drama form or period used by the student themselves, not other members of the group. This evidence can be provided in written or verbal forms and/or via teacher conferencing.

91512: Interpret scripted text to integrate drama techniques in performance

This standard involves interpreting an extract from a larger play to integrate drama techniques in performance. The extract is interpreted in relation to the play as a whole and reflects the character's actions, attitudes and behaviours throughout the play.

When extracts were carefully chosen to provide opportunities to integrate movement and space techniques, resulting performance evidence was purposeful and dexterous. Scripted texts with New Zealand and the Pacific contexts were culturally sustaining for Māori and Pacific students.

Equitable assessment practices were seen in moderation when supporting evidence for Explanatory Note 7 in the standard was provided via written, oral and/or teacher conferencing. For example, culturally diverse, neurodiverse and reluctant writers were provided an opportunity to verbalise intentions and their analysis of the motivations of the character/s and interpretation (performance choices).

Statements of intentions need to be coherent and consistent with the 'play as a whole'. Choices for techniques need to be appropriate, for example, crisp clear delivery of lines to capture the witty wordplay in works of Oscar Wilde or using the southern style of speech for Tennessee Williams's American realism. Opportunities for the integration of space and movement need to be found in all scripted extracts to enhance the planned dramatic effect and communication of meaning.

Thorough text analysis will assist with creation of clear objectives for the character. Performance evidence will show the thoughts of the character through motivated dialogue and movement. Making clear connections between the text and the character's thoughts and intention will assist with the playing of emotional truth. Investing belief in the world of the play

means physical interactions are made with the other characters in the scene that are closely tied to situation and environment.

Assessor Support:

Online

NZQA's learning management system (Pūtake) offers 150+ easy to access courses, materials and products. These are designed to support teachers, as assessors, to improve their assessment of NCEA standards.

Online, subject-specific or generic, bite-sized learning modules and short courses are now available to complement the traditional face-to-face workshops that NZQA offers. These online courses can be accessed using your Education Sector Logon.

Subject-specific course/workshops available for Drama include:

- 91513: Statement of Intention and Dramatic Concept
- 91513: The Devising Process
- 91513: Unpacking 'credible, coherent and effective'

Online Making Assessor Judgements workshops are also available throughout the year. These workshops are structured to guide teachers to improve their understanding of each grade level by examining several full samples of student work. The following standards are available for enrolment in 2024:

- 91220: Script a scene suitable for live performance
- 91519: Script a drama suitable for live performance
- 91516: Demonstrate understanding of the work of a drama or theatre theorist or practitioner

Feedback from teachers for these workshops indicates that more than 74% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the content in the module was beneficial:

"Although I was a bit sceptical that this was going to provide me with better understanding of the standard (and marking it), I found I've picked up more certainty about making judgements about the work my students might produce. I'm also more secure about guiding them through the selection of their topic and setting it up so that they are able to complete a successful investigation."

Exemplars of student evidence for all standards at each level of achievement are available on the NZQA subject page for Drama.

NZQA will continue to provide generic modules and workshops designed to improve general assessment practice. The following modules and workshops will be available in 2024:

- Assessment Approaches, an online workshop exploring different methods of assessment
- Culturally Responsive Assessment
- Assessment Guidance – Reviewing Your Practice
- Tāku Reo, Tāku Mahi – My voice, My work, a guide to managing authenticity
- Why Less is More, a guide to reducing volumes of student evidence
- Integrated Assessment
- Modes of Assessment
- Alternative Assessment

- Acknowledging Sources

“This was great! I liked that I could choose from different scenarios, see how sources are used and the way the student answered the question.”

“Reassuring and very thorough. Easy to use/follow.”

We will also continue to offer the Transforming Assessment Praxis programme, an online workshop relevant to all subjects which helps assessors learn about re-contextualising assessment resources and collecting evidence in different ways, in order to better meet the needs of students.

Check the NCEA subject pages on the NZQA website regularly, as more online modules, workshops and courses will be added throughout 2024.

Assessor Practice Tool

The Assessor Practice Tool (APT) will be used to support assessors with the new NCEA standards from 2024 onwards. The purpose of the APT is to allow assessors to practice making assessment judgements and immediately receive feedback on their judgements from a moderation panel. The APT will initially have material for some existing Level 3 standards, with moderated samples for the new Level 1 NCEA standard subjects being added as material becomes available. Material for the new Level 2 and Level 3 standards will be added over time, and all material for the old NCEA standards will be archived.

Material is currently available for:

- 91512: Interpret scripted text to integrate drama techniques in performance

Workshops and Presentations

The Best Practice Workshops offered by Assessment and Moderation continue to be viewed by the sector as significantly contributing to improved assessor practice:

“I thought the workshop was very clear and helpful, there were a lot of varied examples of ākonga work discussed and opportunity for participants to discuss and ask questions.”

We offer several options of online workshops and presentations for events to support assessors with the assessment of internally assessed standards. These can be subject-specific, or general assessment support, and tailored to the audience. Virtual presentation slots, online workshops or webinars can be requested to provide targeted support to local, regional or national audiences.

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