



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 Education for Sustainability. Please note this report does not introduce new criteria, change the requirements of the standard, or change what we expect from assessment.

Insights

91735: Evaluate measures that may be taken to sustain and/or improve a biophysical environment

Performance overview:

This standard requires that students research and/or conduct a practical inquiry in a chosen environment to analyse the relationship humans have with that environment, highlighting impacts on sustainability. They are also required to analyse and draw conclusions on what possible measures they believe would be most effective in addressing those sustainability issues.

Most students provided evidence from direct interaction with the chosen environment and thereby recorded useful primary data as well as relevant research. When they also applied a good working understanding of what sustainability implies, they successfully reported their evaluation of possible measures to improve sustainability. In some cases, research on a less accessible environment that was not visited was done in sufficient breadth and depth to provide the evidence to complete the standard.

Practices that need strengthening:

Problems arise if the first step of investigation is inadequate, and some students struggled to link the second and third parts of the work to a good understanding of the relevant features of the environment. Another issue is convincingly analysing and prioritising potential measures unless the concept of sustainability is understood to a level where it can be applied to the discussion.

Good practice included direct experiences of the biophysical environment and observation of the human activity, or use of more than one primary sources of information. Personal understandings of sustainability are clearly helpful in the better submissions to underpin higher levels of analysis.

90810: Undertake a personal action with reflection, that contributes to a sustainable future

Performance overview:

This standard requires students to plan and undertake a personal action that contributes in some way to a sustainable future. It involves choosing an issue to address and linking it to an aspect of sustainability, collecting data, reflection on the plan's effectiveness, and how the action contributed to at least one aspect of a sustainable future.

The four aspects of sustainability give a wide scope of contexts for this standard, and thus the range of assessment activities and student responses is wide. Identifying the aspect of sustainability being primarily addressed is an important step in building convincing evidence of meeting the standard. With clarity of that choice and an effort to develop the student's basic understanding of the sustainable future concept, many assessors have stimulated thoughtful planning, meaningful action, and good evidence of reflection on the plan's effectiveness.

Data gathering is an important step in an evidence-based approach to an issue, and where assessors supported thoughtfulness about this before it is undertaken, the data collection was more likely to be effective. The volume of data is less important than its relevance to the issue. Good practice has included simple counts, opinion surveys, behaviour diaries, and photos or video. Any of which can give a firm basis for the drawing of conclusions.

Practices that need strengthening:

In some cases, it is clear the choice of action has already been made for the students before the assessment started. This makes it difficult for them to develop their sense of agency and involvement. Even where the context is narrowed (for example by being based on an on-going school project) personal input is required.

Students could choose an aspect of a larger project (for example the choice of trees and mulch for an on-going school riparian planting project) and focus on an area they will personally perform their action in.

Poor outcomes on this assessment are often because insufficient time has been allocated to it. Each stage has separate requirements, from planning, to action, to reflection. In rich learning contexts, complications will arise, and while that requires readiness to modify the approach it also stimulates better reflection.

Investigation and planning could begin earlier in the year from when the action(s) are planned, so that ideas have time to develop. Check points and class discussions spread out in this way will underpin more meaningful reflection.

Higher levels of achievement on this standard were seen when the students were reflecting on their own attitudes and behaviours, specifically in relation to the sustainability issue they have chosen. Students could use a simple before and after attitude and behaviour questionnaire to help their responses meet Merit and above.

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.