

Some important frequently asked questions about the 2015 PE Scholarship:

Compiled by NZHEA and PENZ



These questions have been answered by Jennifer Mackrell, Team Leader, Secondary Examinations, Assessment Division, NZQA

Q Can all our students do the same topic or should they do different ones?

A Ideally they would choose different topics on aspects or an aspect they find particularly interesting.

Q How can Health students get a PE Scholarship?

A They must satisfy the requirements of the performance standard but remember the standards in NZ Scholarship are based on the NZC at Level 8. Students do not have to be studying the subjects they enter for NZ Scholarship although they must be attending a NZ secondary school full-time in the year they sit.

Q Some of the suggested topics in the information doc seem too narrow (and v.v.)

A Any chosen topic must be able to be fully developed to satisfy the requirements of the standard. Topics that are too broad may lead to responses that lack the depth needed for success in scholarship.

Q There are no topics in the information doc that suit some of the key areas of learning of the HPE curriculum.

A The topics are only suggestions. There are no prescribed topics. One of the advantages of the move away from an exam is that topics for in-depth study can be selected by students, with teacher guidance.

Q The sample topics in the information for teachers do not show us exactly what a report could look like.

A The sample topics are pointing at possible ways of developing a report. The exemplars from the examinations in 2013 and 2014 (to be published after reconsiderations have been addressed) show the level of response required in terms of critical thinking but as pointed out in the information greater depth / breadth will be required in a crafted report. The Scholarship Assessment report (again published for 2014 when all examinations issues have been dealt with) also provides helpful pointers. The PE Scholarship report itself should not follow any template or other confining format, other than that provided for in the Assessment Specifications. The PE Scholarship reports for Technology do indicate the type of format that could be used for a practical report that incorporates research and critical thinking.

Q Why is there so much extra work involved?

A NZ Scholarship is only awarded to the top 3% of students and outstanding scholarship to the top 0.3% of students. It is therefore necessary to discriminate between the very top students in each subject in the country. This does require those students to be prepared to make an extra effort to excel.

Q How can a Health or Home Economics student do a PE Scholarship?

A This standard is based on the HPE curriculum but does have some specifically PE focussed terminology, particularly in aspects of the outcome description. Answers in the PE Scholarship examination over the past few years have reflected these aspects to varying degrees and I would expect this to still be the case. In 2014 a senior and experienced Health teacher was specifically recruited to join the PE Scholarship marking panel with a view to representing the Health perspective in marking. This was very successful and indicated how students functioning at scholarship level, where the specificity of subjects becomes less important than the high level critical approach, operate across the curriculum.

Q What sort of topics could a Health student use as a focus?

A The examples in the information that was provided recently were emphasised to be just examples out of a possible almost infinitely wide range of topics. A number referred to biophysical and sociocultural aspects as this is in the outcome descriptor but the curriculum and the performance descriptors will be the most important factors to be considered for assessment, as the draft assessment plan (p 2 of the information) shows. However, of the topics given I believe a number could be attempted from a Health perspective. These include particularly the 1st, 3rd, 6th and 9th examples.

Q Are there any Health focus exemplars?

A There will be no specific Health exemplars and the exemplars that have been produced are only skeletal to avoid copying and to emphasise that there is no expected format other than the details in the information accessed through the Assessment Specifications. As an example of a report that is at the standard for scholarship, students could refer to the Technology reports that are available online. The Secondary Examinations team offers

support to schools through the Assessment Specifications, annotated exemplars, and other written information such as Assessment Reports. There will not be workshops through NZQA although PENZ may be using their L3 workshops to explore scholarship. It is vitally important that students intending to enter scholarship in any subject study the Scholarship Performance Standard carefully to make themselves aware of the expectations at this level. Details can be accessed from

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/awards/new-zealand-scholarship/scholarship-subjects/scholarship-physical-education/>.

Q Why don't Health and Home Economics have their own scholarship?

A Health and Home Economics have not been successful in satisfying the requirements for selection as a scholarship subject. See the information about the criteria for selection <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/awards/new-zealand-scholarship/criteria-for-inclusion-of-a-subject/>. As an alternative, the use of the PE Scholarship standard was suggested although the scholarship remains Physical Education Scholarship in name. Changes to performance standards are unlikely in the immediate future although I will refer your concern regarding the performance outcome to the next review of these standards. The Scholarship list is reviewed every 2 years and is not due for review again until 2016.

Q How much reference to Biophysical aspects does a Health or Home Economics student need to make?

A If you look at the performance standard it does refer to the biophysical and sociocultural aspects in the outcome description although these terms are not specifically referred to in the curriculum. In the definitions in the standard and elsewhere these can be broadly interpreted. I suggest you look at the recent exemplars from the PE Scholarship examination (the 2014 ones will not be published until after the reconsiderations are completed, probably late May 2015) for the extent of reference to biophysical and sociocultural. You will see it is highly variable depending on the topic and I would expect this still to be the case in a report. As the report draws on aspects of the HPE curriculum ideally a chosen aspect would be related to the wider context of the curriculum, however the Scholarship remains in name Physical Education and incorporating the role of physical activity in health would be reasonable and expected.

Q How will the maximum 30 page limit work when there is also a 2000-3000 word limit?

A The suggested limit on the pages is very loose. The expectation is that candidates produce a report and there is flexibility in this. Anything that looks like a collection of level 3 work without a clear focus on a selected topic will discriminate against a candidate. At the moment markers spend approximately ½ hour marking 3 essays. It is expected to be about the same for one report. One of the criteria is communication; convincing for Outstanding and logical, precise and clear for Scholarship. Candidates who send in extraneous material will be penalised so long reports will be penalised if there is not a clear purpose for the words or

images used.

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