

Expectations of industry training undertaken in schools

Primary ITO unit standards must be assessed with industry in mind. The expectation is that students will be able to utilise the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that they have gained at school, within the relevant primary industry sectors.

The following should be considered when determining student competency:

1. The outcome the industry expects is that students who are competent in practical unit standards will have the ability to utilise these skills in a commercial situation, with no requirement for further training other than familiarisation with aspects of each individual operation.
2. For knowledge-based unit standards, i.e., “Demonstrate knowledge of...”, the expectation is that students will have learned this knowledge in an industry context and be able to apply it within a workplace. It is therefore expected that although the topic might be seen as “theory”, aspects of practical application need to be contextualised to the learning. This could involve a range of learning situations such as practical experience and/or field trips to ensure students understand the application that theory has to the industry.

Key areas in meeting industry expectations and standards include:

- Learning should be carried out in an applied manner. Students should be given opportunities to practice and use the practical skills that they have learned and apply industry experience and context to the knowledge that they are gaining.
- Practical skills should be taught and assessed using up to date and appropriate industry equipment, resources, and practices (e.g., Animal Handling should be assessed in a real, commercial situation rather than on a lifestyle block with 10 sheep.) In this way, industry practice is being reflected.
- The schools must maintain facilities and resources to adequately deliver and assess Primary sector programs.
- Programmes should be embedded into the school culture and be a valued part of the school curriculum rather than a convenient method of managing the less-academic students.
- Teachers must have appropriate industry experience and qualifications. I.e. Current knowledge of the industry is required, as well as appropriate ongoing professional development.
- There should be strategies/policies and procedures in place for a programme to be able to continue if the teacher who is running it becomes unavailable for any reason. This is important, as in many cases the fact that a programme is working well is down to the teacher who is running it. Primary ITO needs to be confident that if a teacher were no longer available, a programme could continue to run and there would be no impact on the quality of learning or assessment.
- Selected Level 1 and Level 2 unit standards are generally appropriate for schools and should be taught from Year 11 onwards. If students are to be assessed against Level 3 unit standards or above, they should be in Year 13 and have had significant industry experience.
- Practical unit standards should be taught and assessed by someone who has the appropriate ability and experience.
- There needs to be evidence of students having spent sufficient time practically before being assessed as competent. Good practice would be for the student to gather evidence (e.g., via a diary or logbook) of their experience over a period of time, before being finally assessed as competent.
- Teaching and assessing on the same day is not good educational practice. There is a period of time that needs to occur between any learning and assessment carried out, so that the learning is embedded, and the students are not relying on short-term memory.

- In many cases, schools who are doing small numbers of unit standards, or who do not have expertise in certain areas will be better to engage an outside provider to assist with the delivery and assessment in these areas. If using an outside provider, an MOU that reflects Quality processes should be in place to ensure effective delivery and assessment.
- For practical unit standards there should be an ongoing collection of evidence in a practical environment. Teachers need to maintain notes/comments on individual student assessments so that a Primary ITO Moderator can see how their assessment decisions were arrived at.
- Refer to the “Special Notes” or guidance information in the unit standards as to the requirements of an assessment.

Sufficiency of Evidence - Collect evidence over a period of time to ensure that students are able to demonstrate the required skills and knowledge and attitudes. The seasonal nature of the primary industries needs to be considered when scheduling assessments. Regarding attitude, students should be able to consistently demonstrate the following:

- Safe practices.
- Care of vehicles, machinery, equipment, plants, and other resources provided.
- A work ethos that will enable them to carry out practical tasks within a reasonable timeframe.

Levels - Teachers must assess to the correct Level (refer to NZQA Level Descriptors).

Oral Questioning - This should play a part in your evidence-gathering process for practically based unit standards to ensure that students understand the reasons for their practices. Use open questions such as “What, Where, Why, When, How, What if?” so that students can provide further explanation, rather than giving you a closed yes or no answer. Keep written notes of their responses.

Authentic Evidence - It must be the student’s own work. Students can work and study together, but you must be sure that students have attained the required competencies on an individual basis.

Health & Safety - Assessment must consider the health and safety of both yourself and your students - make sure that you do not put your own or your students’ health or safety at risk.

Consistency - A good question to ask yourself is “Would another Assessor make the same assessment decisions as me?”. Discuss the assessment decisions you make with other assessors as part of your internal moderation process. Consider the following:

- Have scripts moderated internally.
- Use Primary ITO Assessment Tasks and Assessor guides where available.
- Network with peers.

External moderation is required as part of Primary ITO Quality processes. This may be as:

- Postal, where assessment scripts and other associated evidence are made available to the Primary ITO for postal moderation as requested.
- Cluster group, where professional development will be combined with moderation of scripts.

Note: If developing using your own assessment tools, these must be pre-moderated by Primary ITO before use.