

Assessment Specifications

Literacy 2026

Published in October 2025

General information

Domain:	Core Generic > Work and Study Skills
Standards:	32403, 32405
Assessment method:	Common assessment activity (CAA)
Assessment medium:	Online digital examination, printed paper by exception
Period of assessment:	18–29 May 2026 (first assessment opportunity) OR 07–18 September 2026 (second assessment opportunity)

[Literacy subject page](#)

Information relating to all unit standards

All answers are to be written in English.

A “common assessment activity” (CAA) is developed and marked by NZQA and administered by a kura/school/tertiary provider in a single session on a date(s) they are to nominate during the period of assessment specified above.

The assessment is designed to be completed in 60 minutes by most learners, but schools may allow as much time as necessary for candidates to complete the assessment in one session.

Assessors of this standard should be familiar with the *New Zealand Curriculum*, Phase 3 (Year 8) and Phase 4 (Year 9) of the English Learning Area (equivalent to upper Level 4, lower Level 5 of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007)).

Further information about digital external assessment can be found on the NZQA website.

[Digital external assessment](#)

Conditions of assessment

Candidates must complete their assessment individually under teacher supervision, in accordance with the NCEA [Assessment and Examination Rules and Procedures](#).

Candidates are not permitted to access any resources other than those supplied in the assessment.

The use of generative AI, paraphrasing tools, or other tools that can automatically generate content, such as Grammarly, are not permitted to be used in any NCEA external assessments.

Specific information for individual unit standards

Standard:	32403
Title:	Demonstrate understanding of ideas and information in written texts
Version:	3
Number of credits:	5

Candidates will be required to respond to questions relating to a range of written texts of different types and varying lengths. The texts will relate to a range of experiences relevant to everyday life, such as employment opportunities, health and safety situations, media coverage, sports events, school or community events, and important individuals.

The questions may require matching, labelling, and multiple-choice responses. Questions may ask candidates to do any of the following:

- locate facts or information
- distinguish relevant from irrelevant information
- select appropriate vocabulary
- identify bias/misinformation/omission
- describe who, what, when, where, how
- make basic inferences and predictions
- recognise features of language and structure
- make accurate generalisations
- identify main ideas
- organise information
- identify the writer's purpose or point of view
- summarise information
- interpret information from text features
- make a recommendation based on information in the text
- distinguish fact from opinion
- compare or contrast texts.

Standard:	32405
Title:	Write texts to communicate ideas and information
Version:	4
Number of credits:	5

All answers are to be written in English.

Candidates will be required to produce two pieces of writing in response to stimulus material or prompts provided by NZQA. The two pieces will be of different text types, and at least one will be in a formal register. Text types may include (but are not limited to): letters, reports, articles, blog posts, profiles, descriptions, explanations, and opinions.

Candidates will also be required to respond to questions relating to written language conventions such as spelling, grammar, sentence construction, punctuation, and text organisation. These questions will require multiple-choice or short-answer responses.

Stimulus materials will include scenarios relating to a range of experiences relevant to everyday life, such as employment opportunities, health and safety situations, media coverage, sports events, school or community events, and important individuals or issues.
