



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 Religious Studies.

## Insights

### **91916: Demonstrate understanding of the development of a community that shares religious or spiritual beliefs**

#### **Performance overview:**

This standard requires students to demonstrate an understanding of the development of a community that shares religious or spiritual beliefs.

Evidence that met the standard identified and described a specific community. The best quality student work identified and described who made up the community, where they were located, and key features of the community such as charisms, key works of the community, leaders, or influential people within the community.

For Achieved, the standard also requires a description of two or more significant factors that have had an impact on the development of the community, with examples. Evidence that met this criterion described significant factors that directly affected the development of the chosen community, such as natural disasters that meant the community needed to move, the introduction of a new leader which changed the way the community functioned, or the introduction of technology which meant the community was able to reach different demographics.

To achieve Merit, students explained how each of the significant factors affected the development of the community, with supporting examples. This included explaining how each significant factor (such as the geographic location, the practices, or people who were involved in the community) impacted on the community and how they impacted on the growth or decline of the community, with examples.

To achieve Excellence, students examined why each significant factor developed the chosen community over time. Evidence that met this criterion described a significant period of development of the community or a focus on how the community has developed to the present day. Examples that were provided developed the examination of how a significant factor caused the community to develop and change over time into its current form/state. These examples were woven throughout the text to support statements made by the students.

#### **Practices that need strengthening:**

The most common issue seen was the lack of clarity and description of the chosen community. In some instances, only the beliefs of the community were described, or a description was given of society at the time rather than the religious or spiritual community. The community should be clearly identified, and a description of the specific community is required. This could include who makes up the community, where they are or have been located, when they were present, and what that particular community believes in.

The significant factors need to have a focus on the development of the community. A historical recall of the community is not a requirement of the standard.

For Merit, the explanation of how the significant factors developed the community needs to focus on how each factor developed the religious or spiritual community, rather than how they developed the society in general at the time.

For Excellence, an explanation of how the community developed over time needs to be clear regarding what time period they are looking at, e.g. over time from the founding of the community to today, or the founding of the community to the end of the community's era.

### **91917: Demonstrate understanding of how a significant narrative relates to a religious or spiritual tradition**

#### **Performance overview:**

The standard requires students to demonstrate understanding of how a significant narrative relates to a religious or spiritual tradition.

Evidence that aligned with the requirements of the standard clearly described the origin or context of a chosen narrative and successfully described more than one key message found within the narrative. These descriptions included the meaning of the key messages and what the author intended to communicate through the message. Students also provided relevant examples from within the narrative that reflected each key message.

To achieve Merit, students explained how more than one key message connected to a religious or spiritual tradition, with a clear understanding of the connection being demonstrated. This explanation was supported with at least one example for each key message, demonstrating its connection to the tradition through teachings, beliefs, or practices from within the chosen tradition.

To achieve Excellence, the discussion went further by examining how the key messages were applied within the identified tradition today. Evidence explored how members of the tradition lived out these messages and provided examples for each key message. Good practice was evident when examples illustrating the application of each message were drawn from within the tradition and seamlessly integrated into the discussion.

#### **Practices that need strengthening:**

Challenges arose when key messages were reduced to descriptions of particular stories or narratives from within a tradition. Descriptions of narratives and messages which overly focused on specific characters or events distracted from the overarching key message being communicated and made it more challenging for students to meet all the requirements of the standard. The criteria is able to be met when the chosen narrative and key message allow for a broad discussion of the messages and their intended meaning. Focus should remain on conveying the broader messages, rather than recounting details of a particular story.

For Merit, issues emerged when connection between the narrative and the tradition was not explicit. To successfully demonstrate the connection, evidence needs to identify core beliefs, practices, or values from within the tradition that the key messages exemplify. Relevant examples need to be used to support these explanations.

For Excellence, challenges arose when examples explaining the application of key messages did not originate from within the chosen tradition. Ensuring that all examples of application are drawn directly from the tradition will maintain alignment with the standard's requirements.

## 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](mailto:workshops@nzqa.govt.nz) for more information or to lodge a request for support.

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