

English

SUBJECT EXPERT GROUP RESPONSE TO THE SECTOR

Thank you to those of you who took the time to respond to the questionnaire. We received 77 responses. We know that we are coming to the end of a particularly stressful year and we appreciate your helpful comments and suggestions for improvement. We had a lot of positive feedback, particularly where people could see how the standards offered flexibility in how students could engage in and demonstrate their learning.

Many of the comments indicated that there is a need for further support in the implementation of these new assessment materials. Things such as exemplars and sample teaching and learning programmes will be developed during the mini-pilot next year. Your feedback has also helped to identify areas where we can connect with NZATE and the Network of Expertise to develop professional learning and development and materials to further support teachers.

Five themes were identified in the feedback.

Theme One

Respondents asked for more clarity to understand the two internals.

What are language patterns? (AS 1.1)

Response

The Significant Learning that this standard assesses is the way in which language is rich and varied, adapts and changes, and is shaped by and for context.

Language patterns could be thought of as patterns that might be chosen deliberately in order to meet a specific purpose, such as the rhetorical conventions of a political speech. Language patterns could also be a particular instance of language use that occurs repeatedly during a given text or utterance. It may, for example, be an involuntary pattern that occurs among a particular social group, such as the repeated use of the filler 'like' in conversation. Although it is not deliberate, it is a pattern that has a particular function in that social group.

Does this include visual language patterns?

Response

Achievement Standard 1.1 looks at verbal language patterns (including oral) and not visual language by itself. Students will still be able to explore visual language within a Year 11 English programme. Texts studied for AS 1.2 and AS 1.4 can be written, visual or oral. It is also possible that a student could present their findings for 1.1 as part of a verbal/visual presentation.

How do we mark the verbal/visual presentation of response to text (AS1.2)?

Response

Currently English teachers make holistic judgements for achievement standards with more than one achievement criteria. We currently assess both the development of ideas and the use of language features in our writing standards and will use the same approach for the Verbal Visual presentation of Response to Text standard. The Ministry is working with NZQA to ensure that we give appropriate weighting to these criteria and will continue to support teachers as the standards are piloted and implemented.

Theme Two

Further clarification required on the assessment specifications and expectations of the two external assessments.

Response

NZQA will publish the assessment specifications for external assessments by November, so that schools that are piloting the new standards can prepare their teaching and learning programmes.

External assessment of writing

AS 1.3 is designed to support effective teaching of writing, including giving students regular and frequent opportunities to write.

Developing external assessments that are not time-bound examinations is a shift in current practice that will take some time to get well embedded in future practice. The Ministry and NZQA are working through a number of options, particularly for AS 1.3, which will be tested in the mini-pilot next year. We will continue to work together to ensure that we have an authentic, credible assessment process that gives learners the best chance to demonstrate their learning.

Theme Three

How will Mana Ōrite mo te Mātauranga Māori be supported?

Response

The new assessment products have been designed to ensure that NCEA Change 2 (Mana ōrite mo te Mātauranga Māori) is meaningfully embedded. These products explicitly describe this change in terms of Significant Learning within the Big Ideas framed by the English whakataukī in the New Zealand Curriculum. In the RAS, the Ministry places much importance on engagement with internal and external Māori experts into every stage of product development, beginning with the Learning Matrix, and including quality assurance and feedback points.

We have been encouraged by some of the conversations teachers are already having online about what this might look like in their planning and the Ministry is committed to ensuring that support and resources are in place.

Theme Four

Is the amount of work required from students equitable across the standards?

Response

In developing the assessment products, the SEG has considered the way in which students' work might fit into a teaching and learning programme. During the mini-pilot, the Ministry will work with teachers and test the student workload. This will be used to improve and calibrate the assessment for English, but also give us insights for other subjects still under development. English will also be included in the full pilot (of all Level 1 subjects) in 2022.

Theme Five

Further clarification of how the Achievement Criteria might be applied.

Response

Many responses were positive about the Achievement Criteria and Explanatory Notes. Others were uncertain about how the criteria will be applied.

We received a number of comments regarding the limited explanatory notes of the Achievement Standards, especially the lack of bullet points for the excellence criteria. In all new Achievement Standards, criteria will be based on 'step-ups' so that the criteria for Achieved also apply for Merit, and criteria for Achieved and Merit also apply to Excellence. Your feedback has identified areas where further clarification is needed, and the mini-pilot in 2021 will provide an opportunity to test and refine them further.