



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

Insights

92008: Demonstrate understanding of hauora in a health-related context through the application of a model of health

Performance overview:

This standard requires students to demonstrate understanding of hauora in a health-related context through the application of a model of health. This involves describing (with supporting evidence) how hauora is affected by an activity, according to the parts of the model, and describing how effects interconnect.

Evidence that met the requirements of the standard used an activity with a wellbeing focus clearly grounded in a key area of learning (e.g. Mental Health education, Relationships and Sexuality education, or Food and Nutrition education) as the context for reflection. Descriptions of the activity's effects on wellbeing were framed using recognised and accepted holistic models of health and incorporated concepts and ideas relevant to a Key Area of Learning (KAoL). Context-specific examples from the activity were used as supporting evidence for these descriptions.

The focus of the descriptions was consistently 'self' or 'others' throughout the evidence. When this approach was taken, students were better able to demonstrate an understanding of the holistic nature of hauora and describe more succinctly and coherently the flow-on effects and interrelationships between aspects of wellbeing, as framed by the chosen model.

Practices that need strengthening:

Contexts for Assessment

To enable effects on wellbeing to be considered from a Health Education perspective, activities selected as contexts for assessment in Health Studies need to assess the concept of *hauora* in situations that are clearly and explicitly grounded in a KAoL, such as:

- Mental Health education (e.g. alcohol or other drugs)
- Relationships and Sexuality education (e.g. healthy relationships)
- Food and Nutrition education (e.g. healthy food choices).

Moderation showed that when a model of health was directly applied to an activity that had no obvious connection to a KAoL, or no explicit wellbeing purpose linked to a KAoL, the resulting evidence did not encompass specific concepts and ideas, nor did it reference skills learned that related to a KAoL. For example, in contexts involving food preparation, descriptions of effects tended to focus too heavily on simply linking the activity (cooking) to

each dimension of a model, rather than considering the effects of the prepared food and its social setting on wellbeing. Descriptions of effects made little reference to food and nutrition concepts, and ideas such as key nutrients, food safety, and accepted healthy eating models that could provide the additional depth and detail needed to avoid overly generalised statements about wellbeing not reflective of teaching and learning in Health Education.

In Mental Health education, a single activity is not always considered suitable as an assessment context. For example, a stress management activity on its own may not be sufficient. Effective strategies for managing stress often require a combination of stress-reduction activities. Where stress management is the focus of assessment, students should have the opportunity to reflect on a combination of stress-reducing actions that are personally relevant to them (or others).

While participating in a physical activity (e.g. Zumba) might be considered beneficial for stress relief, the primary focus of the assessment needs to be on managing mental health, not just the physical activity itself. To maintain the integrity of Health Studies and avoid overlapping with Physical Education (PE), physical activity contexts should be regarded as PE contexts and are not considered suitable for assessment in Health Studies.

Focus for reflection of effects on wellbeing

The standard requires that effects on wellbeing be described in relation to self (the student) or others (another individual or a group), and that students demonstrate an understanding of the concept of *hauora*. Descriptions must cover all aspects of wellbeing: mental and emotional, physical, social, and spiritual.

When descriptions of effects (and the chosen model) did not cover all aspects of wellbeing as required by Explanatory Note 3 of the standard, understanding of the concept of *hauora* could not be demonstrated.

When the focus for reflection was the student's own wellbeing, even if the evidence included flow-on effects for others in relation to different aspects of wellbeing, it was still required to show how the activity directly affected all aspects of the student's own wellbeing, as framed by the chosen model.

When the evidence did not focus on either 'self' or 'others', but instead moved between the two, it was difficult for students to apply the model holistically as required (that is, to describe effects and their interconnections as they specifically related to either 'self' or 'others'). Had the task instructions clearly directed students to focus on 'self' or 'others', this may have been avoided. Furthermore, taking this approach sets students up to achieve higher grades and helps make the evidence more coherent and succinct.

Excellence

For Excellence, a clear conclusion needs to be drawn in relation to the effects of the activity for short and long-term wellbeing. Regarding long-term wellbeing, conclusions need to show foresight and be realistic (credible). For example, in food and nutrition contexts the conclusion drawn could relate to the anticipated long-term impacts for wellbeing of the activity for 'self' or 'others', in reference to changes in behaviours and practices related to food choice and/or changes to attitudes and values which underpin food decisions.

However, where the activity was narrow in scope and duration, i.e. simply involving the preparation of a single meal or recipe as a one-off event, and explanations for long-term effects were predominantly focused on the activity's direct contribution to the prevention of complex lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and coronary heart diseases, this was

considered to be an unrealistic long-term effect of the activity.

92009: Demonstrate understanding of decision-making in a health-related situation

Performance overview:

This standard requires students to demonstrate understanding of decision-making in a health-related circumstance or dilemma. This involves describing factors relevant to the decision-making situation and the possible consequences, and proposing a decision in response to the situation (in relation to hauora) with reference to the factors and anticipated consequences.

The standard assesses understanding of factors and anticipated consequences as they relate to a circumstance or dilemma that affects wellbeing, where compromises to some aspects of wellbeing may need to be made to reach a decision. The factors and anticipated consequences for wellbeing are therefore central to the decision-making process and are expected to be the focus of the discussion. When the context for decision-making posed a clear circumstance or dilemma, students were able to determine the decision the situation required and identify factors relevant to the health-related situation.

When the context for decision-making posed a clear circumstance or dilemma, rather than simply a problem to be solved, students were better able to apply critical thinking to the broader attitudes, values, and beliefs (factors), as well as the consequences related to all aspects of wellbeing in the situation and decision. This enabled them to provide the quality of evidence needed to achieve higher grades.

When the circumstance or dilemma was sufficiently complex, students had a better opportunity to explore a range of factors (and anticipated consequences) and demonstrate their influence on wellbeing. For example, a food and nutrition scenario that captured family dynamics, time pressures, and dietary information better enabled students to show understanding of decision-making in a health-related situation. It provided more opportunities for complex thinking (needed for higher grades) compared to a narrowly focused scenario that only required a simple choice between recipes or food products, where effects could only be considered in relation to physical wellbeing.

When students placed the factors and their anticipated consequences for wellbeing at the forefront of the discussion and considered these in relation to the proposed options, they were more likely to achieve the standard.

Practices that need strengthening:

Use of standard decision-making templates

The standard requires thinking and consolidation of ideas that extend beyond the confines of a standard decision-making template to consider the health-enhancing purpose of the process. The use of a standard decision-making template on its own is inadequate for carrying out this process.

A decision-making template may be a useful preparatory tool. However, it should be used with caution, as it may steer students toward overly focusing on the options rather than the factors and consequences, limiting opportunities to achieve higher grades.

If a decision-making template is used as a preparatory activity, it should be clearly stated in the assessment materials that the template is included for this purpose and is not the assessable aspect.

There is no requirement in the standard for students to explore a range of health-enhancing options associated with putting a decision into action. Options for health enhancement are best explored in relation to factors and anticipated consequences, as this ensures that factors and consequences remain central to the discussion.

Context for Assessment

Explanatory Note 2 of the standard states: “A *health-related situation* refers to a circumstance or a dilemma that requires a decision which can affect hauora. It can be addressed through the application of a decision-making process.”

A dilemma requires a difficult choice to be made between two or more alternatives, each of which has undesirable or conflicting consequences for wellbeing. It often includes conflicting values, priorities, or pressures and may not be bound by specific timeframes. For example, a student wants to eat healthily but also wants to fit in with friends who regularly eat fast food. Choosing between social acceptance and personal health creates a dilemma.

A circumstance is similar to a dilemma, but is often more pressing or subject to time constraints. For example, a situation, event, moment that affects a person's wellbeing where the person can often influence the outcome by using decision-making skills to choose how they respond, and where the response might be immediate or delayed.

In Health Studies a health-related situation may include, but is not limited to:

- being bullied at school
- experiencing a breakup
- attending a party where alcohol or drugs are present
- navigating cultural food preferences that may not align with what's available or accepted at school
- navigating social events where there is no suitable food to eat for reasons related to culture/ethics/allergies
- navigating expectations of peers, coaches, parents, and teachers that may conflict with messages on social media (e.g. in relation to study, sports performance, dietary advice).

Moderation has shown that a health-related situation posing a dilemma for wellbeing provides students with a much better opportunity to achieve the standard than situations that simply present a problem to be addressed, where the influence of factors on wellbeing are often not direct or are less obvious. For example, problems or goals associated with lifestyle choices such as not eating enough vegetables or not getting enough exercise or sleep.

When the health-related situation was a problem to be solved or a goal to achieve, students were:

- More likely to overly focus on factors not directly connected to wellbeing, without showing how those factors influenced the decision in relation to wellbeing.
- Less likely to demonstrate complex thinking in relation to wellbeing. The decision often involved a simple choice between solutions (e.g. health promotion strategies), and the discussion of consequences of solutions for wellbeing was narrowly focused on improving just one aspect of wellbeing.
- Less able to evaluate factors and anticipated consequences to determine their significance for wellbeing – that is, their degree of influence and importance, as required for Merit – because the discussion was narrowly focused on how factors and consequences related to only one aspect of wellbeing.

- Less able to justify the decision in relation to wellbeing. For example, the chosen solution was more likely to be justified using factors indirectly linked to wellbeing, such as family income, cost of food, lack of time, knowledge and/or skills.

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.