

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 3**. 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 3

Product	What's changed?
AS3.3 91874 Conditions of Assessment	Strengthened to ensure research methods are ethical and comply with the 'Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand'
AS3.2 91873 and AS3.3 91874 Combined Internal Assessment Activity	Task and assessment schedule updated to exemplify more ethical methods rather than social influence

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NCEA Level 3 Psychology

Conditions of Assessment

Version 2: October 2025

General Information

Subject Reference	Social Science Studies
Domain	Psychology
Level	3

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	91872 Psychology 3.1
Title	Analyse the interaction between psychological approaches
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 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 and assess this standard alongside:

3.2 Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society as some key research naturally fits with the (historical and contemporary) context of the approaches.

Possible formats for presentation of evidence could include:

- collaborative group work/approach
- written – newspaper or magazine article, blog, pamphlet, report
- 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	91873 Psychology 3.2
Title	Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society
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 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 research and the impact it has had. 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 and assess this standard alongside:

3.1 Analyse the interaction between psychological approaches as there may be a natural fit with the (historical and contemporary) context of the approaches

3.3 Conduct independent psychological research with consultation as some research naturally fits with the analysis of a key study.

Possible formats for presentation of evidence could include:

- collaborative group work/approach
- 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	91874 Psychology 3.3
Title	Conduct independent psychological research with consultation
Number of Credits	6
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.

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. Student evidence must show how the research complied with the principles of the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Non-compliance means the student has not met the requirements of the standard.

Teachers may choose to teach and assess this standard alongside:

3.2 Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society as it naturally fits with the preparation for conducting research.

Possible formats for assessment could include:

- collaborative group work/approach
- 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	91875 Psychology 3.4
Title	Analyse how theories are applied within a field of psychological practice
Number of Credits	4
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 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:

- collaborative group work/approach
- 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.



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Internal Assessment Resource

Psychology Level 3

This resource supports assessment against:

Achievement Standards 91873 and 91874

Achievement standard 91873

Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society

3 credits

Achievement standard 91874

Conduct independent psychological research with consultation

6 credits

Resource title: Hue knew? Psychology in colour

Resource reference: Psychology 3.2A and 3.3A Version 1

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 Version 1

Authenticity of evidence

For NCEA internal assessments, students must submit their own work. For evidence to be authentic, it must represent the independent knowledge or skills of the student. See the Conditions of Assessment for further assessment information specific to this internal achievement standard.

Internal Assessment Resource

Achievement standard: 91873

Standard title: Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society

Credits: 3

Achievement standard: 91874

Standard title: Conduct independent psychological research with consultation

Credits: 6

Resource title: Hue knew? Psychology in colour

Resource reference: Psychology 3.2A and 3.3A Version 1

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 both achievement standards. The achievement criteria, explanatory notes and Conditions of Assessment contain information, definitions, and requirements that are crucial when interpreting each standard and assessing students against it.

This activity is divided into two parts:

Part A (AS 91873)

Students will comprehensively analyse the significance of Elliot & Maier's (2012) research on colour and emotion perception. This includes exploring how their findings have influenced areas such as marketing, education, and environmental design.

Part B (AS 91874)

Students will independently conduct psychological research on an aspect of colour and emotion perception. For example, they might investigate whether different background colours influence how people rate the emotional tone of neutral images or words.

While students are expected to work independently, teachers must be available for consultation to support ethical and methodological decisions.

Students may collaborate in small groups to design their methodology and collect data but each student must individually analyse the data, reach their own conclusions, and submit an individual report.

Conditions

If students work in groups, teachers must ensure that each student provides individual

evidence of meeting all aspects of the standards.

As a guideline, assessment for these standards should reflect approximately 90 hours of teaching, learning, and assessment time, both in and out of class.

Teachers may provide guidance on appropriate structure of a scientific report and on suitable statistical methods for data analysis in line with Curriculum Level 8 of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC). The format and style of the report are not assessed under these standards.

Refer to the official Conditions of Assessment for these standards at:

<http://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-Internally-Assessed-Achievement-Standards>

Resource Requirements

- Access to the internet and relevant psychological literature
- Tools for data collection (e.g., surveys, rating scales, visual stimuli)
- The Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Additional Information

Key research reference:

- Elliot, A. J., & Maier, M. A. (2012). *Color-in-context theory*. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 45, 61–125.

This research explores how colour influences psychological functioning depending on context, and has had wide-reaching implications in design, marketing, and education.

Code of Ethics

- Teachers must ensure that all student research is conducted ethically.

Refer to the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand:

http://www.psychologistsboard.org.nz/cms_show_download.php?id=237

Internal Assessment Resource

Achievement standard: 91873

Standard title: Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society

Credits: 3

Achievement standard: 91874

Standard title: Conduct independent psychological research with consultation

Credits: 6

Resource title: Hue knew? Psychology in colour

Resource reference: Psychology 3.2A and 3.3A Version 1

Student instructions

Introduction

This assessment activity is in two parts that, when combined, will form a research report.

- *Part A requires you to:*
Analyse the significance of Elliot & Maier's (2012) research on colour and emotion perception. You will critique how this research has had a positive or negative impact on society by examining its methodology, issues, and the validity of its findings.
- *Part B requires you to:*
Design, conduct, and present your own research into an aspect of how colour may influence emotional perception.

You are going to be assessed on:

- How comprehensively you analyse the impact of Elliot & Maier's research on society.
- How comprehensively you design, conduct, and report your own psychological research.

You may work with others to develop your procedure and collect data, but you must ensure that your final submission provides clear evidence that you have individually met all aspects of the standard.

Teacher note: Insert due dates and timeframes

Task Overview

You will first analyse the original research by Elliot & Maier (2012), then conduct your own related investigation.

Part A: Analyse Key Research

AS91873: Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society

You will independently analyse a key piece of psychological research; Elliot & Maier's work on colour and emotion. Your analysis should explore the significance of this research within the field of psychology and its broader societal impact.

You must work individually for Part A. Your analysis should demonstrate your ability to critically engage with psychological research, including its relevance, influence, and methodological strengths or limitations.

Your analysis must include:

- a discussion of what made Elliot & Maier's research significant in the field of psychology
- a detailed critique of how this research has impacted society (e.g. in marketing, education, design)
- an explanation of how the research remains relevant today due to its methodology or findings
- references to psychological theories, concepts, or other studies that have been influenced by or relate to this research
- an evaluation of the methodology, including any limitations, issues, or concerns about the validity of the findings
- a reasoned judgement about whether the research has had a positive or negative impact on society.

Part B: Conduct Your Own Research

AS91874: Conduct independent psychological research with consultation

You will independently design and carry out a psychological investigation related to colour and emotion perception. Your research should explore how colour may influence emotional responses or judgments.

You may work with others to develop your procedure and collect data, but your final report must clearly demonstrate your individual understanding and contribution.

Your report should demonstrate your ability to:

- independently design and conduct psychological research
- plan and carry out ethical research procedures
- collect, analyse, and interpret data
- evaluate your research design and findings
- justify your methodological choices and suggest directions for future research.

Your report must include:

- Introduction: outline the background, rationale, and aims/ hypothesis of your research.
- Method: describe your research design, participants, materials, procedure, variables
- Ethical considerations: provide evidence that your research complies with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

- Results: present and explain your findings using appropriate tables, graphs, or summaries.
- Discussion: interpret your findings, critically evaluate the strengths and limitations of your research method, assess the reliability and validity of your data, reference relevant psychological theories or concepts.
- Conclusion: briefly summarise your findings in relation to your hypothesis and their implications, and propose directions for future research.
- References: include a list of sources used in both your analysis (Part A) and your own research (Part B).

Presentation and Submission

You will present your analysis of Elliot & Maier's research (Part A) and your own psychological research (Part B) together as one research project, in a format agreed upon with your teacher. This could be:

- A written report
- A journal-style article
- A poster presentation, like those used in science fairs.

You are encouraged to focus on the quality of your analysis and research, not the length of your submission.

Assessment schedule: Psychology 91873 and 91874 – Do you see what I see?

Part A

AS91873: Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society

Evidence/Judgements for Achievement	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Merit	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Excellence
<p><i>Analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society.</i></p> <p>The student analyses what made a key piece of research significant and how this research has had an impact on society. In their evidence, the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussed the significance of Elliot & Maier's research on color and emotion perception. discussed how the research has had an impact on society (e.g., in marketing, education, or design). supported discussions with specific examples from the research or its applications. <p>For example: <i>Elliot & Maier's research is significant because it showed how colour can influence emotional and cognitive responses. Their findings have been applied in many real-life contexts to influence behaviour. For example, certain colours were found to trigger anxiety because of their association with danger and failure and their use is now deliberately avoided in educational contexts.</i></p> <p><i>The example above is an indicative, partial sample only.</i></p>	<p><i>Analyse, in depth, the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society.</i></p> <p>The student analyses in depth the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society. In their evidence, the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critiqued how Elliot & Maier's research has had an impact on society and how this research continues to be significant included references to psychological theories, concepts and/or studies from public works that have been influenced by this research. <p>For example: <i>Elliot and Maier's research on colour and emotion perception has had a profound and lasting impact on both scientific understanding and practical applications in society. An example of its continued significance is how marketing companies use colour to influence consumer behaviour and evoke emotional responses. In a sporting context, Hill & Barton (2005) found that athletes wearing red were more likely to win echoing Elliot & Maier's research</i></p> <p><i>The example above is an indicative, partial sample only.</i></p>	<p><i>Comprehensively analyse the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society.</i></p> <p>The student analyses, comprehensively, the significance of a key piece of research and its impact on society. In their evidence, the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critiqued, in detail, how Elliot & Maier's research has had a positive or negative impact on society included the significance of methodology, issues and validity of findings. <p>For example: <i>Elliot and Maier's research on colour and emotion perception Elliot has had a positive impact on society by empowering designers to use colour intentionally to evoke emotional responses, improving user experience in digital platforms, architecture and even in educational resources. A strength of their lab-based studies meant precise manipulation of variables could be carried out enabling cause-and-effect conclusions. However, critics argue that lab settings may not reflect real world environments bringing into question the ecological validity of the research. Additionally, the studies took place in western contexts and may not apply to other global</i></p>

		<p><i>populations. This limits the validity of the methodology as cultural differences in colour perception are underexplored.</i></p> <p><i>The example above is an indicative, partial sample only.</i></p>
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Part B

AS91874: Conduct independent psychological research with consultation

Evidence/Judgements for Achievement	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Merit	Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Excellence
<p><i>Conduct independent psychological research with consultation.</i></p> <p>The student conducts independent psychological research with consultation, demonstrating the ability to plan, carry out, and report on an investigation linked to a psychological concept. In their evidence, the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developed a clear aim linked to a psychological concept (e.g. colour and emotion). Considered the ethical aspects of research and selected methods that comply with the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand collected data ethically reached a valid conclusion and reported findings. <p>For example: <i>This research used an experimental design to test whether background colour affects emotional word ratings. Participants rated words on a scale after viewing them on different coloured backgrounds. The method allowed control over</i></p>	<p><i>Conduct, in depth, independent psychological research with consultation.</i></p> <p>The student conducts in-depth, independent psychological research with consultation, demonstrating the ability to plan, carry out, and report on an investigation linked to a psychological concept. In their evidence, the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> designed an effective research design and explained why it was chosen. evaluated the method and/or the reliability and validity of the data. discussed psychological ideas based on the findings. <p>For example: <i>An experimental method was chosen to control variables such as lighting and distractions. This allowed for a clearer cause-effect relationship. However, the artificial setting may reduce ecological validity. The findings suggest that warm colours increased positive ratings, supporting theories of colour-emotion association.</i></p> <p><i>The example above is an indicative, partial sample only.</i></p>	<p><i>Comprehensively conduct independent psychological research with consultation.</i></p> <p>The student comprehensively conducts independent psychological research with consultation, demonstrating the ability to plan, carry out, and report on an investigation linked to a psychological concept. In their evidence, the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> justified the research design and method used. used findings to suggest future research directions. provided a list of sources. <p>For example: <i>A repeated measures design was chosen because it helps control for individual differences between participants, which could otherwise act as confounding variables in an independent groups design. However, one potential issue with repeated measures is order effects, where the order of conditions may influence participants' responses. To minimise this, the presentation order of the colours was</i></p>

<p><i>variables and followed ethical guidelines.</i></p> <p><i>The example above is an indicative, partial sample only.</i></p>		<p><i>counterbalanced.</i></p> <p><i>A laboratory experiment was selected as the most suitable method because it allows for a high level of control over extraneous variables, making it possible to establish a cause-and-effect relationship. Although a field experiment might have increased ecological validity and made the findings more applicable to real-world settings, it would have introduced more environmental variables, reducing control and making the study harder to replicate reliably.</i></p> <p><i>The example above is an indicative, partial sample only.</i></p>
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Final grades will be decided using professional judgement based on a holistic examination of the evidence provided against the criteria in the Achievement Standard.