Review of Achievement Standards Level 1, Phase 2

Public Engagement Survey Report: Mandarin

Feedback provided on draft, Phase 2 subject content 24 August 2021

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## Purpose

This report outlines the feedback received from a Public Engagement Survey by the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) on the Phase 2 development of Level 1 products for Mandarin. This report will present the quantitative data collected from the survey as well as summarising the common themes and trends appearing in the qualitative data. This report will be used to inform any necessary changes to the products before they go forward for piloting as part of the Review of Achievement Standards (RAS).

## Background

1. As at 23 August 2021, the Ministry received **36** responses to the Ministry’s online survey about the subject content developed so far for Mandarin. These included both multiple choice answer questions and long form, written response questions.
2. This report is organised into sections based on the questions in the survey. Each section was optional so not every respondent answered every section. The sections are:
   1. Summary of feedback as a whole
   2. General impressions of the subject content
   3. Course Outlines
   4. Individual Achievement Standards
      1. AS 1.1 and Assessment Activities
      2. AS 1.2 and Assessment Activities
      3. AS 1.3
      4. AS 1.4
   5. Impressions of the Achievement Standards as a suite
   6. Consultation on change to subject title
3. 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 subject content.
4. Respondents had the option of submitting feedback as individuals or on behalf of groups, such as school departments. Except where pertinent, responses have not been identified as originating from an individual or a group.
5. **Summary of Mandarin**

There were **36** responses to **Mandarin** products.

Responses about **Course Outlines** were generally **positive.** 7 out of 12 respondents found them useful, while 6 respondents thought they were unclear.

Responses about **Achievement Standards** were **mixed.** AS1.1 received the most positive feedback. AS1.1 and AS1.2 received more positive feedback than AS1.3 and AS1.4. Responses to AS1.1 and AS1.2 were more likely to indicate that *the Standards are ready for piloting or need small amendments* than that *the Standards are unsuitable for piloting*. For AS1.3 and AS1.4, a significant portion of the responses indicated that Standards are not ready for piloting. AS1.4 received the most negative feedback.

Most respondents thought that **the Standards as a group** credential the most important knowledge and/or skills either entirely or with some gaps. 8 out of 17 respondents thought all Standards support ākonga Māori to succeed as Māori, while 4 thought that none of the Standards do this. AS1.1 and AS1.2 received more recognition for supporting ākonga Māori than AS1.3 and AS1.4. Most respondents thought the Standards were too challenging (12 out of 17).

There were no responses to the questions about respondents’ overall view of the material for Mandarin.

Major themes that emerged in written responses:

* Learning is too difficult for Level 1
* Concerns about teacher and student workload
* Suggestion to separate language skills
* Concerns about equity and accessibility
* Concern about the sustainability of Asian Languages
* Concerns about the differences between Asian Languages and European Languages.

1. **General impressions of the subject content**

**Questions**

***Do you think the draft materials for this subject are ready for testing with students in pilot schools/kura?***

There were no responses to this question.

***Do you have any further feedback on the draft materials? If there was one thing you think would help make these materials easier to test in the pilot, what would it be?***

There were no responses to this question.

1. **Course Outlines**

**Chart C1: *Do the sample Course Outline(s) exemplify how the Significant Learning can form a coherent years’ programme with opportunities to assess the 4 Standards?***

**Chart C2: *Do the Course Outline(s) demonstrate how teaching and learning could be grounded in mātauranga Māori?***

***Do you have any further feedback on the Course Outline(s)?***

There were 8 responses to this question.

* Many responses expressed concern that **too much content** is presented in the Course Outlines and that would make it hard for students to achieve the Standards, plus being too difficult for teachers to organise the teaching material. Covering this much content in a year-long programme would increase teacher workload and impede teachers’ ability to develop students’ language knowledge and abilities at Levels 2 and 3. Suggestions included making the teaching period in the Course Outlines 28 weeks, instead of 32 weeks.
* Many responses said that some content presented in the Course Outlines **was more suitable for Year 9 and 10 students**, while a few responses contradicted this view, saying that the suggested content is **too difficult for Level 1 learners**.

1. **Individual Achievement Standards**
   1. **AS 1.1 and Assessment Activities**

**Chart D1.1: *Is this Achievement Standard ready for piloting?***

**Chart D1.2: *Are the Achieved, Merit and Excellence criteria clear enough to support consistent assessment judgments?***

**Chart D1.3: *Does the unpacking of the Standard and the Conditions of Assessment provide sufficient and clear guidance on the use of the Standard?***

***Internal Assessment Activities***

**Chart D1.4: *Could the activities for AS1.1 be used or adapted in your local context?***

**Chart D1.5: *Do the Internal Assessment Activities exemplify how mātauranga Māori can be recognised and valued in assessment?***

**Chart D1.6: *Do the activities for AS1.1 support the engagement, access, understanding and participation of all learners?***

***Do you have any further feedback on this Standard and its activities?***

There were **8** responses to this question.

* Several responses thought that **the Standard is too difficult for Level 1**. Two responses stated that unrehearsed language and interactions are too difficult at this level. One response said that the vocabulary needed to achieve this Standard is too large. One response asked that the Ministry consider how difficult Chinese is compared to other languages. A couple of responses were concerned about the expected level of knowledge since, as one response pointed out, *“many schools offer Chinese as a taste course in year 9 with one period a week so by year 11, the students may have only learned Chinese around 150 hours.”* One response pointed out that **Assessment Activity B** is at Level 2.
* There were some comments on **the Assessment Activity A.** One respondent was worried that the activity is too difficult and would be better suited for presentation. Another respondent pointed out that the activity topics, such as a social media influencer and a celebrity are not everyday topics.
* There was some criticism that **assessments are subjective**. One respondent identified this as a problem since *“[t]his might encourage students to use Pinyin which is closest and convenient to English speakers but Pinyin is not just a convenient access to Chinese Language for foreigners or preschool Chinese natives.”*
* One respondent asked for **clarity around the words “competently” and “skilfully”.** One respondent suggested that “competently” should be in Excellence.
* One respondent suggested that the course should allow students **to interact in written form**, just like European and Pacific Language courses.
* One response indicated a concern that **workload for either students or teacher** will increase significantly.
  1. **AS 1.2 and Assessment Activities**

**Chart D2.1: *Is this Achievement Standard ready for piloting?***

**Chart D2.2: *Are the Achieved, Merit and Excellence criteria clear enough to support consistent assessment judgments?***

**Chart D2.3: *Does the unpacking of the Standard and the Conditions of Assessment provide sufficient and clear guidance on the use of the Standard?***

***Internal Assessment Activities***

**Chart D2.4: *Could the activities for AS1.2 be used or adapted in your local context?***

**Chart D2.5: *Do the Internal Assessment Activities exemplify how mātauranga Māori can be recognised and valued in assessment?***

**Chart D2.6: *Do the activities for AS1.2 support the engagement, access, understanding and participation of all learners?***

***Do you have any further feedback on this Standard and its activities?***

There were 6 responses to this question.

* Some responses said that this Standard is **too complex and difficult** for Level 1 learners. One response said that the suggestion of ‘Storytelling’ in Assessment Activity B will result in students reciting a story, and book/movie reviews are a Level 2 topic. Similarly, one response said that the suggested topics in Assessment Activity A – social media influencers, community, and the environment – are not ‘everyday’ topics and they are more appropriate for Level 2. Another response said that there is too much information for students to include in their assessment, which will impact their ability to achieve it. One response said it that the amount of vocabulary required will make this Standard too difficult, particularly if ‘*Maori culture’* [sic] is integrated.
* Some responses said that **more guidance and clarity** is needed about AS 1.2 achievement criteria, Assessment Activities, and the assessment format. One response said that the Standard needs to be clear about whether a spoken or written presentation is being assessed, or a combination. Another said that assessment conditions are not clear; for instance, clarity is needed about how to assess punctuation and other language elements from a spoken presentation, which would be easier to do in a written presentation. One response said that the Achieved and Merit criteria need more explanation and clarification.

Individual responses said:

* + there was potential overlap between AS 1.2 and 1.4, given that both involve assessing a piece of writing
  + that 2-3 weeks to prepare and produce work for this assessment will be difficult for students, given that the assessment format is not a portfolio and they won’t be able to get their teacher's general feedback while they develop their work.

* 1. **AS 1.3**

**Chart D3.1: *this Achievement Standard ready for piloting?***

**Chart D3.2: *Are the Achieved, Merit and Excellence criteria clear enough to support consistent assessment judgments?***

**Chart D3.3: *Does the unpacking of the Standard and the Proposed Assessment Approach provide sufficient and clear guidance on the use of the Standard?***

***Do you have any further feedback on this Standard?***

There were 10 responses to this question.

* Many responses voiced concern about **the equity and accessibility** of this Standard. Assessing reading and listening together will cause stress and failure, thus “*dramatically*” contributing to the lack of sustainability of Asian Language learning.
* Many responses made it clear that **reading and listening** are two of the four important language skills and should be assessed separately. It is inequitable for students to be assessed on more than one skill within a single assessment.
* Two responses asked for the research on which the decision to combine **reading and listening** into one standard was based.
* The learning required for this standard **is too difficult for Level 1**.
* One response made it clear that **the increase to teacher and student workload** will be inequitable when compared to European Languages.
* **Guidance and clarity** were requested for the following:
  + Native/heritage speakers and their status as far as these standards are concerned.
  + Exemplars and exam papers need to be provided so teachers and students can fully understand what this assessment will look like in the real world.
  + *"Candidates can use resources on demand and will be allowed to use a vocabulary list provided by the MoE." the resources are from the Level 1 vocabulary list or the extra vocabulary?”*
  + *“Needs further explanation and/or samples for: "include a combination of the following: emails, social media content, maps or infographics, instructions, interviews, audio-visual resources.”*
  1. **AS 1.4**

**Chart D4.1: *Is this Achievement Standard ready for piloting?***

**Chart D4.2: *Are the Achieved, Merit and Excellence criteria clear enough to support consistent assessment judgments?***

**Chart D4.3: *Does the unpacking of the Standard and the Proposed Assessment Approach provide sufficient and clear guidance on the use of the Standard?***

***Do you have any further feedback on this Standard?***

There were 12 responses to this question.

* Two responses voiced concern about the fact that **the Asian Languages Achievement Standards are different** from but should be the same as European Languages, which are “nice and simple”.
* Many responses were concerned about **the increase in teacher/student workload** with the new standards and the timing of assessments. *“With 1.4 CAA writing also happening at the end of term 3, the pressure and workload on students is going to be huge.”*
* Many responses made it clear that **writing should be an internal standard**. “*It was proofed to be a failure 10 years ago when students just walked away and did not attempt when writing was externally assessed*”, *“…most students will opt out of this standard as the concept of writing in an exam environment at level 1 Chinese is intimidating.”,* *“1.4 requires students to write in characters under examination conditions, which is too challenging for Chinese language learners.”*
* Two responses voiced concern over the level of ability students would have to have to succeed at Level 1. **The learning is too difficult for Level 1**.
* **Guidance and clarity** were requested for the following:
  + The Achieved, Merit, and Excellence criteria need to be made available
  + A.S 1.2 and AS1.4 overlap skills and therefore only 3 of the 4 language skills could potentially be assessed at Level 1
  + Clarify *"Candidates can use resources on demand and will be allowed to use a vocabulary list provided by the MoE.* *The vocabulary list here is from the Level Vocabulary list or the extra vocabulary?”*
  + How is this standard going to be assessed and by whom?
  + *“What dos the CAA look like? What are the conditions? Can the students type their answers or is it all hand-written? What are the topics and are they related to the COs?”*
  + Why 1.2 and 1.4 are overtly overlapping?
  + “*Would the topics, themes and grammar be predictable as prescribed in the Learning Matrix? If not, students' well being are bound to decrease rather than increase.”*

1. **Impressions of the Achievement Standards as a suite**

**Chart E1: *Do the four Achievement Standards as a group credential the most important knowledge and/or skills for this subject as illustrated by the Learning Matrix?***

**Chart E2: *Do the Achievement Standards support ākonga Māori to succeed as Māori? (select all that apply)***

**Chart E3: *Are the Achievement Standards appropriate to Level 6 of the curriculum? (Approximately Year 11)***

***Do you have any further feedback on the Achievement Standards?***

There were 15 responses to this question.

* Two responses voiced concern about the fact that Asian Languages put **too much emphasis on productive skills** in comparison to European Languages, and that **Reading and Listening should be assessed separately**.
* Several responses asked that **all Asian Languages Achievement Standards be the same as European Languages** “*[o]therwise, it is not equal to every language learning student.”* And “*it will affect students' accessibility to the Asian languages.*”
* Two responses voiced **concern over the sustainability of Asian Languages** with these changes. “*It will largely demotivate students to continue learning Asian languages.”* and “*They may kill Asian language subjects at the end!”*
* One response was adamant that **writing should not be an external standard**.
* Two responses voices **concern about equity and accessibility**, particularly in the external writing standard.
* Three responses voiced strong concern that the **learning is far too difficult for Level 1**, particularly for those schools who run shortened or optional language courses in Years 9 and 10.
* Three responses voiced concern about the increase in **teacher and student workload**.
* **Guidance and clarity** were requested for the following:
  + Whether there will be *“clear patterns of the language and building blocks provided by the Ministry or NZQA”?*
  + From the Learning Matrix: *“acquire simple linguistic strategies and basic knowledge of how to use resources to make meaning from unfamiliar language”*
    - “*What is the definition of basic knowledge of how to use resources to make meaning from unfamiliar language?”*
    - *“Furthermore, what simple linguistic strategies this point is referring to?”*
  + When will exemplars and sample 1.3 and 1.4 assessment tasks be available. There is concern that “*the Achievement Standards will play a huge role in deterring NZ's already shrinking population of foreign language learners*.”
  + 1.2 and 1.4 could potentially both be assessing writing.
  + “*Standard 1.3 requires students to be good at listening, reading and viewing to achieve, which is too challenging*.”
  + What the CAA for 1.4 will be. Not enough information given about the externals.
* One response summed up what several responses voiced concern about: “*As ONE learning area, the discrepancy between European and Asian languages is too substantial to ignore. This is not alighned with the fundamental principles of RAS, inclusion and making NCEA more accessible. In the meantime, students' and teachers' workload will increase significantly. There's a need for a consistent assessment matrix across European and Asian languages*.”
* One response said, “*All good*”.

1. **Consultation on change to subject title**

The sector has indicated that some titles for **NZC NCEA Level 1 subjects** may be appropriate for change. The following criteria will be considered when suggesting new subject titles:

* Subject titles are consistent within a Learning Area
* Subject titles are future proofed to remain current and engaging to ākonga.

Subject descriptions will be developed to support all subject titles to avoid any ambiguity.

**Chart F1: What do you think of the proposal to change the title of Mandarin?**

Other option(s): There were 28 responses about the subject title change, throughout the general survey sections as well as the section dedicated to ‘Subject title-other’.

Of these responses, 26 said that the subject title should be Chinese, and two responses suggested ‘Modern Standard Chinese’. Another reason given for naming the subject ‘Chinese’ at secondary school level is because it is called ‘Chinese’ at universities and other educational institutions. The majority view was that Mandarin applies to spoken language only, and this should be reflected in the subject title and Standards as below:

* + 1.1 Use Chinese Mandarin to communicate on everyday topics.
  + 1.2 Use Chinese to produce responses related to everyday contexts
  + 1.3 Show understanding of spoken Chinese Mandarin related to everyday contexts.
  + 1.4 Show understanding of written Chinese related to everyday contexts.