



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 2025. It also provides further insights from moderation material viewed throughout the year and outlines the Assessor Support available for Dance. Please note this report does not introduce new criteria, change the requirements of the standard, or change what we expect from assessment.

Insights

91936: Compose a dance sequence in response to a brief

Performance overview:

This standard requires students to communicate ideas clearly through the selection and development of dance movements and purposeful variation of dance elements to enhance creative communication. For example, using complementary and/or contrasting body shapes and levels and varying groupings and formations to help show the ideas as appropriate.

In 2025, focus on one succinct idea often proved to be more attainable for Level 1 students than trying to communicate many ideas within a 45 second sequence. Students also had greater success meeting the requirements of the standard when the brief they were responding to had clear links to ideas that could be successfully explored and communicated through movement.

Kōwhaiwhai patterns can be a very successful brief for 91936. Successful use of these was seen when care had been taken to acknowledge the source of the kōwhaiwhai pattern and to engage deeply with the cultural knowledge and understanding that was inherent to the kōwhaiwhai.

Practices that need strengthening:

- The Statement of Intention must be submitted with moderation documents. These are not assessed, but provide the context for assessment to occur. A judgement around whether ideas have been communicated clearly can only be made if the ideas are known to the assessor and the moderator.
- For Excellence, the idea must be communicated consistently and clearly throughout the sequence, with movements that have been specifically developed to link to the idea.
- Excellence also requires the composition to be inventive. This could be inventive movement, inventive combinations of movement, inventive ordering of movements, or the application of the dance elements in inventive ways (e.g. unexpected body parts, variation in proximity and groupings, contrasting use of energy qualities) which work together to communicate ideas clearly.
- Uniquely Māori terms should be used with respect for their specific cultural meanings. For example, tūrangawaewae refers to a place where one belongs or has whakapapa connections, carrying reciprocal responsibilities. It should not be used loosely without sufficient cultural understanding. Other terms, such as kāinga waewae, kāinga tupu (the place where I grew up), or kāinga tūturu (original homeland) may be more appropriate depending on the context.

91937: Perform dance sequences

Performance overview:

This standard involves students performing two dance sequences demonstrating control and fluency. The use of performance energy to express the purpose of the sequences is also a crucial aspect of this standard.

When taught to understand the purpose of the sequence, and what clarity and fluency looked like for the specific sequence, students performed at a higher standard.

Sequences that were focused, purposeful, and not too long in length allowed students to more readily demonstrate and sustain the required criteria for success.

Practices that need strengthening:

- Assessment criteria must be present/evident across both sequences. For example, to achieve, two sequences must show the student is able to present each sequence as required by the choreography. Movements must be performed with a sense of completion and commitment and not be suggested or indicated. Focus and support for the purpose of each sequence must also be evident. If this is only seen for one sequence, then the standard has not been met.
- A short purpose statement must be included for each sequence submitted for moderation. This is not an assessed component, but supports assessor judgement and moderation. This statement should identify the purpose of the sequence and may be submitted by the student, the assessor/teacher, or the choreographer. This is needed to confirm if the purpose has been supported and expressed, as per the standard criteria.
- The statement is not a choreographic intention, i.e. not explanations of what the dance was choreographed about, but rather the reasons why it was performed (e.g. to socialise, to entertain, to compete, to share cultural traditions, to show understanding of a style and its technique, etc).

Identifying students in group work

Group work is common in Dance assessments, but evidence submitted for moderation must clearly identify each student. Moderators need sufficient information to visually identify the dancer for the required length of time.

In 2025, submitting clearly labelled screenshots, use of arrows on the video footage, and clear descriptions and timecodes were among helpful ways used to identify students. It is also useful to know if the information is referring to the right or left of the screen/audience or if it is stage right or left (i.e. from the dancer's point of view).

Digital Submissions

Most submissions provided cloud-based video links, which streamlined moderation. To avoid permission issues, please ensure links allow access to anyone with the URL.

Making judgements for Excellence

For Excellence, all indicators of the Excellence criteria must be evident, as outlined in the Explanatory Notes. This is of particular importance when assessing dance choreography standards. Where moderation grade changes occurred, these were often due to only some

of the Excellence criteria being met. In most cases, it was because the sample did not show sufficient communication of the central ideas in clear and cohesive ways.

The quality of evidence provided should reflect the curriculum level.

Assessing Choreography

Assessment and comments on performance aspects such as technique, clarity, control, and performance energy are not a requirement for choreography-based standards. Instead, assessment and teacher feedback comments should be based on the achievement criteria, such as use and variation of the dance elements and communication of ideas through chosen movement.

How the sequence is performed is not the basis for the awarding of grades for these standards.

Student well-being

When selecting choreography contexts, prioritize positive themes and provide guidance on sensitive topics. While the need for self-expression is not disputed, the mental and physical wellbeing of students in their learning and assessment should be a significant consideration in programmes. Potential audience sensitivities should also be considered when determining the appropriateness of themes.

Costuming should be appropriate for a school environment, and safe dance practices and techniques must be taught, especially the correct techniques for movements that may pose high injury risk on developing bodies, such as jumps or drops onto knees, toe rises, etc.

To give feedback on this report click on [this link](#).

Assessor Support

NZQA offers free 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.

Exemplars, National Moderator Reports, clarifications, and webcasts are hosted on the NZC Subject pages on the NZQA website.

[Subject Pages](#)

Online learning modules and the Assessor Practice Tool are hosted on Pūtake, NZQA's learning management system. You can access these through the Education Sector Logon.

[Log in to Pūtake](#)

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 assessorsupport@nzqa.govt.nz for more information or to lodge a request for support.