

An Overview of the System for Skill Standards

Good practice in the development and implementation
of skill standards-based qualifications

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NZQA SUPPORT FOR THE GUIDES

NZQA supports ConCOVE Tūhura's approach in developing these guides to help standard setting bodies and end-users develop a deeper understanding of skill standards.

As the building blocks of vocational qualifications and micro-credentials, skill standards have huge potential to support consistent graduate outcomes and meet industry needs. We envisage that the toolkit approach to the good practice guides will be particularly useful to the target audiences, some of whom may be new to standards-based qualifications and programmes. – NZQA

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- Structural Detailing
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Their collective knowledge and experience have been invaluable in shaping this resource to support assessment practice in vocational education and training.

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CONTENTS

An introduction to this resource	4
Good practice toolkit	4
Focus and audience	4
How the wider context impacts qualifications development and implementation	6
New relationships	6
Collaborative potential	7
The 'why' and 'how' of good practice guidance	8
Principles over rules	8
Determining what good looks like	8
System roles and areas of focus	10
Qualifications development in SSBs	10
Approvals and listings with NZQA	11
Tertiary education providers and ITOs developing and delivering learning programmes	12
Developing programmes of learning	13
Delivering programmes of learning	14
Assessment of learning	15
Assuring the consistency of learning outcomes	16
References	17
Table 1 Sector input into the development of guidance	9
Table 2 The questions that drive SSB qualifications development	11
Table 3 The questions that drive NZQA's qualifications and standards approvals and listings	12
Table 4 The questions that drive development of programmes of learning	13
Table 5 The questions that drive programme delivery	14
Table 6 The questions that drive assessment practice	15
Table 7 The questions driving assurance of learning outcome consistency	17

AN INTRODUCTION TO THIS RESOURCE

Good practice toolkit

In late 2023, skill standards began replacing unit standards, becoming compulsory components, where they exist, of the programmes leading to New Zealand national qualifications.

This good practice guide is part of a toolkit that provides detailed guidance for those involved in each part of the process:

1. standard setting and qualifications development;
2. learning programme development;
3. learning programme delivery;
4. assessment of learning; and
5. moderation of outcomes.

The guides in the toolkit are:

1. A Background to the Emergence of Skill Standards
2. An Overview of the System
3. Standards and Qualifications Development
4. Programme Development and Delivery
5. Assessment and Consistency Measures
6. Industry Stakeholders and Advisory Work

The guides were developed with research and input from sector entities and teams. Each guide discusses the most challenging issues and sets out guiding principles, illustrated with practice interpretations. It is designed to help standard-setting bodies (SSBs) and tertiary education providers deepen their understanding of what skills standards should be and do in order to achieve the quality and consistency that will meet the needs of industry and learners.

Focus and audience

This guide provides an overview of the whole system for the development and implementation of skill standards-based qualifications, including how the system functions as a whole and what is involved for each distinct part.

The guide is for those working in vocational education who develop qualifications and who implement (deliver, assess and moderate) them in learning programmes. In other words, those who:

- develop qualifications and standards
- are industry representatives or stakeholders who are consulted (or want to be consulted) about standards, qualifications or learning programmes
- implement qualifications by developing and delivering learning programmes
- assess learning outcomes against standards
- assure the consistency of assessment outcomes (e.g. quality assurance or moderation)
- have an interest in the vocational education system.

Other guides in the toolkit provide detailed guidance on each part of the process and the principles that should guide the work. The guides also discuss particular challenges and issues in the work and provide examples of good practice.

HOW THE WIDER CONTEXT IMPACTS QUALIFICATIONS DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

New relationships

The way in which vocational learning and assessment is conceptualised and implemented in standards and qualifications has changed. In late 2023, skill standards began replacing unit standards, becoming compulsory building blocks and assessment mechanisms for all programmes of learning leading to national qualifications. The first skill standards began to be approved and listed in early 2024. Qualifications that are new for 2024 are, or will be, skill standards-based. Qualifications that have been, or are being, revised from 2024 onwards will over time become skill standards-based.

The changes and challenges arising from this are not only technical. They are relational. The wider context for skill standards-based qualifications development and implementation in programmes of learning was established through the Review of Vocational Education (RoVE) since 2019.¹ RoVE aimed to create national coherence across the vocational education system, improve the status of vocational education and increase interest in vocational education-based careers, strengthen industry voice, ensure learner outcomes meet industry needs, and better meet learner needs (particularly those typically underserved by the system). The arrangements established to embody these principles were:

- a national vocational education provider: Te Pūkenga, integrating 16 ITPs and 11 ITOs;
- a unified funding model; and
- Workforce Development Councils (WDCs), NZQA Māori Qualifications Services (MQS), NZQA National Qualifications Services (NQS), and the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop and set standards. Additionally, WDCs provide skills and workforce leadership; moderate assessments and endorse programmes in vocational education and training from Levels 1 to 6; and provide guidance to the TEC on funding for programmes.²

It is this broader context that makes the move to skill standards more significant than simply being an NZQA rule change. It changes the relationships between the functions of the system. Standard-setting bodies (SSBs) in the form of WDCs are now nationalised and no longer industry-owned. This removes the previous tendency for commercial imperatives and relationships to interfere with the professional contact implicit in the SSB-provider context.

Tertiary education providers are having their assessment outcomes moderated by a different SSB. It is no longer ITOs, which formerly set the standards, but now WDCs (as they now set the standards). WDCs, with a wider mandate than the former SSBs, now have a wider range of things to consider here. WDC moderators not only consider the provider's assessment outcomes but also the provider's development and delivery. That is, they consider not only how assessment outcomes are arrived at but how a provider goes about preparing learners for assessment against the skill standards.

So the relationship between WDCs and tertiary education providers is potentially more complex than it was previously. This factor and the aspect of compulsion in the use of skill standards by providers, along with the changes in design, mean that skill standards have significant potential to become a key driver in the unifying goals that underpinned RoVE.

Skill standards are well-positioned to support the principles of system and national coherence, clear learner outcomes (including qualification completion), stronger industry voice and programme consistency. Hence NZQA proposed skill standards to the Minister of Education in 2020 as “more holistic and less atomistic than unit standards, which do not always provide sufficient evidence that the learner can undertake the specific sequence of tasks and actions required in the workplace”.³

¹ See A Background to the Emergence of Skill Standards guide in this good practice series for a deeper discussion of the emergence of skill standards into a RoVE environment and the wider context of standards-based assessment in teaching and learning.

² At the time of writing, the Government had initiated consultation on proposed changes to the vocational education system. One proposal is that WDCs no longer exist from 2025 with standard-setting being done by Industry Training Boards – see the Background guide for more on the context. The other proposal is that WDCs are reconfigured from 2025 and some functions removed.

³ New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 'Aide-Memoire to the Minister of Education: Changes to the Vocational Qualifications System. CR20772', 24 June 2020.

Within this context, good practice in skill standards development can influence the rest of the system to help produce good learner outcomes with real-world value. That is, they can support the satisfaction of industry needs and workforce development (sustainability; future needs), and provide learners with current, credible and valued skills, career pathways and opportunities for social mobility. Good practice in skill standards implementation (programme development and delivery, and assessment) should very directly support learning (and teaching) that leads to good learner outcomes via consistency across assessment outcomes and satisfaction of industry needs.

Collaborative potential

The changed relationships open the door to the parts of the system working together even more, and differently, to achieve the quality and consistency in qualifications development and implementation that is crucial for the vocational education system. Industry, SSBs and education providers need a deep understanding of what skill standards should be and do. Providers, including programme and assessment designers, trainers and assessors, will need to know how to make the most of skill standards in qualifications, programme delivery, assessment and moderation in order to meet the needs of learners, particularly those typically underserved, and to meet workforce demands (and, ultimately, the needs of wider society and economy).

As a general principle, good practice for any part of the vocational education system should include fostering and maintaining good relationships, regular communication and information exchange with other parts of the system. This requires trusting relationships at all levels across the system. Trust is built on attributes such as: mutual competence, fair and agreed processes, open communication and shared learning.

There is scope for SSBs to collaborate with each other to avoid unnecessary proliferation among standards and qualification, and to consider skill areas in common across different sectors (e.g. health and safety). Some SSBs collaborate with providers (including WBLOs)⁴ insofar as they include them in technical advisory groups, gaining guidance about how standards and qualifications may be implemented.

The principle of collaboration underpins the decision to encourage the teams in different system entities to read the guides in this good practice toolkit that sit either side of the guide that addresses their specific work. For example, we suggest that assessors not only read the Assessment and Consistency Measures guide but also the Standards and Qualifications Development guide and the Programme Development and Delivery guide that sit upstream of their work. They should also take note of the section in the Assessment and Consistency Measures guide that discusses consistency or moderation because that sits downstream of their work. This approach helps everyone understand how their work is impacted by others upstream in the system, and how their work impacts others downstream in the system.

⁴ Technically WBLOs are not providers; employers and contracted ITPs and PTEs actually provide the training. WBLOs are programme developers that arrange training (including assessing against the outcomes of standards). Between 2020 and 2022 ITOs transitioned into business unit of Te Pūkenga, the national vocational education provider and became Work Based Learning Organisations (WBLO). It is common throughout the vocational education sector to casually refer to, or think of, WBLOs as providers. Indeed consultation is currently underway (2024) for a proposal that may allow WBLOs to choose to become standalone tertiary education providers.

THE ‘WHY’ AND ‘HOW’ OF GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Principles over rules

The purpose of any good practice guide is to help people make the best possible decisions. It is a resource based on the best available evidence. The evidence still needs to be interpreted, as does the guidance. So, the term ‘good’, rather than ‘best’, is used deliberately to highlight that ‘best’ can only ever relate to very specific situations at a given point in time, whereas good practice speaks to principles and the need to interpret these for the situation. In other words, there are no set rules, recipes or checklists that would replace thinking it through.⁵

The newness of skill standards means much of the sector is still learning about them, or building knowledge and understanding. Some parts of the sector are still learning about the existence of skill standards and will not be exposed to them in practice for another year or so. So, this good practice guidance is designed to address the potential missteps that come from a lack of understanding and experience with skill standards development and implementation. It not only addresses different parts of an entire system but, within that, a wide range of experiences, expertise and operating models. Some readers will be familiar with certain concepts or practices while others will find them entirely new.

Determining what good looks like

Good practice is what has been tried and shown to work, shaping and being shaped by theories or principles in the field. In most fields, good practice is based on a systematic review of the evidence, together with some attention on implementation in different contexts. Good practice is specifically not ‘consensus-based’ – i.e. what a group of experts who have met go on to recommend based on what they agree with or do themselves, regardless of whether or not it is supported by evidence.

The good practice in this toolkit is, therefore, not simply based only what sector groups do, or say they do, or say they would do in future. It is based on long-standing knowledge of ‘what good looks like’ in education together with sector perspectives and experiences gathered from organisations that are showing leadership and who were developing or implementing skill standards-based qualifications in the construction and infrastructure fields covered by ConCOVE and Waihanga Ara Rau.

Skill standards are very new. In the first months of the project, only a handful had been approved out of the tens of thousands that will eventually be listed. The timeframe for this project was six months. A qualification cycle from development to implementation with providers typically takes several years.

Qualifications developers in SSBs – i.e. the WDCs – were directly engaged in developing skill standards during this project’s timeframe so we could observe and influence their practice.

Tertiary education providers, however, had not had any experience with skill standards. WBLOs, the previous SSBs, had experience of setting standards (unit standards) and implementing them by developing and assessing programmes of learning, and moderating providers’ assessment outcomes. Some providers and WBLOs had some exposure to skill standards from being included in technical advisory groups⁶, along with industry expert advisors, and providing guidance to the SSB about implementation.

However in general providers and WBLOs had not had any opportunity to work with skill standards. Our discussions and workshops with them were based largely around their context and speculation about anticipated opportunities and challenges.

The good practice toolkit is primarily based on principles of good practice drawn from the authors’ existing expertise and from contemporary research. This has been supplemented with insights of the sector – i.e. informed conjecture or emergent thoughts about opportunities, challenges, needs, work-arounds and innovations. These views have come from across the vocational education sector. The following diagram shows the sources of input.

Table 1 Sector input into the development of guidance

Sector entity	Roles
Standard-setting Bodies (SSBs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualifications development staff • quality assurance staff
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • representatives that advise SSBs and tertiary education providers
Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • representatives that advise SSBs • programme developers • teachers and assessors • quality advisors and teacher educators
Work Based Learning Organisations (WBLOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programme developers • assessment and moderation leaders
Te Pūkenga (national network)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programme development managers
Private Training Establishments (PTEs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programme developers • teachers and assessors • moderation staff

⁵Checklists are aimed at experts who know what to do and why but may not use their knowledge when faced with situational pressures (think of not accounting for surgical instruments during an emergency surgery). Checklists mitigate the risk of experts overlooking critically important steps during complicated or complex work in pressure situations. Checklists cannot alone address a lack of knowledge and understanding, though.

⁶This is the name used by Waihanga Ara Rau. Other WDCs may refer to groups of technical or SME advisors by other names.

SYSTEM ROLES AND AREAS OF FOCUS

The following diagrams show the different entities and their roles within the system. Note that the SSB has a role at both the beginning and end of the process – firstly the development of standards and qualifications and later, the moderation of provider assessment outcomes.



Qualifications development in SSBs

SSBs develop standards and qualifications in consultation with stakeholders who can advise them. Typically, the subject matter experts are industry representatives from bodies such as employers, professional associations and regional business groups. The other stakeholders include tertiary education provider representatives, iwi and hapu representatives that can speak to the particular needs of Māori employers and workers, and representatives of regulatory bodies that establish and enforce standards of practice and protect the interests of the public.

Trouble-free listing of standards and qualifications by NZQA is not itself a standalone measure of good practice in qualifications development. Nor is it the end point that qualifications developers aim for. Instead qualifications development should aim to help foster the conditions for good qualifications implementation (i.e. programme development; programme delivery; assessment).

This is a tricky goal, though, because the relationship between qualifications development and learner outcomes is an indirect one. And the timing of the cycles for qualifications development and review does not necessarily match learner and industry feedback. So, it is important for qualifications developers to use a range of modes and proxies for accessing information about outcomes and feedback. Some of these may include, for example:

- Ensuring project teams developing qualifications include members from other parts of the organisation such as external moderation and relationship management;
- Including provider, as well as industry, representatives in technical advisory groups;
- Making use of feedback captured through customer relationship management (CRM) platforms and communication hubs; and
- Monitoring graduate programme outcomes in NZQA Consistency Reviews.

The Standards and Qualifications Development guide in the good practice toolkit provides in-depth guidance. The guide also includes an in-depth discussion of the goals and challenges of technical advisory work with industry and other stakeholders. The following table introduces the high-level issues and questions that drive SSB work. Note that their work is in the first instance triggered by industry need to either create a new qualification or to revise an existing one.

Table 2 The questions that drive SSB qualifications development

Sector entity	Roles
Industry need	Is a new credential/qualification or a qualification revision needed? How do we know (i.e. how credible are our sources)?
Current knowledge and gaps	What are we clear about with the new or revised qualification? What don't we know and need to find out?
Consultation	What mix of technical or subject matter advisors (from industry and other stakeholders) do we need, and how will we work best with them?
Articulation of standard	What exactly is each standard? How does it relate to the qualification?
Skills	What skills are critical to the standard? (and what skills are not?) What does it look like when these skills are being used? (i.e. the Learning Outcomes)
Assessment guidance	What should assessors be looking for as evidence of competence against the Learning Outcomes? What constitutes acceptable performance in order to confirm attainment of the standard?
Provider guidance	What topics or focus should be included in the curriculum, relevant to the Learning Outcomes? What resources are recommended for use by a) the programme of learning, and b) the learners?
Listing process	What does NZQA need in order to approve and list the qualification and individual standards?

Approvals and listings with NZQA

NZQA is the Crown Agency that maintains the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF). NZQA sets the rules by which standards are approved and listed on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards (DASS) and qualifications and credentials are approved and listed on the NZQCF. Its rules apply to schools, kura, Te Pūkenga business units (including WBLOs and ITPs at the time of writing this guide), PTEs, and wānanga.

NZQA's rules are established under section 452 of the Education and Training Act 2020. NZQA's website hosts documentation known as 'the Rules' with respect to different aspects of their authority to, for example, approve and list standards and qualifications; register PTEs; and conduct quality assurance (External Evaluation and Review).

In this case, the most relevant Rules are the:

- Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Listing and Operational Rules 2022⁷;
- Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022⁸; and
- Qualification and Micro-credential Listing and Operational Rules 2022⁹

⁷ New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 'Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Listing and Operational Rules 2022' (Wellington: New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 28 November 2022).

⁸ New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 'Micro-Credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022' (Wellington: New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 28 November 2022).

⁹ New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 'Qualification and Micro-Credential Listing and Operational Rules 2022' (Wellington: New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 28 November 2022).

It is important to note that, under the Act, NZQA's working rules (or authority) also includes any operational guidance issued by NZQA teams. This guidance may be formally documented, such as its 2024 guidelines for skill standards¹⁰ and its guide to stacking micro-credentials within a programme.¹¹ Expectations may also be communicated and discussed at workshops or regular meetings with WDCs. All guidance and expectations take account of feedback from the sector.

NZQA approvals staff consider applications for the approval and listing of standards and qualifications. The following high-level questions are adapted from the relevant NZQA Rules to show what NZQA considers.

Table 3 The questions that drive NZQA's qualifications and standards approvals and listings

Sector entity	Roles
Sector need and intention	What is the evidence that the standard is acceptable to the relevant sector or industry, and to providers that will be using them? Is the standard necessary? (does it avoid duplicating an existing standard?)
Access	Are there any unnecessary restrictions with respect to learning pathways or context, or forms of assessment? Are there any gender, ethnicity, or cultural barriers to access?
Specifications	How appropriate and sound are the required specifications included, such as purpose, credit value, assessment (for standards), pathway and outcomes?

Tertiary education providers and WBLOs developing and delivering learning programmes

With qualifications based on skill standards, providers and WBLOs have an opportunity to reconsider and revise content and assessment design. This might be more challenging for some faculties within ITPs or PTEs. Since unit standards were not compulsory (but skill standards now are), some ITP faculties and PTEs are used to offering programmes of learning that are not based on unit standards and do not use standards-based assessment. However, some aspects of skill standards may fit well with the graduate profile-based programmes that many of these provider-based entities have been using.

The key technical aspects of skill standards relevant to providers are that there is more instruction and guidance (than with unit standards) about what to cover, the conditions for assessment and what assessors should look for as evidence of reaching the standard. At the same time there is less prescription (than unit standards) in how the standards are written, with less hard distinction between knowledge and skill and encouragement to infer knowledge from skill through well-designed assessment.

All providers (offering 'provider-based', 'workplace-based' or distance programmes) consider a range of factors when developing and designing learning programmes. The Programme Development and Delivery guide in the good practice toolkit provides in-depth guidance. The following table introduces the high-level concerns for programme development and delivery.

Developing programmes of learning

Table 4 The questions that drive development of programmes of learning

Programme development focus	Programme development key questions
Establish industry or community need	What is the industry and community need for skilled people? How do we know (i.e. how credible are our sources)? How does this align with government tertiary education priorities?
Check qualification and funding	What existing qualification or award will meet this need? What funding is available from the TEC and/or industry?
Establish the market	What is the learner and graduate market for a new or revised programme of learning that meets industry or community need? To what extent do our existing programmes of learning meet this need? (or do we need a new programme?)
Use existing data and stakeholder advice to conceive the programme	What data and feedback do we already have on learner experience and graduate outcomes from similar programmes of learning? What mix of stakeholder advice do we need, and how will we work best with them?
Devise learner journey and support process	What will the learner journey look like from enrolment, engagement, assessment, completion and beyond? How will learners enter, or 'bridge' (from a lower level) into this programme? (What pre-requisites, if any)? To what employment options or higher level programmes of learning can learners graduate? How will we support learners (especially those systemically underserved) so pathways are as clear and smooth as possible?
Carry out learning design	By what mode (online, in-person, on-job, a mix) should the programme of learning be delivered? What instructional design features do we need? How will outcomes be assessed and under what conditions?
Resourcing and support	What resources need development for learners? What guidance or professional development do tutors, teachers or trainers need? What guidance or professional development is needed by assessors (who may also be the tutors, teachers or trainers)?

¹⁰ New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 'Guidelines for Listing Skill Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards' (Wellington: New Zealand Qualifications Authority, August 2024), <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Tertiary/Approval-accreditation-and-registration/Standards/Skills-standards/Guidelines-for-listing-skill-standards-on-the-DASS.pdf>.

¹¹ New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 'Stacking Micro-Credentials' (Wellington: New Zealand Qualifications Authority, February 2024), <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Tertiary/Resources-for-tertiary-providers/Stacking-micro-credentials.pdf>.

Developing programmes of learning

When it comes to delivering learning programmes, there are some differences based on the learning context: delivery via classrooms and workshops ('provider-based' provision) or real-world work situations ('workplace-based' provision). Each has its own advantages and disadvantages to grapple with. At a high level, these revolve around the twin poles of authenticity (i.e. real-world settings, demands and applications of skill) and learning opportunities (i.e. designed and structured practice with formal teaching expertise and learner support). Table 5

Table 5 The questions that drive programme delivery

Programme delivery focus	Programme development key questions
Teaching approach	What pace, mode of delivery, and activities are appropriate for the learners? What flexibility for these can we provide? What support do learners (especially those typically underserved) need and how will that be delivered? How will shared ownership of goals and processes (for learners, as well as teachers and mentors) be promoted?
Contextualised learning	For provider-based contexts: How can the real-world relevance and authenticity be demonstrated to, and experienced by, learners? For workplace-based contexts: How can the real-world constraints and consequences, and thoughtful risk-taking be appropriately managed?
Feedback and recognition	How, and at what points, will feedback be given, and its usefulness monitored? How will achievement be recognised?
Resources	For provider-based contexts: what resource materials will support learning in a classroom, lab or campus workshop context? For workplace-based contexts: what resource materials will support learning and how will learning be resourced at work – including time protected for learning?
Culture	How will learning be aligned with, and reflect, the desired culture(s) for provider context and for industry? How can commitment to everyone's learning be demonstrated?
Opportunities	For provider-based contexts: how will opportunities for authentic experiences be provided? For workplace-based contexts: how will opportunities to learn be part of everyday work?

Assessment of learning

All structures and practices associated with the assessment of learning contain a dual possibility. They can support learning by helping make it meaningful or they can constrain learning by directing attention to trivial credit accumulation rather than deeper learning involving real challenge.¹²

Skill standards do not introduce new forms of assessment. However, they do encourage better practice in assessment, rooted in the best practice principles of standards-based assessment. With skill standards, assessors will need to pay close attention to using the Assessment Criteria (what to look for to be sure that the learner has achieved the Learning Outcome) and to interpreting the Assessment Specifications (instructions and guidance about what acceptable performance is, and what acceptable processes and contexts for assessment would be).

The Assessment and Consistency Measures guide in the good practice toolkit provides in-depth guidance. The following table introduces the high-level concerns for assessment practice.

Table 6 The questions that drive assessment practice

Programme delivery focus	Programme development key questions
Validity	Does the assessment test what we intend to test and what matters most?
Transparency and progress	Do learners understand what will be assessed and why? How do we help learners to understand their progress towards competence?
Opportunities and evidence	How do we ensure plenty of opportunities for learners to demonstrate competence? What kinds of evidence are gathered? How do we ensure it is 'naturally occurring' and as close as possible to the context?
Judgements and consistency	How do we enable demonstrations of a combination of theory and practice (i.e. knowledge and skill together as it is in real life)? Are our judgements consistent so that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • competence is equitably recognised between different learners, contexts and times? • the public can feel assured of the competence of different practitioners and standards of practice?

Assuring the consistency of learning outcomes

Moderation describes processes intended to contribute to assessment outcomes that are consistent, and that assessors continue to grow professionally. Moderators can and should take an interest in matters beyond the assessment tools that are used, and their specific outcomes and results. Their work in monitoring consistency should extend to the systems that support learning and contribute to clear outcomes. These systems include programme development and delivery, and support for learners as well as for those involved in delivery and assessment.

Skill standards do not in themselves change the nature of the moderation process. However there are details in skill standard design that encourage or require fresh thinking about programme design and assessment. Skilful moderation will be in step with the changes others in the system make in response to those prompts.

The Assessment and Consistency Measures guide in the Good Practice Toolkit provides in-depth guidance about assuring consistency (or moderation). The following table introduces the high-level concerns for moderation practice.

¹² Karen Vaughan and Marie Cameron, 'Assessment of Learning in the Workplace: A Background Paper' (Wellington: Ako Aotearoa, 2009).

Table 7 The questions driving assurance of learning outcome consistency

Moderation focus	Moderation key questions
Providing professional support	How do we 'walk in the shoes' of assessors so that we contribute to their professional growth? How do we foster collegiality and 'community of practice' for institution-wide and sector-wide improvement?
Programmes	To what extent do programmes reflect the intentions of industry as articulated by skill standards and especially in the Indicative Content? Does programme design reflect the needs of the specific learner group? Are delivery methods and supports likely to result in the intended outcomes?
Systems	Do institutional systems reduce barriers for learner success? Are those involved in delivering courses and assessing learners adequately supported?
Assessment	Are assessors competent and skilful? Do specific assessment activities adequately address the requirements of the assessment standards involved? Are assessment tools valid and principled? Is record-keeping, and reporting to learners, accurate, secure and timely?

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