



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 History.

Insights

92024: Engage with a variety of primary sources in a historical context

Performance overview:

This standard requires students to engage with primary sources in a historical context. This involves selecting a variety of sources, establishing the relevance of the source to the focus question, and commenting on the strengths and limitations.

A significant number of students successfully made use of the source packs provided by the New Zealand History Teachers' Association. When using these packs, students selected 5-6 sources from a collection that contained a range of quality primary sources. These packs appeared to provide an appropriate level of support and a helpful starting point for students to demonstrate the skills required by the standard.

Having a clearly defined and simple focus question was beneficial when establishing the relevance, or identifying the main ideas of the source, in relation to the focus question.

Some examples include:

- What were the consequences of the Birmingham campaign?
- What were the experiences of women on the home front in New Zealand during WWII?

The Excellence criteria requiring students to make connections between the main ideas of the sources was often successfully demonstrated. This evidence was usually addressed as a source annotation that corroborated shared or differing ideas across the sources, or as a separate summary paragraph (or table). Both methods were equally effective.

The connections made must be between the main ideas. Annotations that make a connection between the type or nature of the source (e.g. both sources are journal entries), or between a shared author or creator of the source (e.g. two sources that had the same photographer), do not address the requirement of the standard.

Practices that need strengthening:

When commenting on the strengths of individual primary sources, annotations must go beyond describing the source type, what can be seen in the source, or the information it contains. It must also be a comment distinct from those that establish the relevance of the source to the focus question.

When 'strengths' is used interchangeably with the words 'useful' or 'usefulness', the annotations are more likely to reflect the type of evidence required when establishing the relevance of the source. When the strength annotation began with "*A strength of this source*

is that it is useful in answering my focus question...”, it seldom demonstrated the separate skill required by this criterion.

The table below provides examples of the type of comment students could make in their strength annotations. This may be helpful in determining whether the strength annotation reflects the requirements of the standard.

| Valid strengths | Strength comments to avoid |
|--|--|
| A comment on the perspective captured in the source | Usefulness of the source in answering the focus question |
| A unique insight provided by the source | A reliability comment based on the secondary source that holds the primary source |
| A comment regarding shared ideas, facts and sentiments in several of the selected sources | A comment about the effectiveness of the source at the time in achieving its desired purpose |
| A specific comment (using detail from the chosen source) about the strength/benefit of the source type | A general comment about the strength/benefits of the source type |
| A comment about how the purpose of the source improves the source’s reliability | |
| A comment about the credentials of the author or creator of the source, and how this is a strength | |

At Achieved, Merit and Excellence, there is no requirement for each source to have a strength annotation. It is possible to gain Achieved without a strength annotation, provided several valid limitations have been identified. For Merit and Excellence, there need to be frequent instances of explained strengths attributed to individual sources in the collection.

When reflecting on the strengths and limitations of the sources across the collection, the comments need to address the selected sources ‘as a whole’. Limitations of the collection may include, for example, making a judgement about the elements of the focus question that have not been fully addressed by the sources, or a persistent bias across all the sources.

While a strength of the collection might consider the multiple perspectives captured, the thoroughness of the ‘answer’ to the focus question, or the credibility and reliability of the sources.

92025: Demonstrate understanding of the significance of a historical context

Performance overview:

To achieve this standard, students must demonstrate the ways in which their chosen context is historically significant. To do this, they need to select an aspect(s) of significance and discuss how this aspect(s) is illustrated in the context.

Students were most successful in meeting this standard when the evidence was clearly shaped around the aspect(s) of significance, with 2-3 appropriate examples from the historical context directly showcasing how this aspect can be seen. By centring the response

around the aspect of significance, a descriptive narrative of the event, place or person was avoided.

When one or two aspects of significance were thoughtfully and deliberately chosen in relation to the context (rather than, for example, trying to cover all those listed in Explanatory Note 4 despite some only having a loose connection to the context being explored), students were most successful in providing the depth and nature of the evidence needed for Merit and Excellence.

Students are not limited to the suggested aspects of significance listed in Explanatory Note 4. There were several successful models of significance used. These include, but are not limited to, Christine Counsell's 5Rs, Partington's Model, and Phillip's GREAT model.

Practices that need strengthening:

While students do need to clearly and explicitly identify the aspect of significance, preferably frequently across the evidence, they do not need to define this aspect. Their understanding of the aspect will be evident through the discussion and examples they use from the historical context to illustrate it.

For Excellence, the aspects of significance need to be 'applied'. Acknowledging the changing nature of significance is one possible way in which students may demonstrate a "depth of understanding of a historical context".

Further ways students could demonstrate their depth of understanding have also been captured in the Excellence exemplar on the NZQA website and the Assessor Practice Tool examples on Pūtake, where students have applied aspects of significance by considering:

- how different groups may have experienced 'impact' differently,
- how the significance of the event is placed within a wider historical context,
- how some individuals/groups may have different perspectives on the significance of a person/event/place.

This list is not exhaustive and depends on the selected context and aspects of significance. The depth of understanding is assessed against what would typically be expected at curriculum level 6.

When demonstrating the significance of a historical person, care must be taken to avoid a biographical narrative of the individual's actions and experiences. However, at times these details can often be included to illustrate an aspect of significance, such as 'resulting in change' or 'profundity'.

If the selected historical context is a place of significance, the evidence must be more than a description of how the place was used over time. While a discussion of its use might be relevant, this would need to clearly and explicitly link to an aspect of significance. When the aspect(s) aligns well with the significance of the place chosen, the discussion was often more convincing, and as a result the higher grades became more accessible.

For example, when looking at the significance of Quail Island, the chosen aspects of significance may be 'impact' and 'revealing'. However, if Gallipoli was the chosen context, then the aspects of 'tuakiri' and 'collective maumaharatanga' may be more effective in establishing its significance.

Encouraging students to draft a bullet-point response, where they carefully consider what content and examples from the context they can use to demonstrate the aspect of significance, is a helpful practice in helping to elicit the evidence required by the standard.

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.

Please contact workshops@nzqa.govt.nz for more information or to lodge a request for support.

To give feedback on this report click on [this link](#).