

# Making judgments

## Prep–Year 10

Teachers make evidence-based judgments about a student’s progress and achievement to inform teaching and learning, provide feedback to students and parents/carers and support school planning. Judgments about evidence of student learning are made against the Australian Curriculum achievement standard, which represents the C or equivalent standard. The [standards elaborations](#) have been developed as a resource to support teachers to make these judgments against the Australian Curriculum.

Teachers use their professional knowledge to make consistent, comparable and defensible on-balance judgments. An on-balance judgment is made by matching the qualities of student responses with the identified aspects of the achievement standard across a five-point scale. This provides transparency about how decisions are made, and supports conversations between teachers, students and parents/carers about the qualities in student work matched to the identified aspects of the achievement standard.

## Making an on-balance judgment

On-balance judgments can be applied to either an individual assessment or across an assessment folio, comprising multiple assessments.

### Making an on-balance judgment for an individual assessment task

- Identify the evidence of the [task-specific standards](#) (marking guide) within the completed student response
- Consider how this evidence best matches the discernible differences or qualities associated with the task-specific standards
- Identify the pattern of evidence to make an on-balance judgment (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Sample on-balance judgment for an individual assessment task

	A	B	C	D	E
<b>The student work has the following characteristics:</b>					
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b>	Provides explanation of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity	Provides explanation of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity	Provides explanation of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity	Provides explanation of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity	Provides explanation of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity
	Provides identification and description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present	Provides identification and description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present	Provides identification and description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present	Provides identification and description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present	Provides identification and description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present
	Provides description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century	Provides description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century	Provides description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century	Provides description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century	Provides description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century
	Provides reasoned comparison of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity	Provides informed comparison of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity	Provides comparison of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity	Provides identification of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity	Provides statements about experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity
<b>Inquiry and skills</b>	Provides development of open and informed questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity	Provides development of informed questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity	Provides development of appropriate questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity	Provides development of questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity	Provides development of questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity
	Provides location and collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources	Provides location and collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources	Provides location and collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources	Provides location and collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources	Provides location and collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources
	Provides thorough examination of sources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>determine their origin and purpose</li> <li>identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present</li> </ul>	Provides informed examination of sources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>determine their origin and purpose</li> <li>identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present</li> </ul>	Provides examination of sources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>determine their origin and purpose</li> <li>identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present</li> </ul>	Provides partial examination of sources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>determine their origin and purpose</li> <li>identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present</li> </ul>	Provides fragmented examination of sources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>determine their origin and purpose</li> </ul>
	Provides interpretation of data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify and describe and compare patterns and trends about Australia's national identity</li> <li>infer relationships</li> <li>evaluate evidence to draw conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity</li> </ul>	Provides interpretation of data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify, describe and compare, with detail, patterns and trends about Australia's national identity</li> <li>infer relationships</li> <li>evaluate evidence to draw informed conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity</li> </ul>	Provides interpretation of data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify, describe and compare patterns and trends about Australia's national identity</li> <li>infer relationships</li> <li>evaluate evidence to draw conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity</li> </ul>	Provides interpretation of data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify aspects of, and partially describe and compare patterns and trends about Australia's national identity</li> <li>infer relationships</li> <li>evaluate evidence to draw partial conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity</li> </ul>	Provides fragmented interpretation of data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify aspects of, and partially describe and compare patterns and trends about Australia's national identity</li> <li>infer relationships</li> <li>evaluate evidence to draw partial conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity</li> </ul>
<b>Overall result:</b>	B	B	C	D	E
	<b>Feedback comments:</b>				

The pattern of evidence leads to an on-balance judgment of an overall result of 'B'.

# Making an on-balance judgment for an assessment folio

An assessment folio contains multiple assessment tasks and responses that provide evidence of a student's learning for the reporting period. To assist the process, the QCAA [standards elaborations](#) resource can be used to ensure the entire achievement standard has been assessed across a year or band of years. The assessment folio should:

- assess the identified knowledge, understanding and skills from the achievement standard
- provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate the depth and breadth of their learning
- monitor progress over time, e.g. progressively record student achievement for each assessment task in a student profile
- cover a range and balance of assessment techniques and conditions.

Making an on-balance judgment on a folio involves a teacher, or a group of teachers, making a professional decision about how the pattern of evidence in the folio best matches the standard. An on-balance judgment considers all the evidence of achievement in the folio.

- Identify if there is an easy match to one level of achievement (A–E or equivalent), i.e. the on-balance judgment is obvious.
- If there is uneven performance across the student folio:
  - take into account the range and distribution of standards descriptors
  - consider if more recent evidence demonstrates a pattern in the student's progress and achievement
  - decide what level of achievement the pattern of evidence of learning most closely reflects, i.e. A–E, or equivalent (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Sample on-balance judgment for an assessment folio

	A	B	C	D	E
<b>The student work has the following characteristics:</b>					
Knowledge and understanding	through explanation of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity	through explanation of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity	explanation of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity	identification of aspects of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity	statements about aspects of the significance an event/development, an individual and/or group has had on shaping Australia's past and its current national identity
	identification and through description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present	identification and detailed description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present	identification and description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present	identification of aspects and partial description of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present	statements about aspects of continuities and changes of Australian society for different groups in the past (20th century) and present
	through description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century	detailed description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century	description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century	partial description of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century	statements about aspects of the causes and effects of change on Australian society in the 20th century
Inquiry and skills	through comparison of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity	through comparison of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity	comparison of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity	through comparison of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity	through comparison of the experiences of different people in the past that have helped shaped Australia's national identity
	development of clear and informed questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity	development of informed questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity	development of appropriate questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity	guided development of questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity	directed use of questions to frame an investigation about the contribution made to shaping Australia's past and current national identity
	location and considered collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources	location and informed collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources	location and collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources	location and partial collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources	location and fragmented collection of useful data and information including images from primary and secondary sources
Overall result:	through examination of sources to: • determine their origin and purpose • identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present	through examination of sources to: • determine their origin and purpose • identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present	examination of sources to: • determine their origin and purpose • identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present	partial examination of sources to: • determine their origin and purpose • identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present	fragmented examination of sources to: • determine their origin and purpose • identify different perspectives about Australia's national identity in the past and present
	interpretation of data to: • identify and through describe and compare patterns and trends about Australia's national identity • infer relationships • evaluate evidence to draw conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity	interpretation of data to: • identify, describe and compare with detail patterns and trends about Australia's national identity • infer relationships • evaluate evidence to draw conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity	interpretation of data to: • identify, describe and compare patterns and trends about Australia's national identity • infer relationships • evaluate evidence to draw conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity	interpretation of data to: • identify aspects of, and partially describe and compare patterns and trends about Australia's national identity • infer aspects of relationships • evaluate evidence to draw partial conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity	interpretation of data to: • identify aspects of, and partially describe and compare patterns and trends about Australia's national identity • infer aspects of relationships • evaluate evidence to draw partial conclusions about the significance in shaping Australia's national identity
	purposeful presentation of ideas, findings, viewpoints and conclusions in a range of communication forms either written or orally with appropriate incorporation of relevant: • source materials • communication conventions (explanation through digital collage) • discipline-specific terms	informed presentation of ideas, findings, viewpoints and conclusions in a range of communication forms either written or orally that incorporate relevant: • source materials • communication conventions (explanation through digital collage) • discipline-specific terms	presentation of ideas, findings, viewpoints and conclusions in a range of communication forms either written or orally that incorporate: • source materials • communication conventions (explanation through digital collage) • discipline-specific terms	partial presentation of ideas, findings, viewpoints and conclusions in a range of communication forms either written or orally that incorporate aspects of: • source materials • communication conventions (explanation through digital collage) • discipline-specific terms	fragmented presentation of ideas, findings, viewpoints and conclusions in a range of communication forms either written or orally that incorporate aspects of: • source materials • communication conventions (explanation through digital collage) • discipline-specific terms
Overall result:	<b>B</b>			Task 1 Task 2 Task 3	
Feedback comments:					The pattern of evidence leads to an on-balance judgment of an overall result of 'B'.

## Additional resources

The QCAA has developed the following resources to support teachers and schools make judgments on student work:

- suggested [assessment techniques and conditions](#) support the development of a range and balance of assessments within an assessment program for each learning area
- the [standards elaborations](#) provide additional clarity when using the Australian Curriculum achievement standard to make judgments on a five-point scale
- [task-specific standards](#) (PDF) provides information about the purpose of these standards and how to use the standards elaborations to develop these.