Review of Achievement Standards Level 1, Phase 1

Feedback Report Asian Languages

Feedback provided on draft Phase 1 products as at 23 April 2021

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## Purpose

This report outlines the feedback received by the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) on the Phase 1 development of Level 1 materials for Asian Languages. It aims to identify common themes and trends across the feedback. This report will be used to inform any necessary changes to the products developed so far as well as the further development of Phase 2 materials by the Subject Expert Groups (SEGs) as part of the Review of Achievement Standards (RAS).

**Background**

1. As at 19 April 2021, the Ministry received 73 responses to the Ministry’s online questionnaire about the materials developed so far for Asian Languages. These included both multiple choice answer questions and long form, written response questions.
2. There was also feedback from the New Zealand Chinese Language Teachers Association (NZCLTA) and the New Zealand Association of Japanese Language Teachers (NZAJLT).
3. This report is divided into the following:
	1. General Overview and Themes
	2. Analysis of Feedback by source
		1. Online
		2. NZCLTA/NZAJLT
	3. Next steps
4. Please note that the content in this report does not reflect the opinions of the authors. The report aims to thoroughly and accurately reflect the views presented by those who fed back on the draft products.

## General Overview and Themes

1. ***Consistency of products across all languages***

The feedback from the survey as well as the feedback from the New Zealand Chinese Language Teachers Association (NZCLTA) and the New Zealand Association of Japanese Language Teachers (NZAJLT) strongly recommend more consistency in the products across all languages, particularly in the standards. Many respondents express concern that the standards for Asian languages appear to be more difficult than the standards for European languages which might result in less uptake of Asian languages. There is also concern that the different standards might impact on the workload of HoDs and hinder collaboration between language teachers.

While there is an acknowledgement of varying levels of difficulty across languages, a number of respondents point out that this issue can be addressed by adjusting the assessment criteria and adapting teaching programmes, as is current practice.

1. ***Clarification of standards***

Many respondents comment on the need for more information about the standards, achievement criteria, and assessment conditions to be able to give more informed feedback on them.

1. ***Achievement Standard 1.3 – Listening and reading***

There is strong concern about assessing the two receptive skills, listening and reading, against one standard. Many respondents think that these two skills are not a natural fit and would not give learners a fair opportunity to demonstrate their individual language abilities and gain an equal amount of credits for those receptive language skills as for the two productive skills, speaking and writing, resulting in learners dropping the subject.

Many respondents are asking for more clarity about the format of the assessment and the question types. There are also suggestions around alignment with other international language proficiency examinations.

1. ***Achievement Standard 1.2 – Presentation***

The open mode of assessment, including written and oral, and the focus on culture are new for the presentation standard. The feedback is divided between those who are concerned that communicating about culture is beyond learners’ linguistic abilities on Level 1, which could result in stereotypical and predictable content, and those who see a need to include more cultural learning and the potential to make language learning more interesting for learners.

Many respondents are asking for more clarity around the topics and assessment conditions for this standard. There are some concerns that the standard would assess culture separately from language and therefore be too close to a Social Sciences standard. Others are concerned that the standard might be too close to Achievement Standard 1.4 (writing), as the evidence for Achievement Standard 1.2 could be presented in writing as well as orally.

1. ***Achievement Standard 1.4 – Writing***

The many responses that express opposition to this standard predominantly assume that this standard, being an external, would be assessed under time-limited exam conditions which is considered too hard for learners and not authentic. There is, however, support for a portfolio-style assessment that would allow the use of resources and be externally marked or verified by NZQA.

Many respondents are asking for more clarification on the assessment conditions and some voice concern that there might not be enough Asian languages teachers that could mark the assessments externally.

1. ***New vocabulary and grammar lists***

There is strong demand for new and shorter vocabulary and grammar lists for Asian languages to support the subject content and ensure consistency across schools.

1. ***Inclusion of te ao Māori***

There is broad support for the inclusion of te ao Māori in language learning, combined with a strong concern that most teachers do not have enough knowledge in that area to incorporate it appropriately. Hence, many responses indicate the need for PLD on mātauranga Māori.

There is also some concern that the inclusion of te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori would add to the workload of teachers and learners and take away the focus from the learning of the Asian language.

1. ***Even spread of credits***

All feedback sources point to a preference for credits to be evenly spread across all four standards to acknowledge the equal importance of all language skills.

1. ***Mandarin versus Chinese***

There is overwhelming support for changing back the name of the subject from Mandarin to Chinese as Chinese is the official language of China and widely used as the name for the subject internationally.

1. ***Learning Matrix***

While the Learning Matrix was generally well received with respondents appreciating the inclusion of intercultural perspectives, there is some concern that it contained too much content beyond the abilities of learners and that it is not user-friendly enough.

Specifically, some respondents propose to remove reference to “a wide range” of language in the progressions as well as the use of physical and digital resources on Level 1, as learners are not familiar with the dictionary forms of words on that level.

Respondents are also asking for clarification for words such as “basic”, “simple”, “familiar”, “personal”, “own culture”, etc.

1. ***One-off assessment for Achievement Standard 1.1***

Many respondents express concern at a high-stakes, one-off assessment for Achievement Standard 1.1. that would award 6 credits for a potentially very short and simple interaction, despite acknowledging that this would reduce the workload for teachers and learners. The preference is for two interactions.

1. ***Course Outlines***

The main feedback on the Course Outlines is that they contain too much content and that it would be hard to cover all the topics in one year. Some of the content is also considered to be too hard for Level 1.

There is some positive feedback on the incorporation of mātauranga Māori, particularly in the Japanese Course Outline, along with some comments that some contexts seem staged to fit in mātauranga Māori.

1. ***Different standards for additional and heritage***

A number of respondents are asking for different standards for additional language learners, heritage learners, and native speakers.

## Sources of Feedback

#### Online

Below are the quantitative data questions summarised in graphs.

In general, the qualitative data suggests that the Learning Matrix, and in particular the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Guide and the Course Outlines are not yet sufficient for teachers to use and need amendments as suggested above in the general themes.

The data does suggest that the incorporation of mātauranga Māori is on the right track, with clarification needed on how the subject supports ākonga Māori to succeed as Māori and how the teaching and learning is grounded in mātauranga Māori.

#### Other Sources of Feedback

The New Zealand Chinese Language Teachers Association (NZCLTA) and the New Zealand Association of Japanese Language Teachers (NZAJLT) provided extensive feedback on the Phase One RAS products through their own surveys. That feedback very much corresponds with the feedback summed up in the themes and graphs above.

The call for the name of the subject to remain “Chinese” and for consistency across all languages is almost unanimous. The main reason for the latter is best summed up in this feedback from the NZCLTA survey: “We need to be more consistent in our approach across languages, otherwise students will pick what appears to be easier.”

Equally, there is hardly any support for combining listening and reading skills in one standard. One respondent sums it up as follows: “I believe the perceptive skills (reading and listening comprehension) are the most important in communication with people with different cultural background. Therefore only 5 credits for Reading and Listening in one examination do not represent the importance of the two skills.”

While the NZAJLT survey shows a stronger support for the Learning Matrix (46.7%) than the MoE online survey, the voiced concerns for the Learning Matrix and the Course Outlines are the same as in the MoE and the NZCLTA survey, ie, that they are too long, not always level-appropriate, and not very user-friendly.

The feedback in all surveys is for more clarity around the standards and assessments.

## Next Steps

**Ministry Actions**

* Ministry to clarify position on addressing PLD concerns relation to:
	+ being able to adequately reflect and competently deliver Mātauranga Māori in classroom settings, especially understanding kupu and concepts Māori
	+ work with NZQA in preparing sample or exemplar student materials to support the delivery of the new teaching, learning, and assessment materials.
* Ministry to clarify timing of development process and develop sector responses. This may be what the public should be expecting and when; and confirming what is being asked of the public at engagement points.
* Ministry to clarify communication with sector regarding the Change Package, including rationale for the number of standards and division of internal and external credits. This may be possible to action through the communications plans for O&I responding to Change Package queries.
* Ministry to clarify, alongside NZQA, the ways in which both internal and external assessment are carried out. This would also include concerns about specifics of assessment (methods, deadlines in year etc).
* Ministry to commission new vocabulary and grammar lists for Asian languages.
* Ministry to provide advice to Minister who will make the final decision whether the name of the subject should be Mandarin or Chinese.
* Ministry to consider the recommendations for different standards for additional and heritage learners of Asian languages.

**SEG Actions**

* SEG to discuss, alongside the European Languages SEG, the arguments for more consistency in the products across all languages.
* Feedback on specific standards will be considered during Phase 2 development, as further content is created for the TLAG and Achievement Standards are refined, including achievement criteria and assessment conditions.
* SEG to discuss the arguments for an even spread of credits.
* SEG to review Learning Matrix in relation to:
	+ the amount of content
	+ the appropriateness of content for certain levels.
* SEG to provide clarification on certain words and phrases in the Glossary.
* As part of the Phase 2 development, SEG will review the Course Outlines and align them with the Learning Matrix and Assessment Matrix in relation to:
	+ the amount of content
	+ the appropriateness of content for certain levels.

The Course Outlines will be republished alongside Phase 2 products.