NZQA Assessment Support Material

Unit standard	30508
Title	Write a short crafted text for a specified audience using resource material in English for an academic purpose

Level	3	**Credits**	6	**Version**	1

Assessor guidelines

Assessors need to be very familiar with the outcome being assessed by the unit standard. The outcomes, performance criteria and the guidance notes contain information, definitions, and requirements that are crucial when interpreting the standard and assessing learners against it.

CONDITIONS OF ASSESSMENT

This is an **open book assessment** that will take place over a timeframe set by the assessor.

For assessment against this standard:

- The academic purpose can be determined by the assessor or the candidate. It will involve answering a research that could involve comparing, contrasting, problem-solving, discussion, argument.

- The candidate must write a minimum of 500 words.

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- Candidates' writing competence must be assessed after they have been given the opportunity to edit and proofread their work. Drafting should be submitted to the teacher for general guidance only. General guidance is to direct a candidate back to given performance criteria e.g. particular aspects of grammar. It is not to identify individual errors of content, grammar, sequence, or discourse.

- Candidate's writing may contain inaccuracies in surface features, but these should not interfere with meaning.

- The assessor must be satisfied that the candidate can independently demonstrate competency against the unit standard.

Resource requirements

Resource documents used by the candidate:
- may be provided by the assessor;
- must be attached to the completed assessment;
- must be in English language;
- must be at a level of sufficient complexity to satisfy the requirements of this standard for example – course text book, introductory academic text, non-fiction book, journal article;
- should use vocabulary which is based on a text of an academic nature.

Context/setting

- Candidates should be assessed after they are familiar with the topic.
- It is recommended that assessment against this unit standard is conducted in conjunction with assessment against other Level 3 English for Academic Purposes unit standards. By linking with a reading standard on a similar topic and text type, (e.g. unit standard 30511, *Read and apply information in English for academic purposes*) candidates will become familiar with content, text structure, language features and specialised vocabulary.
- Assessment may occur in conjunction with study and assessment in other learning areas.

Notes for assessors

- The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) describes language proficiency at six levels. This unit standard is at CEFR level low B2. Teachers and assessors are encouraged to refer to these descriptors to gain a clearer understanding of the competencies required by these standards. A structured overview of all CEFR related scales can be found at http://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio/overview-of-cefr-related-scales.
- Although the level of the written text must meet the requirements of CEFR low B2, some vocabulary from a higher level that is relevant to the topic and context should be used, in order to meet the requirements of the standard.
- It is important that both assessors and candidates are familiar with the outcome, guidance information and performance criteria of the unit standard.
- The audience of the crafted text needs to be determined and made explicit.
- Candidates may use the model text in this document and the checklist to guide their writing and to ensure they meet all the performance criteria.
- This standard focuses on assessment of writing. It is acknowledged that a significant amount of reading is required, but the reading is not to be assessed for this unit standard.
- The assessment schedule is for assessors only and is not to be shared with candidates during the assessment process.

- Appropriate assessment conditions as per your organisation's guidelines must be adhered to, in order to ensure authenticity of candidates' evidence and to safeguard the validity of assessment.
- Refer to your organisation's policies before offering a resubmission or further assessment opportunities.

Assessment task

Candidates have been reading about digital learning and how education has changed and become increasingly reliant on computers. They will use relevant ideas from their reading to write an essay answering the following research question.

The academic purpose is to write an essay outlining cause and effect.

Research question

In recent years, learning has changed significantly, and classroom learning is no longer the only form of learning available. More and more students are learning using digital tools. What has caused this change? What are the possible effects now and in the future?

The audience

Candidates are writing the text for schools and educational institutions who are considering changing to a more digital learning environment.

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Assessment Schedule

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Title	Write a short crafted text for a specified audience using resource material in English for an academic purpose				
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PC	Evidence for achievement	Judgements for achievement
1.1 Writing addresses the topic in a manner appropriate to audience and academic purpose.	Writing follows a structure which includes introduction, paragraphs outlining causes and effects, and a conclusion. The introduction identifies the topic and outlines the purpose of the essay, e.g. *Learning is gradually changing from traditional classroom teaching to more digital approaches. /.../ This essay will explore some of the reasons for the change, and the possible consequences in the future.* This is followed by paragraphs outlining causes and effects, e.g. *Recent improvements in technology, such as the development of tablets, have made digital learning affordable for most people.* *A digital learning environment can have many positive effects, such as...* Writing ends with a conclusion that provides a summary of causes and effects and may also give suggestions e.g.	Writing is appropriate to the audience and academic purpose most of the time. Essay is structured in a way that clearly addresses the academic purpose most of the time.

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	Digital learning has developed over several years, and will continue to develop in the future. It has become popular because of the availability of technology and connectivity, and because of the modern population, which is globalised and mobile. Digital learning environments are convenient as students do not need to travel to class and can study at times that suit them. However, digital learning environments can also lead to increased isolation, which means that students may lose motivation. Schools that choose a digital environment need to find ways to keep students from becoming isolated. An awareness of audience is shown in style and content. Refer to examples above.	The tone and structure demonstrate awareness of the specified audience most of the time.
1.2 Ideas are developed and display a knowledge base to achieve the academic purpose.	Each body paragraph contains a relevant topic sentence e.g. *Many factors contributed to the increase in digital learning, but the most important one was the internet.* The topic sentence is developed. This may include: • Exemplification e.g. *Internet connections are now available in most parts of the world.* • Explanation e.g. This means that students anywhere… • Expansion e.g. *Further, by connection to the internet…*	The text demonstrates candidate's knowledge of the topic. Text demonstrates ability to develop ideas to meet the academic purpose.

1.3 Text structure has overall progression, paragraphing and some use of cohesive devices. These devices include but are not limited to – grammatical, lexical and referential.	Writing follows an appropriate structure with an introduction, followed by paragraphs that develop ideas logically and ends with a conclusion. Refer to PC 1.1 for examples.
	
	Cohesive devices may include:
	
	• Grammatical cohesive devices such as:
	  - connectives e.g. *However, In addition*
	  - conjunctions e.g. *because, and, so*
	  - substitution e.g. *Many factors contributed to the increase in digital learning, but the most important*
		The text demonstrates clear structure, with paragraphs in a logical progression.
		
		Ideas are related and linked with some grammatical, lexical and referential cohesive devices within and between paragraphs.

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	<u>*one* was the internet.</u>
	- ellipsis e.g. *students are connecting to classmates to complete tasks but [they] do not always…*
	• Lexical cohesive devices such as:
	  - synonyms e.g. *internet/online environment*
	  - antonyms e.g. *traditional classroom/modern environment*
	  - repetition e.g. *computer use, computers*
	  - collocation e.g. *digital learning, download information*
	  - word sets e.g. *digital tools, tablets, computers*
	
	• Referential cohesive devices such as:
	  - personal pronouns e.g. *they, it, them*
	  - demonstratives e.g. *these; the (definite article)*
	  - comparatives e.g. *better, less effective*	

1.4 Writing uses a formal style appropriate to the academic context. Formal style includes but is not limited to – lexical and grammatical features, and a variety of sentence structures.	Formal style may include: Lexical features such as: • academic vocabulary e.g. *consider, increased* • specialised vocabulary e.g. *digital platform, connectivity* • correct word choice and part of speech e.g. *learning environment, to learn new skills* Grammatical features such as: • verb forms e.g. *Online learning <u>gives</u> all students...(*active) ...*this isolation <u>is caused</u> by...* (passive), ...*digital learning environments <u>can</u> also lead to...* (modals) • the use of ellipsis and substitution to avoid • repetition e.g. *<u>this isolation</u> is caused by* • nominalisation e.g. <u>*Recent improvements in technology*</u> Formal tone such as: • objective language e.g. *A digital learning environment can have many positive effects*	The vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure and tone are formal and appropriate to the academic context most of the time. A variety of sentence structures is used.

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	• the use of hedging or imprecise language e.g. *Others suggest that face-to-face learning...* • formal language instead of slang or colloquial expressions e.g. *information (instead of 'info')* • the full form of words instead of contractions or abbreviations e.g. *online platforms cannot (instead of can't)* A variety of sentence structures such as: • simple sentences e.g. *Internet connections are now available in most areas of the world.* • compound sentences e.g. *Digital learning has developed over several years, and will continue to develop in the future.* • complex sentences e.g. *However, digital learning environments can also lead to increased isolation, which means that students may lose motivation.*	
1.5 Writing makes generally consistent use of appropriate lexical and grammatical forms throughout the text.	For examples of appropriate lexical forms, refer to PC 1.4. For examples of appropriate grammatical forms, refer to PC 1.4.	Lexical and grammatical forms are used correctly throughout the text.
1.6 Writing uses source material. This includes but is not limited to – direct quotation, paraphrasing, summary, and synthesis.	This includes: • quotation, e.g. *Lack of contact with the teacher can be "particularly detrimental" for students who struggle with motivation (Jacob, 2016).* • paraphrasing, e.g. *Mitra's experiment involved placing computers in remote parts of India without any instruction.* • summary, e.g. *Mitra (2007) suggests that children can teach themselves, without a teacher, using only technology.* • synthesis, e.g. *While Mitra (2007) believes technology*	Ideas are supported by source materials. All ideas taken from resource materials are clearly indicated, using an appropriate recognised method.

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	by itself is enough, Jacob (2016) suggests...	
1.7 Source material is acknowledged. This includes but is not limited to – in-text citation, and a reference list in accordance with a recognised format (e.g. APA).	This includes: • citation e.g. (Jacob, 2016). • reference list using APA or other recognised format.	Source material used is acknowledged within the text and in a reference list, and follows standard conventions.

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Model text on a parallel topic

Research question
Recent studies have shown that New Zealand school students have a lower rate of literacy/reading compared to other developed countries. What are the reasons for this? What are the possible consequences for this in the future?

1.1 Writing addresses the topic in a manner appropriate to audience and academic purpose.	A recent international study, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), shows that New Zealand children do not have good literacy skills and are behind children from other developed countries (Mullis et al., 2017). In fact, one quarter of all year five children have low or very low ability to read. In addition, the reading ability of children has gone down since the last survey in 2011. This essay will look at the causes of the decrease in literacy and what the consequences could be in the future for these children and the country.
1.6 Writing uses source material.	One possible reason for the poor result is the way schools teach and assess children. Massey University Professor Tom Nicholson, suggests that the schools need to teach children the sounds of letters, and not only teach them to read by looking at the whole word (Collins, 2017). Chris Hipkins, the education minister, thinks that it is the fault of the old government, who created a new way to assess children. Hipkins suggests these assessments were "too narrowly focused" so that children did not learn enough (Collins, 2017).
1.3 Text structure has overall progression, paragraphing and some use of cohesive devices. 1.2 Ideas are developed and display a knowledge base to achieve the academic purpose.	However, it is also possible that the real reason is not about the school, but about the family situation of the children. According to the PIRLS survey, a home environment with many books and with support from parents is important for good reading skills (Mullis et al., 2017). Other studies have found that social and economic background also affects children's achievement at school (Ferguson et al, 2008). Even though New Zealand is a developed country, there are big social and economic differences between children. Some children are from families that are poor or live in bad housing, which affects their health and education (Unicef, 2017). However, in the PIRLS survey, children from wealthy backgrounds had dropped the most since the last survey. One Auckland school teacher suggests that this result is caused by parents who are busy with their smartphones instead of talking to their children. Another cause might be that they are "time-poor parents perhaps not reading to their children at night" (Collins, 2017).
1.4 Writing uses a formal style appropriate to the academic context. 1.5 Writing makes generally consistent use of appropriate lexical and grammatical forms throughout the text.	Regardless of the reason, low reading ability in children can have serious consequences both for the children and for the country. When these children start secondary school, they will fall behind in all subjects if they are not good at reading. Low reading levels also mean they will not be able to continue to higher study and may become adults with low literacy. For adults, good literacy is "associated with higher earnings and increased chances of being in stable employment" (Tertiary Education Commission, 2010, p.5). On the other hand, low literacy can lead to poverty and poor parenting. This can mean that the next generation will also grow up with difficulties in reading (Tertiary Education Commission, 2010). If many people in the country grow up with low education, this will eventually affect the economy and development of New Zealand. Even though New Zealand is a highly developed country, many children are struggling with low literacy levels. This can lead to unemployment and other difficulties when these children grow up. It is important that something is

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1.7 Source material is acknowledged.	done to improve reading levels. The schools need to look at their teaching and assessment practices, and parents need to become more active in helping their children with their education. Most importantly, the government will need to ensure that children do not grow up in poverty. If this is not done, New Zealand as a country will suffer in the future. **References** Collins, S. (2017, December 5). Report reveals kiwi reading levels are lowest on record. *NZ Herald, Education.* Retrieved from http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11953667 Fergusson DM, Horwood LJ, Boden JM. (2008). The Transmission of Social Inequality: Examination of the Linkages Between Family Socioeconomic Status in Childhood and Educational Achievement in Young Adulthood. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility 26*, 277-295. Mullis, I.V.S., Martin, M.O., Foy, P., & Hooper, M. (2017). *PIRLS 2016 International results in reading*. TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, Lynch School of Education, Boston College and International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Tertiary Education Commission. (2010). *Getting results in literacy and numeracy.* Wellington. UNICEF Office of Research (2017). 'Building the Future: Children and the Sustainable Development Goals in Rich Countries', *Innocenti Report Card 14*, Innocenti, Florence: UNICEF Office of Research.

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