

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 **Social Studies Level 1**. 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: Social Studies Level 1

Product	What's changed?
Conditions of Assessment across all internal standards	Updated to provide clearer guidance around authenticity.
AS1.1 92048 Internal Assessment Activities	Updated to clarify that these tasks involve using findings from research which must take place prior to the assessment activity.
AS1.3 92050 Unpacking	Updated to align with the revised Achievement Standard criteria.
Subject Learning Outcomes	Updated to align with the revised Achievement Standard criteria for 1.3.

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NCEA Conditions of Assessment across all internally assessed standards

Subject:	All NZC subjects
Achievement Standard:	All NZC internal Achievement Standards

The Conditions of Assessment across all Level 1 internally assessed standards have been updated to include clearer guidance about authenticity. Any changes to Standard Specific Conditions of Assessment will be shown separately within this document.

Conditions of Assessment for internally assessed standards

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.

NCEA Internal Assessment Activity

Activity name:	Youth activism in the Pacific
Subject:	Social Studies 1.1a
Achievement Standard:	92048
Credits:	5
Assessment Activity Version:	4

Note to teacher: This Internal Assessment Activity may be used unchanged, or can be adapted by the teacher, ensuring that all requirements of the Achievement Standard are still met. This textbox should be removed prior to sharing the activity with your students.

What to do

You are going to demonstrate your understanding of findings of a social inquiry related to youth activism in the Pacific. You will explain and evaluate these findings by answering a focus question that you have formulated prior to this Assessment Activity.

Prior to this assessment activity, you will have gathered evidence from primary and secondary sources related to your social inquiry focus question. You will have selected and processed this evidence in order to generate your findings, which will be used to answer your focus question in this assessment activity.

To explain and evaluate your social inquiry findings, you should:

- give detailed information about your findings that directly acknowledge and answer your focus question
- examine your focus question further by making judgements. This involves:
 - making critical connections between your ideas
 - drawing well-reasoned conclusions.
- use evidence from primary and secondary sources to develop your explanations:
 - to ensure you have valid evidence to develop your explanation, you will have recorded the details of sources used, such as the names of people interviewed and their roles, and the date and time, or the title, author, year, and place. These details will vary depending on the type of source.

How to present your learning

You can use a variety of ways to communicate your findings, such as:

- an oral presentation with supporting visuals (3-4 minutes)
- a written report including visuals (within 750-800 words)

- a digital presentation including visuals (check with your kaiako to ensure you meet guidelines).

Timeframe

You will have up to three weeks of class time to complete this Assessment Activity.

Getting started

Prior to this assessment activity you will have already:

- developed a challenging focus question for your social inquiry with help from your kaiako
- identified an appropriate inquiry framework for Pacific contexts which considers the people at the centre of the issue that you could apply
- discussed how to collect primary evidence. Identify things that need extra consideration when you do this
- brainstormed who you might be able to talk to, how you will contact them, and what you may ask. Make sure you do this in an ethical and culturally sustaining way.
- created a template so you can record the details of the sources you use
- discussed what concepts might be relevant, such as identity, culture, vā, kuleana, and justice.

NCEA Internal Assessment Activity

Activity name:	Fashionably fast
Subject:	Social Studies 1.1b
Achievement Standard:	92048
Credits:	5
Assessment Activity Version:	4

Note to teacher: This Internal Assessment Activity may be used unchanged, or can be adapted by the teacher, ensuring that all requirements of the Achievement Standard are still met. This textbox should be removed prior to sharing the activity with your students.

What to do

You are going to demonstrate your understanding of findings of a social inquiry related to fast fashion. You will explain and evaluate these findings by answering a focus question that you have formulated prior to this Assessment Activity.

Prior to this assessment activity, you will have gathered evidence from primary and secondary sources related to your social inquiry focus question. You will have selected and processed this evidence in order to generate your findings which will be used to answer your focus question in this assessment activity.

To explain and evaluate your social inquiry findings, you should:

- give detailed information about your findings that directly acknowledge and answer your focus question
- examine your focus question further by making judgements. This involves:
 - making critical connections between your ideas
 - drawing well-reasoned conclusions.
- use evidence from primary and secondary sources to develop your explanations:
 - to ensure you have valid evidence to develop your explanation, you will have recorded the details of sources used, such as the names of people interviewed and their roles, and the date and time, or the title, author, year, and place. These details will vary depending on the type of source.

How to present your learning

You can use a variety of ways to communicate your findings, such as:

- an oral presentation with supporting visuals (3-4 minutes)
- a written report including visuals (within 750-800 words)
- a digital presentation including visuals (check with your kaiako to ensure you meet guidelines).

Timeframe

You have up to three weeks of class time to complete this Assessment Activity.

Getting started

Prior to this assessment activity you will have already:

- built your current understanding of fast fashion by doing some background 'finding out'
- developed a challenging focus question for your social inquiry with help from your kaiako
- created a template to record the details of the sources you use
- identified key people or groups involved in or impacted by fast fashion
- identified an appropriate inquiry framework for your chosen context that you could apply which considers the people at the centre of the issue
- found out if there are groups or people in Aotearoa New Zealand currently working on improving things related to fast fashion
- brainstormed who you might be able to talk to, how you will contact them, and what you may ask
- thought about how Social Studies concepts are connected to fast fashion, such as human rights, equity, justice, economics, manaakitanga, aroha, whakawhanaungatanga, and mana.

NCEA Internal Assessment Activity

Activity name:	Pass it on
Subject:	Social Studies 1.1c
Achievement Standard:	92048
Credits:	5
Assessment Activity Version:	4

Note to teacher: This Internal Assessment Activity may be used unchanged, or can be adapted by the teacher, ensuring that all requirements of the Achievement Standard are still met. This textbox should be removed prior to sharing the activity with your students.

What to do

You are going to demonstrate your understanding of findings of a social inquiry related to the flow of ideas and opinions on social media. You will explain and evaluate these findings by answering a focus question that you have formulated prior to this Assessment Activity.

Prior to this assessment activity, you will have gathered evidence from primary and secondary sources related to your social inquiry focus question. You will have selected and processed this evidence in order to generate your findings which will be used to answer your focus question in this assessment activity.

To explain and evaluate your social inquiry findings, you should:

- give detailed information about your findings that directly acknowledge and answer your focus question
- examine your focus question further by making judgements. This involves:
 - making critical connections between your ideas
 - drawing well-reasoned conclusions.
- use evidence from primary and secondary sources to develop your explanations:
 - to ensure you have valid evidence to develop your explanation, you will have recorded the details of sources used, such as the names of people interviewed and their roles, and the date and time, or the title, author, year, and place. These details will vary depending on the type of source.

How to present your learning

You can use a variety of ways to communicate your findings, such as:

- an oral presentation with supporting visuals (3-4 minutes)
- a written report including visuals (within 750-800 words)
- a digital presentation including visuals (check with your kaiako to ensure you meet guidelines).

Timeframe

You have up to three weeks of class time to complete this Assessment Activity.

Getting started

Prior to this assessment activity you will have already:

- developed a challenging focus question for your social inquiry with help from your kaiako.
- discussed Social Studies concepts that may be relevant to the focus of your inquiry such as tuakiritanga, whakapapa, kotahitanga, mana, mana motuhake, culture, and change.
- Created a template to record the details of the sources you use.
- Considered what perspectives and knowledge are important to this social inquiry and how you might integrate that into your selection of sources, findings, and evaluation.
- identified an appropriate inquiry framework for your chosen context that you could apply which considers the people at the centre of the issue.
- explored social media to get an understanding of ideas that are spreading via different platforms.
- brainstormed who you might be able to talk to, how you will contact them, and what you may ask.

NCEA Unpacking the Standard

Subject:	Social Studies
Achievement Standard:	1.3 Demonstrate understanding of decisions made in relation to a contemporary social issue
Credits:	5

The intent of the Standard

The intent of this Standard is for ākonga to engage with resources to demonstrate understanding of decisions made in relation to a contemporary social issue.

A contemporary social issue is an issue that is currently affecting various people, places, or both. A decision is a potential solution or resolution to the contemporary social issue. By examining decisions made, regardless of whether they are made by governments, institutions or communities, ākonga will gain insight into the root causes of the social issue, the stakeholders involved, the rationale behind the decisions made, and their intended outcomes. This Achievement Standard encourages ākonga to think critically and promotes civic engagement for positive social change. It also supports the development of more informed and well-considered decision-making in the future.

This Achievement Standard relates to the following Significant Learning:

- explore how power is exerted to influence multiple aspects of society and the impact on groups and communities
- explore different views about human rights and how they are valued and applied
- explore how and why identities and culture can be multiple and dynamic
- recognise that society's range of social organisation systems (such as social, political, cultural, spiritual) impact upon the rights, roles, and responsibilities of people and groups.

Making reliable judgements

The evidence produced by ākonga in this Achievement Standard will demonstrate understanding of decisions made in relation to a contemporary social issue. Their responses will describe the main features of the issue, such as the people, groups, or communities involved. To show their understanding of decisions made regarding the issue, ākonga will describe the intended outcomes of the decisions made, and include what the decision maker hoped to achieve with regard to the social issue.

At higher levels of achievement, ākonga will explain the rationale for decisions made in relation to a contemporary social issue. Their explanations will include the reasoning and purpose for decisions made in relation to the contemporary social issue. Discussion of the decisions made and how they relate to each other, such as whether they complement each other or not, is also a higher level requirement. Evidence from the sources provided is used to develop explanations.

Collecting evidence

The Standard allows ākonga to show understanding of differing decisions made in relation to a contemporary social issue through engaging with previously unseen resources.

Evidence of understanding will come from the ability of ākonga to describe, explain and examine decisions made in relation to the contemporary social issue and the stimulus materials ākonga draw from to support their explanations.

Possible contexts

In a teaching and learning programme, kaiako can support ākonga in exploring solutions and resolutions to a range of contemporary social issues, including considerations that may contribute to solutions and resolutions. For the purposes of this Standard, a contemporary social issue must consider one or a combination of the following:

- the inclusion of diverse identities
- the impact on people's rights
- the responsibilities and roles of social organisations
- the nature of power.

Examples of contemporary social issues and related ethical considerations are:

- the protection of land rights — justice, self-determination
- discrimination and bias within different institutions and systems — inclusivity, equity
- attitudes to youth activism — inclusivity, equity, self-determination
- mining for resources — integrity, justice
- access to and/or cost of education — equity, inclusivity.

Social Studies NCEA NZC Level 1

Subject Learning Outcomes for Assessment

Companion to the Social Studies Learning Matrix

What are the Subject Learning Outcomes and how can I use them?

Subject Learning Outcomes identify the knowledge and skills that students need to be ready for assessment. Subject Learning Outcomes are informed by the Achievement Standards. They should be used in conjunction with the full suite of NCEA materials. For guidance on assessment criteria, please also refer to the Achievement Standards, Unpacking, and External Assessment Specifications or Conditions of Assessment as appropriate.

Subject Learning Outcomes do not replace any documents. This includes the External Assessment Specifications and Conditions of Assessment. All NCEA materials need to be used to fully understand the requirements of each Achievement Standard and to plan a robust teaching, learning, and assessment programme. Subject Learning Outcomes should not be used to make assessor judgments. The Achievement Standard and the Assessment Schedule for Internal Assessment Activities are used to make such judgments.

Subject Learning Outcomes, alongside other key documents, make clear to teachers what to include in their teaching and learning programmes and what student capabilities to check for, in the lead up to assessment. Each Subject Learning Outcome does not need the same amount of teaching time.

All learning should connect with students' lives in Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific. Teachers or students usually select the contexts. As such, contexts are not always specified in the Subject Learning Outcomes. Examples may be provided to illustrate topics and contexts, but they are not prescriptive.

Students are entitled to teaching that supports them to achieve higher levels of achievement. Subject Learning Outcomes mainly align with outcomes for the Achieved level. However, outcomes for higher levels of achievement are also included.

The knowledge and skills in the Subject Learning Outcomes are the expected learning that underpins each Achievement Standard. Students will draw on this learning during assessment. It is important to note that assessment is a sampling process so not everything that is taught will be assessed.

Achievement Standard 1.1 (92048): Demonstrate understanding of findings of a social inquiry (5 Credits)

What is being assessed	Subject Learning Outcomes
Findings of an inquiry	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a culturally and ethically sound inquiry framework to produce findings • use a single question which is specific and could include a social studies concept or concepts. The question will relate to one or a combination of the given themes. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the impacts of a global flow ○ diversity and inclusion in society ○ the views on and application of human rights ○ the dynamic nature of identity and culture. <p>For example, how are Indigenous young people using a specific social media platform to express themselves and address the injustices they have faced?</p>
Communicate findings	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe findings that relate to a question about one or a combination of the given themes. Findings are understandings gained from processing primary and secondary sources. For example, describe a select group of young people and what they are sharing or engaging with on social media to express their Indigenous identities and cultures. Students could use social studies concepts in the description. For example, diversity, inclusion, identity, hononga, and culture. <p>For higher levels of achievement, students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain findings that address the focus of the inquiry. For example, what is being shared to express Indigenous identities and cultures gives a voice to underrepresented groups to highlight injustices or engage in social activism. • evaluate findings that examine the focus of the inquiry. This includes making judgements by critically connecting ideas and drawing well-reasoned conclusions. For example, critically connecting ideas such as human rights, power, and global flows.

Use of evidence from primary and secondary sources	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use relevant evidence from primary and secondary sources. Evidence refers to information that is collected and processed from sources to develop findings on an inquiry focus. For example, sources can include oral sources, artefacts, written sources, and visual sources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For higher levels of achievement, students are able to use this evidence to back up and strengthen their explanation.
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Achievement Standard 1.2 (92051): Describe a social action undertaken to support or challenge a system (5 Credits)

What is being assessed	Subject Learning Outcomes
Carrying out a social action	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe a social action they have undertaken and its aim in relation to a social issue. For example, establishing a social media page, creating and sharing content to inform young people about the negative effects of vaping among youth in Aotearoa.
Supporting or challenging a system	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe a system supported or challenged by their social action. Systems can exist in social, political, economic, or organisational contexts such as an environmental system, a media system, a local health system, a school system. For example, describing how sharing content from the Ministry of Health's 'Vaping Facts' initiative for youth established in 2022 supports the health system. <p>For higher levels of achievement, students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the impacts of the social action in supporting or challenging the system. Impacts are direct effects on individuals, groups, or places and can be short or long term, positive or negative. For example, sharing content from the Ministry of Health's Vaping Facts' initiative for youth established in 2022 supports the health system by helping get the information to a wider audience. Young people could be more likely to pay attention to social messages when they are devised by their peers rather than the Ministry of Health. • evaluate the suitability of the social action in supporting or challenging the system. This includes evaluating the planning, organising, and carrying out of the social action, to what extent those were suitable, and may consider alternative social actions that could have been more suitable. For example,

	evaluating the suitability of a social media page as a fast, convenient way to share information to a young demographic shows there has been an evaluation of what is an appropriate mode of communication for the targeted stakeholder.
Use of evidence	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use relevant annotated visual evidence from the action to demonstrate their individual participation. For example, photographs, screenshots, videos, and/or audio recordings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For higher levels of achievement, students will be able to use this evidence to back up and strengthen their explanation.

Achievement Standard 1.3 (92050): Demonstrate understanding of decisions made in relation to a contemporary social issue (5 Credits)

What is being assessed	Subject Learning Outcomes
Understanding a social issue	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe a current social issue affecting people and places. The issue could be related to one or a combination of the following social issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the inclusion of diverse identities ○ the impact on people's rights ○ the responsibilities and roles of social organisations ○ the nature of power. <p>For example, a description of the social issue of food insecurity may use the concepts of human rights, inequality in access to food, or responsibilities of NGOs.</p>
Decision-making	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe decisions made in relation to an issue. Decisions are potential solutions or resolutions to an issue. An example of a decision made for the social issue of food insecurity could be the decision for a business to donate their excess food to organisations such as Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance and New Zealand Food Network • describe the intended outcome of decisions made, including consideration of the objectives of the decision and what they hope to achieve in relation to the social issue. For example, for a business

	<p>donating excess food, the intended outcome of this decision is to redistribute surplus food in order to alleviate hunger and contribute to addressing food insecurity.</p> <p>For higher levels of achievement, students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the rationale for decisions made with reference to the social issue. This includes the reasoning and purpose behind the decision. For example, the rationale for a business making the decision to donate surplus food was to take positive community action and to be part of a solution to the contemporary social issue of food insecurity. Further reasoning included the reduction of food waste and minimising the business' carbon footprint by keeping food out of landfills. • discuss how decisions relate to each other, with reference to their rationale and the social issue. In their discussion, students will recognise that sometimes decisions complement each other to address the social issue more thoroughly, but sometimes decisions may interact in ways that are less effective or even adverse. For example, a business may decide to donate surplus food to help with the issue of food insecurity by feeding hungry people. Another decision for the business was to sponsor the local community māra kai who grow food and run workshops on growing food. While both decisions shared the aim to address food insecurity, donating food responds to immediate needs of alleviating hunger, whereas supporting the local māra kai contributes to long-term, sustainable solutions. Together, these decisions are complementary solutions for the issue of food security, addressing both immediate and long-term needs.
Use of evidence	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use relevant evidence from previously unseen resources. Examples of relevant evidence include appropriate names, dates, quotes, or statistics related to the social issue, and details of the proposed solutions or resolutions of decisions made. <p>For higher levels of achievement, students will be able to use this evidence to back up and strengthen their explanations.</p>

Achievement Standard 1.4 (92049): Demonstrate understanding of perspectives on a contemporary social issue (5 Credits)

What is being assessed	Subject Learning Outcomes
Understanding of a social issue	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe a current social issue affecting people and places. This could include using social studies concepts. For example, the rising the cost of living creates further inequity between groups within Aotearoa New Zealand.
Perspectives and viewpoints	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe how two or more different perspectives influence viewpoints. Perspectives can be broad such as liberal, environmental, or Indigenous. They are not always directly opposed. Viewpoints are what people think about a contemporary social issue. Within everyday actions, people express an opinion or viewpoint. For example, 'Make it 16' have a social justice perspective, and as such their viewpoint is that voting rights should be extended to 16- and 17-year-olds because they feel it goes against the Bill of Rights. <p>For higher levels of achievement, students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss how differing perspectives have influenced responses. Discussion of perspectives typically includes consideration of values and beliefs that influence a viewpoint and related actions or responses. For example, that Paul Goldsmith is a member of the National party and has a conservative perspective, as he values upholding the status quo and prioritising issues like law and order. Therefore, his viewpoint is that the vote shouldn't be extended to 16/17 year olds, particularly as there are other political priorities for the National party that involve youth. examine implications of the differing perspectives on society. Implications are wider consequences for society.
Responses to a social issue	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe differing actions or responses in relation to the contemporary social issue. For example, the social justice perspective and viewpoint of the Make it 16 campaign saw them lodge an appeal with the Supreme Court of New Zealand

	<p>For higher levels of achievement, students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the responses and their impacts. Impacts are direct effects of a response on individuals, groups, or places, and can be short or long term, positive or negative. The social justice perspectives and viewpoint of the Make it 16 campaign saw them respond to the issue by lodging an appeal with the Supreme Court of New Zealand. • Implications are the wider consequences for society, this may include real and possible consequences. A possible implication could be 'Make it 16' being negatively affected by a government response to rule out lowering the voting age to 16, as if a bill were to make it to parliament it would not gain enough support to become legislation”.
Use of evidence	<p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use relevant evidence such as appropriate names, dates, quotes, or statistics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For higher levels of achievement, students will be able to use this evidence to back up and strengthen their explanation.