Review of Achievement Standards Level 1, Phase 1

Feedback Report Music

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 content for Music. 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 content by the Subject Expert Groups (SEGs) as part of the Review of Achievement Standards (RAS).

## Background

1. The Ministry received 53 responses to its online survey about the content developed so far for Music. These included both multiple choice answer questions and long form, written response questions.
2. The Ministry also conducted focus group meetings with members of the education sector who provided feedback on draft products for some subjects in the Review of Achievement Standards (RAS). There was no focus group for Music.
3. Feedback for some subjects was provided by the four NCEA panels. For Music, feedback was provided by the Māori, Pacific, and Disability and Learning Support Panels.
4. This report is divided into the following:
   1. General overview and themes
   2. Analysis of feedback by source
      1. Online public engagement survey
      2. NCEA Panels
   3. Next steps
5. 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. ***Inclusion of mātauranga Māori***

There was support for the use of Māori concepts and kupu in the Music draft products, however, there were comments from most stakeholder groups that mātauranga Māori was not embedded well enough across all the content.

The main comments focused on:

* the need to highlight throughout all the products that music is a key aspect of Māori culture.
* the need for clearer connections between the Māori concepts and kupu in the Learning Matrix with content in the Teaching and Learning Guide and Assessment Matrix,
* the challenge for teachers and ākonga to authentically interpret, and gather evidence for, ‘Māori music’ for Achievement Standard 1.3 ‘Demonstrate understanding of Māori music and music from one other context’. Concern was raised about the assessment of this standard – will the assessors have the requisite understanding of mātauranga Māori to be able to assess all evidence consistently and authentically? See point 3, below, for more detail about concerns raised about Achievement Standard 1.3.

1. ***Capability of teachers to deliver mātauranga Māori***

While there was general support from all feedback sources for the inclusion of mātauranga Māori in Music, there was significant concern that most teachers do not have enough knowledge and training in te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori to be able to deliver the proposed material with nuance and understanding. This indicates that the main barrier to teacher capability in this area is lack of training and professional development (PD) opportunities, not lack of willingness to incorporate te ao Māori.

“This is indeed a big shift for teachers of music. All teachers in Aotearoa today are challenged to look at ways to support ākonga Māori to succeed as Māori. The disparity in evidence that this is being done successfully, between all teachers and in all subjects is enormous and we would certainly need significant PLD and training to develop the confidence to deliver mātauranga Māori in our specific subject areas more confidently.”

This concern was also raised in terms of the ability of the whole school – its culture, environment and surrounding community – to support teachers who are trying to deliver mātauranga Māori authentically in a classroom.

“I have colleagues who are 100% into embracing and supporting more te reo Māori into their teaching but again feel push back from students about doing so. I think these changes need to explained fully in a way not only for teachers to understand but also for all students to understand.”

1. ***Achievement Standard 1.3 – Inclusion of ‘Māori music’***

There were mixed reactions from the various stakeholder groups about the draft Achievement Standard 1.3 ‘Demonstrate understanding of Māori music and music from one other context’.

Some feedback showed a positive response to a standard that specifies Māori music.

“The incredibly rich New Zealand music industry has a huge amount to explore and that includes Māori music, which as far as I can tell still uses dominant western musical ideas.”

However, concerns were raised about how teaching and assessing Māori music contexts could occur for this standard. This concern is connected with the more general worry from many stakeholders that teachers do not have deep enough understanding and experience with mātauranga Māori to be able to bring it into their teaching with authenticity and nuance.

“I have concerns as to how the concepts of ihi, wehi and wana will apply outside of Maori music context.”

Some survey responses commented that specifying Māori music in a standard is too limiting, and is at odds with the Significant Learning, ‘Students will be able to discuss diverse music contexts’.

“1.3 has the right intention to bring the music of Aotearoa more into focus for our tamariki. However, I feel this standard could be opened up to include a much wider context of topical choice. Why not include several pieces of music to study of which one MUST be indigenous to NZ?”

There is a related concern from survey respondents that a standard that specifies Māori music is too similar to Te Ao Haka standards, and there is a risk of duplication..

The majority of concerns about this draft standard appear to stem from perceptions that:

* there is a limited range of music that could be categorised as “Māori music”.
* music is a performing arts subject.
* the new Te Ao Haka subject will be centred around Māori music.

In terms of evidence required for this standard, there were comments about the challenge of producing valid, reliable and authentic material year on year. That is, there’s a risk that ākonga might change the context but they could still reproduce and apply answers used in previous years, by other ākonga.

1. ***Assessment mode, particularly Achievement Standard 1.4***

While most feedback from stakeholders about the standards’ modes of assessment focused on the need for change, some comments showed support for the draft Music standards:

“I think it's important to maintain a chunk of the assessment in music literacies (reading, writing, listening, analysis). I REALLY like the fact that the elements of music standard [draft Achievement Standard 1.1] is internal - this will allow flexibility for teachers to deliver and assess this content in a way that best fits their students.”

Achievement Standard 1.4 ‘Perform music’ attracted the most comments, with the majority view being that this standard should be internally, not externally, assessed. The most common reason given for this view was that the technological resources and time needed for external assessment of music performance will disadvantage some schools.

“Should NOT be an external. There is no workload reduction only an increase in workload for all as sending files is a nightmare. It will also promote further inequity between the poor schools and rich schools as video quality WILL affect the marking outcomes. Also, random markers will not know the story behind each student, or the development that student may have made.”

“Adjudicating performance live is the common practice and it's more authentic. Without an excellent or a decent recording device, the sound & visual quality isn't as fantastic as the live performance. Music teachers are good at marking performance assessments as majority of us specialise in performing instruments or singing in public setting.”

“How does making a portfolio of music performance to be assessed externally support the widely researched view that feedback should be timely. How do I fairly discuss my own feedback to students when it’s possible it will be negated by the external moderator some months down the track. We have always done this really well.”

Related to this concern is a perceived lack of clarity about the assessment method (exam, or other format) for Achievement Standard 1.4, and whether solo, group work, or either, could be assessed.

“Does Performance standard include both solo and group or does the student select either solo performance or group performance? Performance standard should have more credits weight as it takes years to build up instrumental & musical knowledge skills especially if we're combining solo/group performance aspects together. Ideally I would like performance skills to be assessed separately e.g. solo versus group as it requires different types of skills & mindset.”

“In my experience asking students to write about music in an external exam is going to seriously disadvantage the very students we wish to help. Our second language students our Maori and Pacifica who we know come into secondary school literacy at a lower level. But these are the kids who get the ihi and wehi and can do spine-chilling performances and can sometimes create exceptional original music.”

These areas of perceived lack of clarity appear to have confused and complicated the stakeholder feedback about how external assessment for this standard could occur in a fair, consistent and robust way across all schools.

Some stakeholders approved of Achievement Standard 1.2 ‘Create original music’ being internally assessed, while others commented that it should be externally assessed.

“I believe the Composition aspect should be marked externally as opposed to the Performance. Composition is more of an opportunity for students to show their knowledge of the other strands. It is a crafted activity as opposed to a one-off performance where anything can go wrong at the time of performance. It is also easier to upload the files for a composition portfolio.”

“Composition area is the one possible aspect that not all the Music teachers specialise in, would be great to have outside panel marking composition.”

1. ***Credit weightings of each standard***

All stakeholder groups were unanimous in the view that the ‘doing’ standards – ‘Create original music’ and ‘Perform music’ – should be weighted at 6 credits each, and the other two standards should be weighted at 4 credits each.

The reasons given for this view mainly focused on the greater amount of time and effort that ākonga and teachers would spend to achieve these standards. Other reasons were related to the negative implications in terms of ākonga choosing to study music.

“By reducing the weighting of Performance, music as a subject will inevitably lose students. At this level, students generally take music for the performance aspect. It provides them with a sanctuary from the other written-based subjects within the school environment.”

1. ***Inclusion of Pacific values and concepts***

The general view from stakeholders was that Pacific music contexts need to be incorporated more explicitly in the subject’s content, and there needs to be more emphasis on how important music is to Pacific communities’ culture and identity.

A related concern was that teachers throughout Aotearoa do not currently have enough understanding and experience of Pacific contexts and culture to authentically incorporate them into their teaching of the subject, or to teach music in a way that supports Pacific learners.

## Sources of feedback

#### Online public engagement survey

Below are the quantitative data questions summarised in graphs.

The quantitative data shows that approximately half the survey respondents think that the Music Learning Matrix is on the right track. However, the data shows that more than half the survey respondents think that the ‘Teaching’ web content and course outlines need amendments.

A similar patten is evident throughout the quantitative data, regarding the inclusion of mātauranga Māori in Music’s draft content. While two-thirds of respondents indicate support for use of Māori concepts and kupu in the Learning Matrix, more than half think that the general ‘Teaching’ content on the website, and the course outlines, are not grounded in mātauranga Māori and need further development to be able to support ākonga Māori to succeed as Māori at school.

The main themes arising from the survey respondents’ comments, that align with the overall feedback from all stakeholder groups, are:

* Achievement Standard 1.4 ‘Perform music’ should be assessed internally, not externally.
* Challenges with specifying ‘Māori music’ in Achievement Standard 1.3. ‘Demonstrate understanding of Māori music and music from one other context’. In addition to the views presented in ‘General Overview and Themes’, above, survey respondents also queried whether Māori music would be defined to include oral-based traditions and rituals, and whether Cook Island Māori music is included or not.
* It will be a challenge for teachers to deliver mātauranga Māori in the classroom without resourcing and ongoing support.
* There’s potential for Achievement Standard 1.2 ‘Create original music’ to be assessed externally, instead of internally.
* Standards relating to creating music and performing music, should be weighted at 6 credits each.

In addition to these key themes, survey respondents were concerned that the draft products were not clear enough about the pathways possible for ākonga who enrol in Music. There was also concern that no longer allowing separate standards for solo music work and group music work in the new Music standards will be too limiting for ākonga.

There were similar concerns about the absence of music technology in the draft Music content. There respondents queried whether this further confuses pathways available for ākonga, and commented on the need for music technology to be part of the new NCEA Level 2 or 3 content, if it isn’t going to be explicitly included at Level 1.

“If L1 is foundational, are we not going to end up with a disconnect at the end of L3 between the expectations we have of students at L3 and what tertiary level institutions expect of students (e.g. when auditioning for performance studies)?”

“At primary and Years 7-10 in intermediate/secondary, arts advocates and teachers already struggle to get schools to value the importance of offering a rich curriculum that values the arts. This implies zero learning is required prior to Year 11, in which case this will further hinder the push to improve, increase, or even continue programmes at Years 7-10 (and at Primary level). In many cases there is slim to no programmes happening already (best case full-year programmes at Year 9; worse case 8 weeks at most). How are we meant to deliver rich, deeper-thinking type learning if we are now treating level one as "foundational"?

Some survey respondents commented on the challenges that schools will face working with itinerant music teachers to apply the proposed Music learning and standards. One reason given for this concern stems from the perceived difficulty of itinerant music teachers working with ākonga on Achievement Standard 1.4 ‘Perform Music’, if that standard is externally assessed. Another reason given for this concern is that treating NCEA Level 1 Music as a foundational subject will disadvantage schools that cannot access itinerant music teachers as regularly as others.

“At our school, itinerant students get one 20-minute lesson per week; and often due to supply versus demand issues, they are group lessons as well. That adds up to about 12 hours in a year. I worry about schools with even larger itinerant access issues (whose students would not be able to afford lessons outside of school either) being capable of passing L1 if it is made to seem like L1 is the starting point for music.”

“[We are] concerned that the collegiality of working with itinerant teachers is undermined when they don't have a part to play in assessment of the students they prepare.”

#### NCEA Panels

Feedback from the NCEA Māori, Pacific, and Disability and Learning Support panels was generally the same as from survey respondents. Additional feedback from individual panel feedback are outlined below.

The main feedback from the Māori Panel was that mātauranga Māori not visible enough in the draft Music content. The Māori kupu and concepts that were visible were not contextualised well enough and connected in meaningful way to the surrounding content.

While there was support for some aspects of the content, such as the Big Idea that “Music is an expression of, and a way of connecting with whakapapa, identity and culture”, the panel were of the view that these Big Ideas need to be more connected with, and strongly underpin, the significant learning.

“This is a very strong space for our people and this is important opportunity to include mātauranga Māori.”

The Pacific Panel commented that, while there are multiple references to ‘culture & identity’, there is no clear evidence of how and where Pacific contexts and concepts of culture and identity are reflected in the products or the thinking. The panel felt that the draft Music content was missing context about the value of music as a heritage literacy and music as a deeply embodied way of knowing. They commented that the content didn’t convey a sense of how deeply entwined music and culture are for the peoples of the Pacific.

The panel has suggested some areas where Pacific contexts and culture can be included. For instance, a suggested significant learning that would build on the Big Idea ‘Music is a sonic language born of context’ is that symbols, structures and semiotics are culturally embedded, e.g. Tongan sheet music. There are other areas that a Pacific concept could be incorporated to complement references to Māori concepts. In particular, reference to 'tikanga’, and ‘music as a waka to explore te ao Māori’. should be reviewed to see how these concepts could be applied to Pacific contexts, or revise this content to include similar Pacific concepts.

The Pathways Panel commented that there has been a positive shift with the products, particularly pulling out that music is a part of identity, and culture and contexts and closer alignment with what is taught in the tertiary space. While the panel thought that the Music products were generally on the right track, they have commented that clarity is needed about how the Learning Matrix is connected with general ‘Teaching’ content on website, and whether the content is referring to live music or not.

## Next Steps

**Ministry Actions**

Recommended actions to be undertaken by the Ministry – the RAS teams and other Ministry groups – are largely communication actions aimed at supporting the sector.

* Ministry to clarify and communicate opportunities for training and professional development in te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori.
* Ministry to prepare exemplar content and communicate useful resources to support the delivery of the new teaching, learning, and assessment content. These will be included in the Pilot products.
* Ministry to clarify timing of development process and communicate the expectations regarding timing and type of engagement with relevant stakeholder groups.
* Be clear on communications about new curriculum, and alignment with new standards.
* Ministry to review communication processes and channels with the education sector and school communities regarding the Change Package.
* Ministry to work with NZQA to clarify which formats for external and internal assessments will be most accessible and achievable to schools and learners throughout Aotearoa.

**SEG Actions**

* Further develop all subject content to incorporate mātauranga Māori in a more cohesive, contextualised, and culturally-centred way.
* Decide whether to change Achievement Standard 1.4 ‘Perform music’ to being internally assessed.
* Decide whether to change Achievement Standard 1.2 ‘Create original music’ to being externally assessed.
* Consider whether to change the credit weightings of the ‘doing’ standards (Achievement Standard 1.2 ‘Create original music’, and Achievement Standard 1.4 ‘Perform music’) to 6 credits, and change the other two standards to 4 credits each.
* Clarify whether Achievement Standard 1.4 ‘Perform music’ applies to solo and/or group music performance.
* Decide whether to retain ‘Māori music’ in the standard title for Achievement Standard 1.3 ’Demonstrate understanding of Māori music and music from one other context’.
* Clarify that Achievement Standard 1.3 ’Demonstrate understanding of Māori music and music from one other context’ is not requiring ākonga to compare music contexts as part of the assessment.
* Further develop the subject content to be more explicit about the importance of music to Pacific communities, and to express that ākonga can experience Pacific contexts and cultures through music.
* Include more detail across all content about this subject’s role in supporting ākonga pathways.
* Develop the definition of ‘Māori music’ to be inclusive of contemporary music as well as traditional music, and to clarify how widely ‘Māori music’ can apply in terms of music styles, instruments used, the heritage of the musician, and language used.
* Decide how Cook Island Māori contexts and music can be included in Achievement Standard 1.3 ‘’Demonstrate understanding of Māori music and music from one other context’.
* Revise and clarify any content and/or standards that could be perceived as overlapping with Te Ao Haka standards.