



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

Insights

91932: Demonstrate understanding of the spatial distribution of a phenomenon and its impacts on place

Performance overview:

This standard requires students to describe the spatial distribution of a phenomenon, factors or processes that contribute to its distribution, and the impacts of the phenomenon on place.

The standard was able to be met when students identified the spatial distribution of the phenomenon by using terminology, such as 'peripheral' and 'discontinuous', and then described it accurately using geographic terminology relating to distribution and spatial patterns. The identification of the spatial distribution was developed to provide a description of the characteristics of the distribution. Where applicable, this included the concentration, any variations within the concentration, and the size/extent of the distribution.

The evidence describing factors or processes that contribute to the spatial distribution demonstrated understanding of the causal relationship with the distribution. Describing how the phenomenon is created is not required by the standard.

In relation to impacts, evidence which met the standard reflected an understanding of how changes to the features of a geographic area were attributable to the phenomenon. The analysis maintained a focus on the impacts, supported by relevant case study material reflecting the entirety of the chosen geographic area.

Practices that need strengthening

Further consideration could be given to:

- The quality of the description of the spatial distribution of the phenomenon.
- The selected geographic area.
- Impacts of the phenomenon reflecting the extent of the geographic area.

A clear and accurate description of the spatial distribution of the phenomenon is needed, as factors or processes need to be viewed as contributing to the distribution. Students need to focus on "why is this pattern occurring" and make explicit links between the factor or process and the distribution characteristics included in the description. Success with these aspects of the standard can be influenced by the selection of the 'place' or geographic area.

Consideration should be given to selecting a 'place' big enough to show a spatial pattern, but not so large as to complicate the contributing factors or processes. For example, the phenomenon of tropical cyclones in the South Pacific results in clearer evidence of understanding than a focus on the whole Pacific or a global scale. A larger scale tended to

complicate the distribution and contributing factors or processes and make achievement more challenging.

The evidence demonstrating the impacts of the phenomenon on place could be enhanced by focusing on the specific impacts and using case study examples to clearly illustrate them. Examples should reflect the entirety of the selected geographic area.

91933: Explore an environment using data

Performance overview:

This standard requires students to process, present, and understand data to explore, interpret, and analyse a chosen environment. Students should also consider how the data strengthened and limited their understanding of the environment and how additional data could improve that understanding.

Evidence that met the standard typically included a range of relevant data correctly presented by the student. Presented data including a map, graphs, and visuals (such as annotated photos or sketches) were interpreted to provide evidence for the findings. The quality and range of data presented, and the methods of presentation, significantly impacted the ability to explain the findings using the data and achieve higher grades.

The evidence clearly demonstrated an ability to interpret the findings to understand the environment. Where data sets were combined, students were able to explain findings rather than make assumptions or use learned geography knowledge. For example, data to support explanation included annotated photographs displayed with maps or graphs, or statistical maps.

Evidence that met the standard considered how useful the data was to understand the environment, rather than judging the quality of the data.

Practices that need strengthening:

Further consideration could be given to:

- The data available to students.
- Interpreting data to generate findings.
- Reviewing how the data influenced understanding of the environment.

Consideration should be given to ensuring that the collective range and quality of data is sufficient to enable explanation of the findings. Secondary data must be processed by students to create a new visual. For example, selecting data from a table to create a graph and photographs, or maps annotated to show features, processes, and data collection sites.

To describe and explain findings requires students to examine and interpret the data to gain understanding about the environment. The evidence for findings must be clearly based on the presented data. Secondary data such as geographic models can be annotated with environment specific evidence and used to support explanation of the findings. For example, photographs might show changes in vegetation, but an annotated altitudinal zonation model would support an explanation of why this occurs. Explaining temperature as part of a school's microclimate could draw on annotated photographs of areas of shade/sun, an annotated map showing the built environment such as concrete and fields, and a wind rose.

The review aspect could be clearer if the focus was on how understanding of the environment was strengthened and limited because of the data used. A focus on strengths and weaknesses of the data is not required.

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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.