NCEA Review and Maintenance Programme – 2026 updates

Review and maintenance work has been undertaken for all three levels of NZC NCEA for 2026. This pdf document contains the updated assessment materials for **Psychology Level 2**. In January 2026 the NCEA website will be updated with these changes for Level 1, and the pdf version will be removed as it will no longer be necessary. For Levels 2 and 3, assessment materials will be updated on TKI in January. For external assessment specifications, refer to the NZQA website.

Subject: Psychology
Level 2

Product	What's changed?
AS2.3 91846 Conditions of Assessment	Updated to align with strengthened ethical research methods.
AS2.3 91846 Internal Assessment Activities	Task instructions updated to align with strengthened ethical research methods

Contents

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NCEA Level 2 Psychology

Conditions of Assessment

Version 2: January 2026

General Information

Subject Reference	Social Science Studies
Domain	Psychology
Level	2

Conditions of Assessment

These Conditions provide guidelines for assessment against internally assessed Achievement Standards. Guidance is provided on:

- specific requirements for all assessments against this Standard
- appropriate ways of, and conditions for, gathering evidence
- ensuring that evidence is authentic.

Assessors must be familiar with guidance on assessment practice in learning centres, including enforcing timeframes and deadlines. The NZQA website offers resources that would be useful to read in conjunction with these Conditions of Assessment.

The learning centre's Assessment Policy and Conditions of Assessment must be consistent with NZQA's Assessment Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess. This link includes guidance for managing internal moderation and the collection of evidence.

Gathering Evidence

Internal assessment provides considerable flexibility in the collection of evidence. Evidence can be collected in different ways to suit a range of teaching and learning styles, and a range of contexts of teaching and learning. Care needs to be taken to allow students opportunities to present their best evidence against the Standard(s) that are free from unnecessary constraints.

It is recommended that the design of assessment reflects and reinforces the ways students have been learning. Collection of evidence for the internally assessed Standards could include, but is not restricted to, an extended task, an investigation, digital evidence (such as recorded interviews, blogs, photographs, or film), or a portfolio of evidence.

Effective assessment should suit the nature of the learning being assessed, provide opportunities to meet the diverse needs of all students, and be valid and fair.

Ensuring Authenticity of Evidence

Authenticity of student evidence needs to be assured regardless of the method of collecting evidence. This must be in line with the learning centre's policy and NZQA's Assessment Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess.

Ensure that the student's evidence is individually identifiable and represents the student's own work. The evidence must be an accurate reflection of what the student independently knows and can do, according to the Standard being assessed. This includes evidence submitted as part of a group assessment, evidence produced outside of class time or without assessor supervision, and evidence produced with any use of generative artificial intelligence tools (GenAI). GenAI use should be carefully considered in the context of the Standard being assessed and its Conditions of Assessment, discussed with students before the assessment, and its use must be acknowledged. For example, an investigation carried out over several sessions could include:

- teacher guidance on the nature and extent of acceptable GenAI use, if any
- assessor observations and conversations
- meeting with the student at set milestones or checkpoints
- the student's record of progress, such as photographic entries or any GenAI prompts used.

Specific Information for Individual Internal Achievement Standards

Achievement Standard Number	**91844 Psychology 2.1**
Title	Examine different psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour
Number of Credits	6
Version	1

If the teacher decides to use an inquiry as the assessment activity the following applies. The teacher may assist the inquiry by:

- aiding in the refinement of focusing questions
- assisting in locating sources
- conferring with individual students during the inquiry process.

Evidence for this achievement standard should be gathered from in and out of class activities to be completed by students over a period of time specified by the teacher. Where a group approach is used the teacher needs to ensure that there is evidence that each student has met all aspects of the standard.

Teachers may choose to teach the relevant part of the programme and assess against this standard alongside 2.2 Approaches as some of the debates naturally fit with the (historical and contemporary) context of the approaches.

Possible formats for presentation of evidence could include:
- written – newspaper or magazine article, blog, pamphlet
- oral – recording, radio programme, podcast, role play
- visual – video, webpage, graphic novel, slide show or other digital formats
- or a portfolio format that includes a variety of media (for example, written notes, annotations, blog entries, video, graphics, photographs, podcasts, interactive mind maps and other online presentations).

The format in which the evidence is submitted is not assessed.

Achievement Standard Number	**91845 Psychology 2.2**
Title	Examine how a psychological debate has changed over time
Number of Credits	3
Version	1

If the teacher decides to use an investigation as the assessment activity the following applies.
The teacher may assist the investigation by:
- aiding in the refinement of focusing questions
- assisting in locating sources
- conferring with individual students during the inquiry process.

Evidence for this achievement standard would be expected to be gathered from in and out of class activities to be completed by students over a period of time specified by the teacher. This evidence may be generated from discussion, group work, research, decision making and/or reflection and will be presented in any media that clearly communicates the student's understanding of the debate and how it has changed. Where a group approach is used the teacher needs to ensure that there is evidence that each student has met all aspects of the standard.

Teachers may choose to teach the relevant part of the programme and assess against this standard alongside 2.1 Approaches as some of the debates naturally fit with the (historical and contemporary) context of the approaches.

Possible formats for presentation of evidence could include:
- written –newspaper article, blog, debate transcript
- oral – recording, radio programme, podcast, a debate, role play, interview
- visual – timeline, video, webpage, slide show, or other digital formats
- or a portfolio format that includes a variety of media (for example, written notes, annotations, blog entries, video, graphics, photographs, podcasts, interactive mind maps and other online presentations).

The format in which the evidence is submitted is not assessed.

Achievement Standard Number	**91846 Psychology 2.3**
Title	Conduct psychological research with guidance
Number of Credits	4
Version	2

Evidence for this achievement standard would be expected to be gathered from in and out of class activities to be completed by students over a period of time specified by the teacher. Where a group approach is used the teacher needs to ensure that there is evidence that each student has met all aspects of the standard.

The focus of this standard is *psychological* research. When conducting psychological research, students must adhere with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Non-compliance means the student has not met the requirements of the standard.
Possible formats for assessment could include:

- written – lab report, report, newspaper article, instructional manual ('how to' guide), blog
- oral – recording, podcast
- visual – video, webpage, slideshow, annotated diagrams and tables
- or a portfolio format that includes a variety of media (for example, written notes, annotations, blog entries, video, graphics, photographs, podcasts, interactive mind maps and other online presentations).

The format in which the evidence is submitted is not assessed.

Achievement Standard Number	**91847 Psychology 2.4**
Title	Examine how theory is used in fields of psychological practice
Number of Credits	5
Version	1

If the teacher decides to use an investigation as the assessment activity the following applies.
The teacher may assist the investigation by:

- aiding in the refinement of focusing questions
- assisting in locating sources
- conferring with individual students during the inquiry process.

Evidence for this achievement standard should be gathered from in and out of class activities to be completed by students over a period of time specified by the teacher. Where a group approach is used the teacher needs to ensure that there is evidence that each student has met all aspects of the standard.

Possible formats for presentation of evidence could include:

- written – newspaper or magazine article, blog,

- oral – recording, radio programme, podcast, role play, interviews
- visual –video, webpage, slide show or other digital formats
- or a portfolio format that includes a variety of media (for example, written notes, annotations, blog entries, video, graphics, photographs, podcasts, interactive mind maps and other online presentations).

The format in which the evidence is submitted is not assessed.

Achievement Standard Number	**91848 Psychology 2.5**
Title	Examine ethical issues in psychological practice
Number of Credits	3
Version	1

Evidence for this achievement standard would be expected to be gathered from in and out of class activities to be completed by students over a period of time specified by the teacher. Where a group approach is used the teacher needs to ensure that there is evidence that each student has met all aspects of the standard.

Possible formats for presentation of evidence could include:

- written – newspaper or magazine article, blog, instructional (or 'how to') manual
- oral – recording, radio programme, podcast, role play
- visual –video, webpage, graphic novel, slide show or other digital formats
- or a portfolio format that includes a variety of media (for example, written notes, annotations, blog entries, video, graphics, photographs, podcasts, interactive mind maps and other online presentations).

The format in which the evidence is submitted is not assessed.

Teachers may choose to teach the relevant part of the programme and assess against this standard alongside or prior to teaching 2.3 - Methods as Ethics are an important part of conducting psychological research.

Teachers should provide summaries of a psychological Code of Ethics as the standard assesses the students' understanding of the application of these principles rather than their recall. The context/study used for this standard can be New Zealand or overseas.

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Internal Assessment Resource

Psychology Level 2

This resource supports assessment against Achievement Standard 91846

Standard title: Conduct psychological research with guidance

Credits: 4

Resource title: Red and yellow and pink and green

Resource reference: Psychology 2.3A Version 2

This resource:

- Clarifies the requirements of the standard
- Supports good assessment practice
- Should be subjected to the school's usual assessment quality assurance process
- Should be modified to make the context relevant to students in their school environment and ensure that submitted evidence is authentic

Date version published by Ministry of Education	October 2025 To support internal assessment from 2026
Authenticity of evidence	For NCEA internal assessments, students must submit their own work. For evidence to be authentic, it must represent what students independently know or can do. See the Conditions of Assessment for further assessment information specific to this internal achievement standard.

Internal Assessment Resource

Achievement standard: 91846

Standard title: Conduct psychological research with guidance

Credits: 4

Resource title: Red and yellow and pink and green

Resource reference: Psychology 2.3A Version 2

Teacher guidelines

The following guidelines are supplied to enable teachers to carry out valid and consistent assessment using this internal assessment resource.

Teachers need to be very familiar with the outcome being assessed by the achievement standard. The achievement criteria and the explanatory notes contain information, definitions, and requirements that are crucial when interpreting the standard and assessing students against it.

Context/setting

This activity requires students to conduct their own comprehensive psychological research under teacher guidance. They will be investigating the "Stroop Effect" and measuring how interference affects a person's reaction time when naming colours. They will then present their findings in a simple laboratory report format with a discussion evaluating their research process as a whole.

It is up to the teacher how the class will select participants. They may choose to use students from other year levels or collect the results from multiple classes. There are a number of websites that provide timed Stroop Tests, or if students do not have access to computers there are instructions for manual completion of the test in the list of provided websites.

Ethics should be considered when carrying out any research related to human participants. Research conducted for this assessment must comply with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Conditions

The students could work in groups but will be assessed individually.

As a guide, assessment against this standard should reflect approximately 40 hours of teaching, learning and assessment, in and out of the classroom.

Conditions of Assessment related to this achievement standard can be found at http://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-Internally-Assessed-Achievement-Standards

Resource requirements

Access to the Internet and to relevant primary sources of information.

Additional information

Resources

The following is a list of helpful resources including the original study on which this research is based as well as instructions for conducting the test manually and a link for conducting it online.

Stroop, J. R. (1935). Studies of interference in serial verbal reactions. Journal of Experimental Psychology,18:643-662. A link to the original paper: http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Stroop/

Stroop, J. R. (1938). Factors affecting speed in serial verbal reactions. Psychological Monographs, 50:38-48.

http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/seeing-science-exploring-color-perception-with-the-stroop-effect/

https://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/words.html#seffect

Internal Assessment Resource

Achievement standard: 91846

Standard title: Conduct psychological research with guidance

Credits: 4

Resource title: Red and yellow and pink and green

Resource reference: Psychology 2.3A Version 2

Student instructions

Introduction

This assessment activity requires you to conduct your own psychological research to investigate the psychological concept of the Stroop Effect.

You are going to be assessed on how comprehensively you justify the method used, evaluate the reliability of the data and the validity of the method, and discuss the psychological ideas related to the research.

Teacher note: Insert due dates and time frames.

Task

Part A: Conduct research

You need to:

- develop a statement of the aim and purpose of your research that is linked to Stroop's original concept
- use scientific research methods that comply with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and select and record data using the Stroop Test experiment
- record source details
- interpret and report on the findings
- develop a valid conclusion, derived from the findings, which is relevant to the purpose of the investigation.

Background information:

Do you sometimes *automatically* walk home from school on Tuesday even though you know you have a hip hop class on Tuesdays? What about when you start learning to drive, you have to concentrate intensely but after a while, driving becomes effortless. How about naming the colour blue when the word that is coloured blue says RED? The brain gets a bit confused with situations like this. This is a famous psychological phenomena discovered by the psychologist John Ridley Stroop in 1935, known as the "Stroop Effect".

Part B. Write a report

Your report must include:

- an introduction with a clear aim and/or hypothesis and purpose linked to Stroop's original concept
- a description of the Independent Variable (IV) and Dependent Variable (DV)
- a description of how you conducted your research. Include the method, design, sample, materials and procedure used.
- an explanation of your results. This could include tables, graphs, data analysis and diagrams.

As a guide, write approximately 600 - 800 words for Part B.

Part C: Evaluate the reliability of your research and findings

- Justify the research method used.
- Evaluate the validity of the method and the reliability of the data.
- Discuss the psychological ideas relating to the research from other source(s).

You need to provide a list of sources used.

As a guide, write approximately 200 – 300 words for Part C.

Assessment schedule: Psychology 91846 - Red and Yellow and Pink and Green

Evidence/Judgements for Achievement	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Merit	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Excellence
The student conducts psychological research into the "Stroop Effect" with guidance by: • developing a statement of the aim and purpose linked to a psychological concept or idea • using scientific research methods that comply with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand (an experiment is the only possible method in this activity. Parts of the students' report such as the hypothesis IV & DV and description of the procedure will illustrate that the scientific method has been used). **For example: (partial evidence)** **Introduction** **Aim:** *The aim of this experiment was to try to see if we would get the same results found by Stroop in 1935 and measure the interference that words of colours, has on naming colours, in a list of coloured words. That is to see if we could demonstrate the Stroop Effect.* **Hypothesis:** *Our hypothesis for this experiment was "reaction times on identifying the colour of words would be slower for words printed in contrasting colours from their meanings".* **IV and DV:** *The IV was the colour of the word (either the same colour as the colour word or different from the colour word, for example "BLUE" written in the colour blue or "BLUE" written in the colour red). The DV was the reaction time for participants to say the correct colour of the word. The experimental design was a controlled*	The student conducts in-depth psychological research into the "Stroop Effect" with guidance by: • further refining the research process such as describing the reasons for the choice of the method used to conduct psychological research • discussing the psychological ideas relating to the research based on the findings. **For example: (partial evidence)** **Procedure:** **Experimental design:** *Stroop's original experiment was a laboratory experiment so we tried to re-create this by choosing a quiet classroom for the test to be held in. By using a controlled experiment the researcher is able to have control over the variables and reduce any distractions or other variables.* **Discussion:** *We found that when the colour word was printed in the same colour as the word, people named the ink colour faster compared with when the colour word was printed with an ink colour that was different from the word. (For example, when blue was used for the word "blue" , the colour is named faster than when blue is used to write the word "green".) Our findings …* Further evidence that the student evaluates the validity of the method and/or reliability of the data. A list of sources is provided.	The student conducts comprehensive psychological research into the "Stroop Effect" with guidance by: • further refining and detailing such as justifying the research method used • discussing the psychological ideas relating to the research based on the findings and those from other source(s). **For example: (partial evidence)** **Procedure:** **Experimental design**: *Stroop's original experiment was a controlled (or laboratory) experiment so we tried to re-create this by choosing a quiet classroom for the test to be held in. By using a controlled experiment the researcher is able to have control over the variables and reduce any distractions or extraneous variables. By using an experiment, we were also able to show a causal relationship. That is, a case study, survey or an observation were not suitable to the situation because …* **Discussion***: We found that when the colour word was printed in the same colour as the word, people named the ink colour faster compared with when the colour word was printed with an ink colour that was different from the word. (For example, when blue was used for the word "blue", the colour is named faster than when blue is used to write the word "green".) Our findings …* *Another theory which accounts for this effect is the*

experiment. Further evidence required by students: • selecting and recording data • providing evidence of recorded data • interpreting and reporting on the findings • a valid conclusion derived from the findings which is relevant to the purpose of the investigation A list of sources is provided. *The examples above are indicative samples only*	*The examples above are indicative samples only*	*selective attention theory. Broadbent's (1968) theory about this states that …* Other evidence will include an evaluation of the validity of the method and the reliability of the data. A list of sources is provided. *The examples above are indicative samples only*

Final grades will be decided using professional judgement based on a holistic examination of the evidence provided against the criteria in the Achievement Standard.

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Internal Assessment Resource

Psychology Level 2

This resource supports assessment against Achievement Standard 91846

Standard title: Conduct psychological research with guidance

Credits: 4

Resource title: Let's check it out!

Resource reference: Psychology 2.3B Version 2

This resource:

- Clarifies the requirements of the standard
- Supports good assessment practice
- Should be subjected to the school's usual assessment quality assurance process
- Should be modified to make the context relevant to students in their school environment and ensure that submitted evidence is authentic

Date version published by Ministry of Education	October 2025 To support internal assessment from 2026
Authenticity of evidence	For NCEA internal assessments, students must submit their own work. For evidence to be authentic, it must represent what students independently know or can do. See the Conditions of Assessment for further assessment information specific to this internal achievement standard.

Internal Assessment Resource

Achievement standard: 91846

Standard title: Conduct psychological research with guidance

Credits: 4

Resource title: Let's check it out!

Resource reference: Psychology 2.3B Version 2

Teacher guidelines

The following guidelines are supplied to enable teachers to carry out valid and consistent assessment using this internal assessment resource.

Teachers need to be very familiar with the outcome being assessed by the achievement standard. The achievement criteria and the explanatory notes contain information, definitions, and requirements that are crucial when interpreting the standard and assessing students against it.

Context/setting

This activity requires students to select a research topic and conduct their own comprehensive research with teacher guidance. Prior to the students conducting the research, they are expected to be familiar with the scientific method, and issues to do with research such as selection of appropriate research methods, reliability and validity, control, variables, sample selection and ethical research. You may want to provide students with a scaffold on which to design their research, including a report template.

Students will be provided with a list of possible research topics and corresponding studies from which they will select one and conduct their own research.

Ethics should be considered when carrying out any research related to human participants. Research conducted for this assessment must comply with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Conditions

The students could work in groups but will be assessed individually.

As a guide, assessment against this standard should reflect approximately 40 hours of teaching, learning and assessment, in and out of the classroom.

Conditions of Assessment related to this achievement standard can be found at http://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-Internally-Assessed-Achievement-Standards

Resource requirements

Access to the Internet and to relevant primary sources of information. Suggestions of possible topics and corresponding studies include:

- Can a person's memory of an event be changed? Study: Loftus, E. F., & Palmer, J. C. (1974). Reconstruction of auto-mobile destruction: An example of the interaction between language and memory. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 13, 585-589.

- Will people give wrong answers to questions just to fit in with the group? Study: Asch, S. E. (1951). Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgment. In H. Guetzkow (ed.) *Groups, leadership and men*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Press. OR Jenness, A. (1932). The role of discussion in changing opinion regarding a matter of fact. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 27, 279-296.
- Will people copy others when they don't know what to do in a situation? Sherif, M. (1935). A study of some social factors in perception. *Archives of Psychology*, 27(187).
- Which words will we remember best in a list of words? Murdock, B. B. (1962). The serial position effect of free recall. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 64(5), 482–488. OR Ebbinghaus, Hermann (1913). *On memory: A contribution to experimental psychology*. New York: Teachers College.
- Can you tell if a person is introverted or extroverted by sucking a lemon? The Relation between Introversion and Salivation. D. W. J. Corcoran. *The American Journal of Psychology*. Vol. 77, No. 2 (Jun., 1964), pp. 298-300.

Additional information

None.

Internal Assessment Resource

Achievement standard: 91846

Standard title: Conduct psychological research with guidance

Credits: 4

Resource title: Let's check it out!

Resource reference: Psychology 2.3B Version 2

Student instructions

Introduction

This assessment activity requires you to select a topic (from a selection of topics your teacher has provided) and conduct your own psychological research.

You are going to be assessed on how comprehensively you justify your research method, evaluate the reliability of the data and the validity of the method and discuss the psychological ideas related to the research.

Teacher note: Insert due dates and time frames.

Task

Part A: Conduct research

- develop a statement of the aim and purpose of your research which is linked to a psychological concept or idea
- use scientific research methods that comply with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand
- select and record data
- record source details
- interpret and report on the findings
- develop a valid conclusion derived from the findings which is relevant to the purpose of the investigation.

Part B: Write a report

Your report must include:

- an introduction with a clear aim and/or a hypothesis and purpose linked to the original idea
- a description of any variables such as the Independent Variable (IV) and Dependent Variable (DV)
- a description of how you conducted your research. Include: the method, design, sample, materials and procedure used
- an explanation of your results. This could include tables, graphs, data analysis and diagrams.

Depending on the context, as a guide, write 600 – 800 words for Part B.

Part C: Evaluate the reliability of your research and findings

- Justify the research method used.
- Evaluate the validity of the method and the reliability of the data.
- Discuss the psychological ideas relating to the research from other source(s).

You need to provide a list of sources used.

As a guide, write 200 – 300 words for Part C.

Assessment schedule: Psychology 91846 – Let's check it out!

Evidence/Judgements for Achievement	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Merit	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Excellence
The student conducts psychological research with guidance by: • developing a statement of the aim and purpose linked to a psychological concept or idea. **For example: (partial evidence)** *In 1951 Solomon Asch conducted a, now famous, experiment to investigate the extent to which social pressure from a majority group could affect a person to conform. Our aim was to see if we would get the same results as Asch in a school situation that is to see if we could get students to conform to group pressure.* Further evidence includes students: • selecting and recording data • using scientific research methods that comply with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand • providing evidence of recorded data • interpreting and reporting on the findings. A list of sources is provided. *The examples above are indicative samples only*	The student conducts in-depth psychological research with guidance by: • further refining the research process such as describing the reasons for the choice of the method used to conduct psychological research • discussing the psychological ideas relating to the research based on the findings. **For example: (partial evidence)** *Asch's original experiment was a controlled (or laboratory) experiment so we tried to re-create this as closely as possible and used a classroom as the venue for the test. By using a controlled experiment the researcher is able to have control over variables such as background noise and time of day. We were also able to ...* *Our research showed that when faced with making an incorrect answer (following the incorrect answers given by year 12 students) the majority of year 9 students we tested conformed and gave an incorrect answer at least once. When asked about why they conformed, some participants said they knew the answer was wrong, but went along with it because …* Further evidence includes students: • evaluating the validity of the method and/or reliability of the data. A list of sources is provided. *The examples above are indicative samples only*	The student conducts comprehensive psychological research with guidance by: • further refining and detailing such as justifying the research method used • evaluating the validity of the method and the reliability of the data • discussing the psychological ideas relating to the research from other source(s). **For example: (partial evidence)** *Asch's original experiment was a controlled (or laboratory) experiment so we tried to re-create this as closely as possible and used a classroom as the venue for the test. By using a controlled experiment the researcher is able to have control over the variables and minimize any distractions or extraneous variables. By using an experiment, we were also able to show …. The experimental design could not have been a field experiment because ….* *One criticism of the method is that it has low validity. That is, the results that we got cannot be generalised beyond the setting. This is because … The data we gathered was not high in reliability. This may have been due to our sample. If we look at our results more closely we can see that three of the groups of four answered incorrectly consistently. These three groups were all made up of friends. This is because friends are more likely to …* *Our research showed that when faced with making an incorrect answer (following the incorrect*

		answers given by year 12 students) the majority of year 9 students we tested conformed and gave an incorrect answer at least once. When asked about why they conformed, some participants said they knew the answer was wrong, but went along with it because ... *Jenness also conducted research in 1935. This is in contrast to the researchers Perrin and Spencer (1980) who …* A list of sources is provided. *The examples above are indicative samples only*

Final grades will be decided using professional judgement based on a holistic examination of the evidence provided against the criteria in the Achievement Standard.