



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 Music.

Insights

91948: Use music skills in a music style

Performance overview:

To achieve the standard, students need to identify and apply music skills consistent with a music style. In recreating the music style, students must evidence the use of aural skills.

Moderated evidence has demonstrated a wide variety of student work, a great deal of which has shown individual student development and application of their listening, digital music, physical/practical, and theoretical skills through a range of music styles. Overall, there has been an even split in assessing listening skills through Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) recreations and instrumental playbacks. A few arrangements, and evidence of conducting and transcribing, have also been submitted.

Some of the more effective evidence seen has been from ākonga completing Activity A: Waiata Styles. Overall, arrangements of modern waiata in a kapa haka style demonstrate the application of highly developed listening, physical, and theoretical skills.

Success for students often depends on the music chosen for recreation. For example, when the assessor has created or sourced playback tracks for students that they have not heard before and/or cannot find readily online, then students' listening and musical skills are authentically developed.

Practices that need strengthening:

As required in the Conditions of Assessment, “students must submit a written or spoken description of the skills they have developed, used, and combined in the project, and the musical and stylistic decisions they have made. A spoken description would be recorded for moderation purposes”.

Playback evidence

Continue to encourage students in their written or spoken descriptions to name the music style they are recreating and unpack it, e.g. “*The music I am recreating is the 12-bar blues, which I found out through listening to the chord pattern several times which repeats in a 12-bar loop...*”, etc. Students then need to pinpoint which music skills they have applied during the recreation, e.g. “*I used listening skills and keyboard skills to work out the chords, which are D, G and A7. I then added the melody, using syncopation and a laid-back feel in the style of the original.*”

DAW evidence

Ideally, students would utilise their listening skills to complete the task rather than using internet sites. If they cannot work out the original sound/instrument they can always use the

one they think is closest in timbre and unpack why they made their track choices in their description.

Best assessment practice has often been demonstrated when assessors give students tracks that they have either created or edited themselves.

Include screenshots of DAW tracks for each student's moderation submission alongside their descriptions. Overall, student descriptions need more detail for the assessor/moderator to understand the process of how they produced their recreation in the final MP3 format heard by assessors. Unpacking the music style and musical details (key, BPM, form, etc.) together with production techniques (EQ, reverb, etc.) is expected in each student's description.

As assessors are now more familiar with the MoE assessment activities, consider adapting or designing new tasks to develop and extend music skills appropriate to course and programme design.

91949: Demonstrate music performance skills

Performance overview:

To achieve the standard, students need to:

- apply stage presentation skills appropriate to a music performance context
- apply appropriate technical and musicianship skills in a music performance.

There is a marked difference in assessing the performance standard from previous years. While overall musicality is assessed, there is a separate bullet point for stage presentation skills to be applied/evident. The 'stage' can be in the classroom – however, make sure there is space between the performer and audience for the music to be 'intentionally performed' (Explanatory Note 3).

Practices that need strengthening:

With stage presentation skills being a focus of the standard, performers need to demonstrate a connection with the audience from the beginning of the performance to their exit from the stage.

Endeavour to give students opportunities to practice these skills throughout the year in front of various audiences, from small peer groups to lunchtime gigs, etc. Encourage performers to announce their name, the piece/song/waiata, a little something about the music and/or the group they are a member of. At the end, some acknowledgement of the audience is appropriate to complete an intentional performance.

Students can perform as many times as practical, but only one performance, either solo or group, will be assessed and/or submitted for external moderation.

91425: Research a music topic

Performance overview:

To achieve the standard, students need to process evidence from a range of sources to present their own valid conclusions. A range of sources is typically between 10-12 internet sites, which could include interviews and/or musical recordings.

The research process is clearly laid out in Explanatory Note 3 of the standard, including the need to record sources of evidence. A bibliography, referencing any quoted citations, must

be included with all research submissions. Encourage students to maintain a research log for authentication purposes and to outline when generative AI has been accessed within the final presentation.

Surveys have been seen more in recent moderation, together with statistical analysis on topics such as the musical listening habits of teenagers. These can assist students in demonstrating a 'range' of sources. However, they should only be used if they add significantly to the research topic.

Practices that need strengthening:

Moderation submissions securing Merit and/or Excellence criteria demonstrate a clearly defined area of research together with research question(s) which narrow the focus of the investigation. This allows for critical thinking and detailed conclusions. An example of an area of research could be "*The influence and importance of music within the context of a video game*", and the focused research questions might include:

1. *How does music within a video game immerse the player?*
2. *How does music affect overall performance of the player?*

Research presentations continue to be largely in written form, the majority of which are essays. Essay lengths are generally between 1500-2000 words, which is appropriate for students to present detailed findings and perceptive conclusions. Encouraging students to complete oral presentations or evidence via other assessment modes allows for student agency and equity considerations to be acknowledged.

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.

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