

# New Zealand Scholarship Health and Physical Education

## 2026

A resource to support students preparing a report  
for HPE Scholarship (Health Education)



New Zealand Health Education Association (NZHEA)

# New Zealand Scholarship Health and Physical Education: A resource to support students preparing a report for HPE Scholarship (Health Education) (2026)

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**This resource is designed to be shared with students.  
It may be printed and adapted for own use.**

## Disclaimer:

Using the ideas presented in this resource cannot assume nor guarantee that any student's scholarship submission will meet that standard required for Scholarship performance or Outstanding Scholarship performance in the current year. It is only a guide to the requirements, and the quality of an individual submission will be judged by the marking panel using the published assessment criteria.

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# Purpose and overview of this resource

## Purpose:

This resource has been developed to support and guide students making a submission for the **Health and Physical Education Scholarship** (93501) award.

Note that “HPE” will be used as shorthand for Health and Physical Education throughout this resource. Similarly, **HEd = Health Education** and PE = Physical Education.

## Audience:

The main audience for this resource is **HEd** students in New Zealand schools and the HPE teachers of these students. However, many sections have relevance for HEc and PE students making a HPE scholarship submission. Where additional HEc or PE knowledge is required (beyond what is provided in this resource), this is noted.

## Overview:

The resource is divided into sections that aim to help students to:

1. Understand the requirements of HPE scholarship;
2. Understand the requirements of a critical evaluation;
3. Understand HPE knowledge;
4. Select a suitable topic; and
5. Prepare a report.

Although this resource contains many tables and templates that step you through various planning, learning and writing processes required to prepare your HPE Scholarship submission, critical insight may not be shown by simply ‘filling in the boxes’ indicated by these tables and templates. It is the overall quality of your responses to your topic and questions, the insights and depth of knowledge that these responses show in context of your selected topic, and the synthesis of ideas and coherence of your report, that result in a Scholarship level performance.

### Extra note for 2026.

**You may hear of a new Year 1-13 curriculum being released later in 2026 - before you submit your Scholarship report. Please note that you are NOT required to use anything from this curriculum as year 12 will not be implemented until 2029 and year 13 in 2030.**

## Submission date for HPE Scholarship 2026

# Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2026

<https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/scholarship-subjects/health-and-physical-education/>

# PART ONE

## Understanding the requirements of HPE scholarship

This section contains information about:

- The HPE Scholarship specification performance standard and assessment schedule
- The Assessment Report for New Zealand Scholarship, Health and Physical Education, 2025
- Teacher (or other adult) support
- A suggested process for preparing your submission

For the official notification of the HPE Scholarship Assessment Specifications go to <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/scholarship-subjects/health-and-physical-education/>

The screenshot shows a webpage titled "Health and Physical Education" with the subtitle "NZ Scholarship Health and Physical Education assessment specifications, resources and past exam materials". Below the title is a "Resources" section containing four cards:

- Scholarship Health and Physical Education assessment specifications**: Includes a document icon and a link "Open specifications →".
- Scholarship Health and Physical Education performance standard**: Includes a document icon and a link "Download [DOC, 396KB] →".
- Examination timetable**: Includes a calendar icon and a link "This year's examination timetable →".
- Choosing a report topic**: Includes an information icon and a link "Learn more →".

# The HPE Scholarship Assessment Specification and performance standard

The assessment specifications and performance standard are all-important as these statements describe the overall requirements for HPE Scholarship. A key purpose of this resource is to help you to understand the intent of these statements. These statements will be revisited throughout this resource.

## [Assessment Specifications](#) Scholarship Health and Physical Education 2026

This document is published each year and tells students what they need to base their report on – in this case one of three reports – and in broad terms what their report needs to consider and how to present it.

**Performance standard: 93501**

**Assessment method: Report**

### Format of the assessment

Candidates produce a report that critically evaluates a significant well-being challenge or issue facing young people in New Zealand today.

#### To critically evaluate means to:

- identify the nature of the health or physical activity challenge or issue (supported by relevant data)
- provide **two or more** perspectives on the challenge (bodies of thought, as supported by evidence)
- propose future solutions and / or health promotion actions to address the challenge and enhance young people's well-being.

#### The report should integrate the following:

- hauora, attitudes and values, the socio-ecological perspective, and health promotion concepts
- bio-physical principles and / or sociocultural factors as relevant
- primary data / own evidence, reflections and / or personal learning experiences
- evidence from at least one of the following documents:

Document One	Document Two
<a href="#">Overview of Youth Health NZ</a> 2024	<a href="#">The Child and Youth Strategy</a> 2024-27 NZ
Document Three	Document Four
<a href="#">Active NZ: Participation Trends</a> 2017- 2023	<a href="#">Sport NZ Strategic Plan</a> 2024-2028

#### The report must:

- not exceed the equivalent of 26 double-spaced single-sided A4 pages
- have numbered pages
- use a font the approximate equivalent of 12 point Arial
- provide references in one consistent format, preferably footnotes.

The report may contain relevant and meaningful images, sketches, diagrams, illustrations, and other forms of graphic representation.

Material obviously in excess of the maximum limit will not be marked. Repeated or extraneous material may be seen as evidence of flawed communication.

Appendices to the report must contain only selected relevant information that is directly referred to in the report, e.g. a questionnaire or brief video. Appendices are included in the 26-page limit.

### **Special notes**

Familiarity with the New Zealand Scholarship Health and Physical Education resources, including the descriptors in the Performance Standard, is essential.

### **Conditions of assessment**

The use of chatbots, generative AI, paraphrasing tools, or other tools that can automatically generate content is not permitted and material generated by these tools should not be submitted as part of the candidate's work.

### **Submission requirements**

Evidence may be submitted as ONE document file (PDF, DOC, or DOCX), with a maximum file size of 5GB. Information for candidates and schools on the NZQA digital submission portal is available on the NZQA [website](#).

Special assessment conditions Refer to the NZQA website for further information: [Aromatawai special assessment conditions](#).

**The purpose of this resource is to help you unpack and understand what you need to do to prepare a HPE Scholarship report.**

**Important: some of these requirements changed in 2025. These changes have been continued in 2026. Please ensure you are using material specifically stated in the 2026 assessment specifications.**

**Note that the Child and Youth Strategy 2024-2027 is different to the version published in 2019.**

## [New Zealand Scholarship Health and Physical Education Performance Standard](#)

This document remains the same from year to year and only an overall review of Scholarship can change it. As the title says, it outlines the 'performance standard' – what students need to show they understand to achieve HPE Scholarship.

### **Outcome Description**

The student will use knowledge of the health and physical education learning area to critically evaluate information related to health and physical activity through the application of the concept of hauora, bio-physical principles and socio-cultural factors drawn from learning experiences in, through and about, health-related and human body movement contexts.

### **Scholarship Performance Descriptor**

The student will demonstrate aspects of high level:

- analysis and critical thinking
- integration, synthesis, and application of highly developed knowledge, skills, and understanding to complex situations
- logical development, precision and clarity of ideas.

### **Outstanding Performance Descriptor**

**In addition to the requirements for Scholarship, the student will also demonstrate, in a sustained manner, aspects of:**

- perception and insight
- sophisticated integration and abstraction
- independent reflection and extrapolation
- convincing communication.

### **Explanatory Notes**

This standard is derived from the Health and Physical Education learning area in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Learning Media, Ministry of Education, 2007) up to and including Curriculum Level 8, and is related to the [Physical Education Teaching and Learning Guide](#).

### **Subject specific definitions:**

- *Critical evaluation* means to challenge assumptions and taken-for-granted points of view, through reflecting, examining pros and cons, bias and different perspectives to make informed, valid judgements supported with evidence.
- *Analysis and critical thinking* means to examine and critique material in detail to evaluate information, understandings, differing perspectives / viewpoints and practices, leading to valid and substantiated judgements.
- *Sustained manner* means to demonstrate across a range of contexts.
- *Perception and insight* means using analysis and evaluation to demonstrate new understanding.
- *Integration and abstraction* requires identification, explanation, and analysis of links and interrelationships from a range of relevant information and opinions.
- *Convincing communication* requires a fully integrated, fluent and precise presentation to demonstrate elegance / style / flair / refinement, complexity, and originality.
- *Bio-physical principles* refer to the principles of anatomy, biomechanics, exercise physiology, sports psychology, and nutrition as they relate to human body movement.
- *Socio-cultural factors* relate to social and cultural environments and contexts.

This performance standard should be read in conjunction with the [Assessment Specifications](#) for the standard, which can be accessed through the Subject page on the NZQA website.

Assessment against this performance standard is administered under the [Rules and Procedures for Secondary Schools](#), which can be found on the NZQA website.

**These two documents need to be used hand in hand.**

**The information in these two tables – the Assessment Specification and the Performance Standard - will be expanded upon in detail across this resource.**

**The Assessment Specification describes what you need to do in 2026.**

**The Performance Standard outlines the broad intent of HPE Scholarship.**

# Assessment Schedule

NZQA publishes the HPE Scholarship assessment schedule after marking each year's submissions to indicate how the submitted reports were marked. **This document contains a lot of useful information describing the expectations of the performance standard and the assessment specification.** Source the Assessment Schedule [here](#).

## How is New Zealand Scholarship marked?

Markers allocate a score of 0-8 for each component in the New Zealand Scholarship assessment using subject specific schedules. These are based on a Generic Marking Guide, as follows:

- An answer given a score of 8 is an outstanding answer in all respects. Strong evidence of integration and synthesis. As good as could be expected under examination conditions. Accurate, comprehensive, coherent, lucid, perceptive.
- A score of 1 shows meagre understanding relevant to the question.
- A score of 0 is awarded for answers that are blank or irrelevant.

The work of the highest scoring candidates is reviewed by marking panels, to identify the top candidates in each subject. Exam booklets for candidates whose scores are close to either the Scholarship or Outstanding cut-offs are also re-marked, to ensure their results are correct.

## HPE Assessment Schedule with Judgment Statements

Performance Descriptors	Outstanding Scholarship		Scholarship		Just below Scholarship		Below Scholarship
	8	7	6	5	4	3	2,1,0
Application of Knowledge	<p>Sophisticated integration and abstraction of concepts and ideas. (This is inclusive of, but not limited to, appropriate use of issues, theories, practices, and learning experience.)</p> <p>Exceptional depth of understanding and a balanced response (theory and practice).</p> <p>Complex syntheses of highly developed knowledge, concepts, and ideas.</p> <p>Divergent ideas and</p>	<p>Integration and abstraction of concepts and ideas. (This is inclusive of, but not limited to, appropriate use of issues, theories, practices, and learning experience.)</p> <p>Theoretical and practical balance, although limited viewpoints may have been considered. (There is sufficient depth in some areas.)</p> <p>Logical syntheses of highly developed knowledge, concepts, and ideas.</p>	<p>Minimal integration and abstraction, and a lack of development of concepts and ideas.</p> <p>Possible imbalance between theory and practical, viewpoints are limited, breadth over depth. Covers too many points inadequately, or may have a narrow focus.</p> <p>Knowledge, concepts, and ideas are not logically synthesised.</p> <p>Future actions may have been addressed, but lack relevance and / or cohesion.</p>	<p>Many unsubstantiated assumptions and generalisations.</p>			

	independent conclusions related to future actions to enhance well-being.	Includes coherent conclusions related to future actions to enhance well-being.		
<i>Note: Concepts are inclusive of the HPE underlying concepts (hauora, socio-ecological perspective, attitudes and values, and health promotion), and topic-specific concepts. There is an expectation that the candidate draws from their own learning experiences, which may include collection of primary data, and / or personal reflections.</i>				
<b>Critical thinking</b>	High level, sophisticated, critical response and synthesised report.  Issues, theories, and practices are questioned and challenged with sophisticated insight and perception.  Independent reflection and extrapolation, employing sophisticated insight and perception.  Divergent ideas surrounding the selected topic.	A critical response and synthesised report.  Issues, theories, and practices are questioned and challenged with insight and perception.  Independent reflection substantiated coherently and logically.	Some evidence of critical response, but not sustained.  Issues, theories, and practices are examined in a superficial manner.  Independent reflection, however judgements may lack coherence and are not sufficiently substantiated.	2 = Minimal evidence of critical thinking or evaluation.  1 = Significant lack of critical thinking or evaluation.  0 = No relevant critical thinking or evaluation.
	<i>Note: The candidate is expected to show use of knowledge, critical thinking, and communication to evaluate a Health and Physical Education learning area context</i>			
<b>Communication</b>	Sophisticated and convincing communication.  Supports argument with relevant referenced evidence that provides insight and illumination.  Compelling argument that is sophisticated and logically developed.  Clear, precise, and / or creative use of terminology.	Communicates convincingly through a structured and coherent discussion that is supported with relevant referenced evidence.  Logical development of argument that is well substantiated.  Accurate use of terminology.	Although report is structured and includes substantiated arguments and referenced evidence, it may be unconvincing and lacks coherence.  Arguments are not interconnected and may lack fluency.  Use of terminology. (May be issues with accuracy.)	Account based writing and explanation alone.

## How scholarship differs to NCEA Achievement Standards

Scholarship is an award, not a qualification. If successful, students receive a monetary award, not a qualification. These awards are described [here](#).

The quality of each student's work is judged against a set of performance descriptors which are considered in relation to the performance standard and the assessment specifications. This assessment (or marking) process has some similarities to NCEA.

However, only the highest scoring submissions will gain a Scholarship award. Unlike NCEA, where you gain A, M or E if your work is of sufficient quality, in Scholarship, your work needs to be among the best 3% (approximately) of the cohort that year.

### In HPE:

- Scholarship is assessed or 'marked' by a panel of specialist HPE teachers and tertiary educators.
- The panel use an assessment schedule (see above).
- The HPE assessment schedule is divided into three aspects: **Application of knowledge, Critical thinking, and Communication.**
- Each submission is given a score of 0-8 in relation to each of the three aspects of the assessment schedule which produces a total mark out of 24.
- The total marks that result in a student being awarded Scholarship or Outstanding Scholarship may differ from year to year, depending on the quality of the submissions.
- Approximately 3 per cent of Year 13 students studying each subject at Level 3 are awarded Scholarship, which includes the one percent of students who are awarded Outstanding Scholarship, if they reach the standard that has been set. It is important to understand that unlike NCEA (and as indicated above), being awarded Scholarship depends on the quality your submissions and this quality is judged and ranked against other students, as well as being marked against the marking criteria.

## Mark Ranges for HPE Scholarship 2018-2025

	Scholarship		Outstanding Scholarship	
	Mark Range	No. of Candidates	Mark Range	No. of Candidates
<b>2025</b>	13-18	139	19-24	16
<b>2024</b>	13-18	104	19-24	14
<b>2023</b>	13-18	84	19-24	15
<b>2022</b>	13-18	77	19-24	14
<b>2021</b>	13-19	112	20-24	14
<b>2020</b>	13-19	115	20-24	12
<b>2019</b>	13-19	142	20-24	13
<b>2018</b>	13-19	136	20-24	17

## 2018-2025 HPE results

Year	Cohort	% Cohort Awarded Scholarship* (including Outstanding)	Scholarship (excluding Outstanding)	Outstanding
<b>2025</b>	11,272	<b>1.38%</b>	139	16
<b>2024</b>	9338	<b>1.26%</b>	104	14
<b>2023</b>	7580	<b>1.31%</b>	84	15
<b>2022</b>	4735	<b>1.92%</b>	77	14
<b>2021</b>	5191	<b>2.43%</b>	112	14
<b>2020</b>	4482	<b>2.83%</b>	115	12
<b>2019</b>	4874	<b>3.18%</b>	142	13
<b>2018</b>	5404	<b>2.83%</b>	136	17

\*Note that only around 3% of candidates can receive Scholarship in each subject in any given year.

Other information about Scholarship or Outstanding Scholarship, and special awards such as the Top Subject Scholarship Awards are online at: <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/understanding-secondary-quals/nz-scholarship/nz-scholarship-results/>

# Assessment Report for New Zealand Scholarship, Health and Physical Education

**It is important to read the previous year's assessment report as it highlights areas of strengths and weaknesses that the markers have noticed.** Many of these points are addressed across this resource.

## New Zealand Scholarship Health and Physical Education 2025 Performance standard 93501

### General commentary

Overall, candidate responses demonstrated effective use of the relevant health and physical education documents listed in the Assessment Specifications (note this list was updated in 2025), with most candidates integrating it appropriately into their topics. Many candidates clearly identified their chosen well-being issue or challenge early in the report and attempted to apply perspectives to explore a range of viewpoints related to their chosen issue. **However, some candidates who referred to the new document(s) outlined in the assessment specifications did not apply different perspectives.** This suggests that, while the assessment specifications were accessed, they were not always fully understood or consistently applied.

### Some successful examples of perspectives included:

- using opposing viewpoints (for and against)
- a range of perspectives (e.g. youth, public health, government, or Sport NZ)
- different socio-ecological perspectives (e.g. personal, interpersonal and societal etc.)
- lenses guided by models and theories (e.g. healthism, Te Whare Tapa Whā, and determinants of health)
- perspectives from specific disciplines (psychological, biophysical, or sociocultural).

This year's submissions reflected a greater balance between Health-focused and Physical Education focused reports. Many candidates continued to select themes such as declining participation in sport and pressure within sport.

Reports generally maintained a socio-cultural focus, although it was pleasing to see a noticeable increase in attempts to integrate biophysical knowledge. Overall, there was an improvement in the quality of balanced reports, with evaluation more frequently established from the outset. Effective evaluation involved weighing different perspectives on the selected well-being issue or challenge and using these to develop a reasoned conclusion about its significance and implications.

**The critical evaluation is expected to focus on the well-being issue or challenge itself rather than on the strategy document.** While critique of the document(s) remains relevant, this should support, rather than substitute, the evaluation of the issue.

Although the choice of well-being issue or challenge remains open, this flexibility presented challenges for some candidates. Some selections demonstrated only a tenuous connection to a strategy document, resulting in limited integration and, at times, uncertainty as to whether the topic clearly sat within the Health and Physical Education curriculum.

Hauora was often treated in a formulaic and surface-level manner. Health promotion, and attitudes and values, were not as clearly or convincingly integrated as in previous years.

Notable strengths included sound knowledge of social determinants of health and key concepts such as self-determination, social comparison, and healthism, as well as effective application of the socio-ecological perspective. Evidence suggests that some schools submitted work originally produced by candidates for NCEA Achievement Standards with minimal adaptation for Scholarship. Simply extending an Achievement Standard report by adding a paragraph to link the topic to a strategy document does not meet the expectations of a Scholarship response.

**Report on performance standard Candidates who were awarded Outstanding Scholarship commonly:**

- demonstrated compelling critical evaluation through clear, engaging writing (without reliance on inflated vocabulary)
- employed a coherent structure (including purposeful headings) that supported a sustained and synthesised argument on an issue of personal relevance
- made explicit, well-integrated use of different perspectives to produce balanced, justifiable conclusions
- established a clear evaluative focus from the outset and maintained this focus throughout the report
- showed in-depth understanding of relevant Health and Physical Education concepts, integrating socio-cultural and biophysical knowledge where appropriate
- integrated the required strategy document(s) effectively, demonstrating a high level of understanding and critical thinking
- integrated, where possible, both socio-cultural and biophysical knowledge and concepts
- used social theories thoughtfully as analytical lenses to deepen critique
- grounded claims in up-to-date, relevant research (often Aotearoa New Zealand-based), challenging taken-for-granted assumptions
- embedded cultural knowledge and applied health promotion frameworks (e.g., Te Pae Mahutonga, Ottawa Charter) with appropriate issue-specific actions suggested for each component of the chosen framework
- demonstrated independent, divergent thinking and used evidence and theory purposefully to justify conclusions and consider future implications.

**Candidates who were awarded Scholarship commonly:**

- selected topics clearly linked with the Health and Physical Education curriculum area
- engaged with the updated Assessment Specifications, integrating one or more required document(s) purposefully and demonstrating critical engagement rather than token reference
- established a clear critical evaluation of the selected well-being issue or challenge from the start of their report
- organised reports coherently (with purposeful headings) to support a sustained, synthesised argument
- substantiated the well-being issue or challenge and its impact on young people, using relevant, up-to-date evidence, including one of the specified documents (often Aotearoa New Zealand-based)
- incorporated a range of perspectives, albeit sometimes implicitly, to produce balanced, justifiable conclusions
- demonstrated conceptual depth by linking underlying Health and Physical Education concepts, and integrating a limited number of relevant biophysical and socio-cultural (e.g. determinants of health, social inequality, healthism, theories of motivation and hegemonic structures) knowledge and theory where appropriate
- evaluated the well-being issue or challenge clearly, extending to implications and feasible improvements to policy or strategy
- exhibited independent insight by questioning assumptions and biases, applying social theories, and weaving in candidate-generated evidence to strengthen the argument.

**Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship commonly:**

- selected topics that were not well suited to sustained critical evaluation or sat outside the Health and Physical Education curriculum scope

- did not clearly identify a specific well-being issue or challenge
- showed limited engagement with the updated assessment specifications, at times reflecting use of older, outdated versions
- did not integrate evidence from the required document(s); referencing was often absent or minimal
- lacked a clear structure and logical flow
- presented formatting and length issues (too long or too short; spacing, margins, font size; limited referencing)
- overused images that added little value to the development of their argument
- demonstrated limited understanding of underlying concepts and of the Level 8 Health and Physical Education New Zealand Curriculum knowledge
- attempted to cover too many theories or ideas superficially, undermining depth and coherence
- relied on descriptive writing and large quantities of data without meaningful analysis or synthesis
- omitted multiple perspectives or these were weakly integrated, reducing balance and justification for conclusions
- presented flawed or superficial arguments, with no evidence of their own experience, indicating limited understanding of the issue
- submitted work originally produced for Achievement Standards with minimal adaptation for Scholarship
- misinterpreted the Overview of Youth Health as a strategy document rather than a contextual summary of youth health in Aotearoa New Zealand.


Each year, along with the HPE Scholarship assessment report and assessment schedule, the previous year's Top Scholar report is made available. You can download these from the [NZQA website](#).

### Scholarship Health and Physical Education past exam material and exemplars

Select a year to download Scholarship Health and Physical Education past exam papers, exemplars, and assessment schedules and reports

 2025 Scholarship Health and Physical Education exam material [ZIP, 1MB]

 2024 Scholarship Health and Physical Education exam material [ZIP, 2MB]

 2023 Scholarship Health and Physical Education exam material [ZIP, 14MB]

 2022 Scholarship Health and Physical Education exam material [ZIP, 1MB]

# Scholarship preparation activity using the 2025 Top Scholar report

Access the 2025 HPE scholarship materials at this [link](#).

The student work in this folder includes:

- Exemplar outstanding scholarship
- Exemplar scholarship
- Exemplar top scholar

**(Note that similar files are also available for 2022 - 2024.)**

The outstanding scholarship and scholarship reports have been annotated (ie comments are provided about why they received the marks they did), but the top scholar report has not. The top scholar report received a grade of 24/24. That is, they gained full marks for the three categories in the marking schedule (application of knowledge, critical thinking, and communication).

**Your task is to annotate the top scholar report in a similar way to the examples of Scholarship and Outstanding Scholarship.**

**Overall:**

- As you read through the report, highlight/underline/note sentences or ideas of interest to you. Why do these stand out to you as the reader, as you think about preparing your own Scholarship report?
- How have they conveyed their interest in the topic? What convinces you this is an original and unique piece of writing?

**Looking into the details:**

- Look at how they have integrated the *documents specified (noting they only needed to use one but were able to refer to most of these in some way)* – how, and how often, do they use it and critique it in relation to the central idea of youth mental health?
- How, and how often, have they applied the HPE underlying concepts? To what depth have they used these concepts? What other concepts or theories have been woven in, and how?
- How have they connected knowledge of their topic to the HPE underlying concepts, the documents, and other knowledge concepts, so that there is an overall sense of coherence –that all the writing connects, and no aspect is left as a standalone idea?
- How do they develop an argument (or make a case)? How do they select and use language (words and phrases) to convey meaning, and to write persuasively and with authority?
- What structural elements do they use (e.g. subheadings, etc) to organise their ideas and help the reader stay focused on the points being made?
- (How) have the images contributed to their report? How have the images been tied into the written text?

**Also think about:**

- What are some of the gaps? e.g. (how) could the underlying concepts have been embedded more?
- What questions or ideas did you think of as you were reading that the report didn't answer? Why do you think the student didn't cover this (other than running out of space) and focused on other aspects of the topic?

**Finally:**

- Look at the assessment schedule. In relation to each of the required features for outstanding scholarship, what evidence do you think convinced the markers this was the top scholar report?

# Teacher (or other adult) support

For a high quality HPE report Scholarship submission you need to **balance** working independently and with autonomy to ensure that the report is authentically your own work, with adequate support from your teacher(s) to ensure that the time and effort you are putting into your submission is a reflection of the performance descriptor and assessment specifications.

Whereas internally assessed Achievement Standards either have a specified assessment task or a portfolio of evidence that you complete - with direction from your teacher – a Scholarship report needs to be your own, uniquely planned and presented work. You need to decide the topic (with support from your teacher to ensure that you select a suitable topic) and develop your report using ideas and information beyond what you will be specifically taught in class.

## What sort of support can you expect from your teacher as you prepare your report?

- Guidance about the suitability of your topic.
- In class lessons you will learn a lot about the underlying concepts of HPE, and topic specific knowledge and concepts which you can apply to your selected topic. *(See part 3 of this resource.)*
- Supervision or ‘coaching’ from your teaching that gives direction or provides assistance to the way you are developing your report, to ensure that the process you are following will produce a report that meets all requirements. Think of your teacher like a sports coach, a musical conductor, or a director of a play – they don’t play the game or perform for you but give you direction about what to do – it’s still up to you to put their suggestions into action.
- Ideas about suitable (quality) resources and information, and data that may be collected as part of your learning programme that can be used as a source of information for your critical evaluation. *(See part 3 of this resource.)*
- Feedback and critique about aspects of your submission - but noting that this is in excess of your teacher’s usual marking and assessment expectations so you will need to negotiate with your teacher what is reasonable to ask for, and a timeframe for this.

## How much support is too much?

This is not something that can be determined simply in terms of time provided, but the nature and type of the support. If the learning about the topic, and analysis of the information you are including in your report has been taught to you directly by your teacher (or another adult), and you are simply reproducing their ideas, consider this as ‘too much’ support.

Overall, the marker needs to be convinced that your report is a unique piece of work produced from your thinking and your sense-making.

# A suggested process for preparing your Scholarship submission

## Preparation

- Find out about the general, overall requirements for Scholarship (check with your school as well as online).
- Find out about the requirements for HPE Scholarship specifically (check with your HPE teacher(s) as well as online for the **Assessment Specification** and the **Performance Standard**).
- Develop understanding of the requirements and expectations of the ‘**critical evaluation**’ required for HPE Scholarship, and the **report** presentation format required (a main purpose of this resource).
- Note the submission date for HPE.
- Find out what sort of support your school offers students entering for Scholarship – this might be general support or subject specific.
- Check that you have access to good quality word processing application and a computer to complete your report. Make sure you know how to use some of the basic formatting functions in order to meet Scholarship presentation requirements.
- **Make a commitment to enter for a New Zealand Scholarship (you may decide to enter for more than one subject).** Check the examination schedule online for exam-based Scholarship subjects.

## Planning

- **Establish a timeline between NOW and the submission date** taking into consideration: school holidays, NCEA assessment commitments (internal and external), other Scholarship commitments, personal commitments outside of class time e.g. sports and cultural activities, social time, work commitments, etc. **The timeline should allow time for each of the stages listed below.**
- **Select a topic.** The Assessment Specification for 2025 requires you to produce a report that critically evaluates an aspect(s) of a selected document: one of *Overview of Youth Health NZ 2024*, *The Child and Youth Strategy 2024-27 NZ*, *Active NZ: Participation Trends 2017-2023*, or *Sport NZ Strategic Plan 2024-2028*.
- You may refer to more than one of the listed documents within your report, although it is expected that you will select ONE as a focus for your critical evaluation. *Check the suitability of this topic with your teacher. (See part 4.)*
- **Frame your topic as an evaluative question with a series of sub-questions.**
- **Collect a range of information** related to your topic from your learning programme and other information you find yourself. *(See part 3.)*
- **Refine your topic**, your overall **critical evaluation question**, and sub-questions as needed. *(See part 2 and 4.)*
- **Re-select your information** to identify the material that will support your critical evaluation and seek new information where it appears to be lacking.
- **Create a template** for your report with temporary headings to ensure that it contains all of the required headings for a report. Start to make notes under each of these headings. *(See part 5.)*
- Find out about referencing using footnotes.

## Writing the report

- Systematically work through the **writing** required for each section of the report. (See *part 5*.)
- Periodically **check back to previous sections** to ensure coherence and consistency – that you are sticking to your story and answering your critical evaluation question (and sub-questions).
- Get feedback on sections of your report to check that what makes sense to you makes the same sense to someone else.
- Check your report for technical errors like typing and grammatical mistakes and recheck that your report is consistent with the formatting requirements for submission.
- **Complete your written report.**

## Overall review and feedback

Have your **report reviewed by an adult** (e.g. teacher or parent) and refine your report based on feedback received.

**Submit your report** in accordance with your school's submission process and as directed by online information about the submission process.

Submission date for HPE Scholarship 2026

**Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2026**

## **PART TWO**

# **Understanding the requirements of a critical evaluation**

This section contains information about:

- What is a critical evaluation – as an outcome?
- What is critical thinking as a process for learning?
- Being a critical user of digital information
- Using (critical) reflections

# What is a critical evaluation – as an outcome?

NZQA states that for **all** subjects: “Scholarship candidates are expected to demonstrate **high-level critical thinking**, abstraction and generalisation, and to integrate, synthesise and apply knowledge, skills, understanding and ideas to complex situations.”

HPE performance standard specifically states that: “The student will use knowledge of the health and physical education learning area to **critically evaluate information** related to health and physical activity .....

## What is a critical evaluation for HPE purposes?

- When you ‘**evaluate**’ something you are looking to make a judgement about the **value**, quality or importance of it. ‘**Evaluate**’ is a verb and therefore it refers to the action of assessing or analysing health-related information from a particular perspective or position based on ethical, social, cultural and political values relevant to the subject matter.
- ‘**Critically**’ is an adverb which modifies the verb to indicate how the action (of evaluating) is to be done or carried out. In this case it means to think seriously or deeply about something – and this requires critical thinking.
- A ‘**critical evaluation**’ then is how you **think** about the health-related information or topic matter being evaluated relative to those ethical, social, cultural and political values. This is in contrast to an **emotional** evaluation for example which would be based on your opinions and assumptions, and how you feel about the topic.

To be able to carry out a critical evaluation requires selecting a topic that lends itself to critical evaluation – you need to be able to ask and respond to critical and evaluative questions about your topic. (See part 4.)

## Overview of a critical evaluation

	Critical thinking questions could include:	Comment
<b>Describe</b> <i>What?</i> <i>When?</i> <i>Who?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is my selected topic about?</li> <li>• What is the context or situation – what’s the issue or what is cause for concern?</li> <li>• What is the main point?</li> <li>• Who is involved?</li> <li>• Whose well-being is affected – positively and/or negatively?</li> <li>• Where does it take place?</li> </ul>	<p>Some description is necessary in the introductory section of your critical evaluation so that the reader knows ‘what’ your topic is about.</p> <p>However, reports submitted for Scholarship that provide consideration only of the ‘what’ questions (that simply describe a situation), are not a critical evaluation.</p>
<b>Analyse</b> <i>Why?</i> <i>How?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did this situation occur?</li> <li>• How does one factor affect another in relation to this issue? Why is this?</li> <li>• What if another factor were added or removed?</li> <li>• How do the parts fit into the whole picture of the issue?</li> <li>• Why did this issue occur?</li> <li>• What are the alternative solutions?</li> <li>• What has been done to improve the situation? Why not something else?</li> </ul>	<p>An analysis is part of an evaluation because it helps to break the topic or issue into its constituent parts and develop understanding of these.</p> <p>When analysing your health-related information you need to look in depth at your selected materials and use your HPE knowledge to identify evidence that helps you to judge the <b>value</b>, quality or importance of it well as how the various parts of the situation or issue interrelate.</p> <p>Thinking analytically about your topic, and the information you are using for your report requires a certain level of detachment (‘stepping back from it’).</p>
<b>Reflection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What happened?</i></li> <li>• <i>What did I notice or realise?</i></li> <li>• <i>What was most important for me?</i></li> <li>• <i>What have I learnt?</i></li> <li>• <i>What would I do differently or the same next time?</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Note that your topic selection will determine whether or not information from reflection is included in your report. See the statement on reflection at this end of this section of the resource.</i></p>
<b>Evaluate</b> <i>What if?</i> <i>So what?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does this mean in consideration of the issue or topic?</li> <li>• Why is this significant or important?</li> <li>• Is it convincing - why/why not?</li> <li>• What are the implications?</li> <li>• Is it successful - why/why not?</li> </ul>	<p>Evaluating requires asking the analytical ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions (above) to be able to get to the ‘so what’ and ‘what next’ questions. Carrying out a critical evaluation requires critical thinking. Critical thinking is a detailed process; the basics for which appear in the left hand column of this table. <i>(See also the detailed critical thinking framework following.)</i></p>
<b>Critically evaluate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does it reflect HPE knowledge?</li> <li>• What can I deduce from the information I have gathered?</li> <li>• What next? Is it transferable to other situations, and if so, how and where else can it be applied?</li> <li>• What can be learnt from it?</li> <li>• What needs to be done now?</li> </ul>	<p>A critical evaluation also requires demonstrating some ethical, cultural, social, and political values relevant to HPE. The basis for these values comes from the HPE underlying concepts (and the NZC values statement see NZC page 10) as well as other subject or topic specific concepts and NZ policy and legislation like the Human Rights Act and other laws that protect the rights and safety of children, young people and adults.</p>

Adapted from [http://www2.eit.ac.nz/library/ls\\_guides\\_descriptivewriting.html](http://www2.eit.ac.nz/library/ls_guides_descriptivewriting.html)

# Introduction to the critical evaluation requirements for the 2026 HPE Scholarship report

2026 requirements	What this means
Candidates produce a report that critically evaluates a significant well-being challenge or issue facing young people in New Zealand today.	
<b>To critically evaluate means to:</b>	<b>Comments</b>
identify the nature of the health or physical activity challenge or issue (supported by relevant data)	Convince the reader of the issue – what is cause for concern, what is the (important) point of the matter – and back this up with recent, New Zealand relevant data. Ensure there is a very clear health and well-being concern at the centre of your issue.
provide two or more perspectives on the challenge (bodies of thought, as supported by evidence)	<p><b>Perspective</b> – viewpoints, ways of understanding - make sure you understand this related to different perspectives that come from different groups who draw on different bodies of knowledge – <i>it is not simply about the personal views and opinions of different individuals or groups of people.</i> See the 2025 assessment report.</p> <p><b>Bodies of thought</b> – concepts, theories, (different) knowledges such as indigenous knowledge or knowledge from different disciplines which are useful for understanding the topic – see Part 3.</p> <p>What this is saying is that you need to bring some added depth of knowledge about your topic – so it’s not just critically evaluating the topic within itself, it needs to consider ways of understanding the topic beyond just being the topic. See the 2025 assessment report – this says several things about the way other perspectives (knowledge, concepts etc) can be added.</p> <p><b>Supported by evidence</b> means you will need to be able to make reference to similar or related materials that use these perspectives - <i>you can’t just make this up.</i></p> <p>Part 4 has much more detail about this requirement.</p>
propose future solutions and / or health promotion actions to address the challenge and enhance young people’s well-being.	See Part 3 <b>Health Promotion</b> – the field of health promotion is vast and there are many approaches for promoting health and well-being. Ensure you include consideration of what can be done in relation to your topic/issue and don’t just provide an evaluation of the problem(s).
<b>The report should integrate the following:</b>	
hauora, attitudes and values, the socio-ecological perspective, and health promotion concepts	<p>See Part 3.</p> <p>These are the concepts that help define the unique nature of HPE in the curriculum and it is expected these ideas will be feature in a range of topic specific ways.</p> <p>Bear in mind that in a critical evaluation you might want to challenge these concepts or offer an alternative if you think the way they appear in the curriculum are inadequate for exploring your topic.</p>
bio-physical principles and / or sociocultural factors as relevant	<p>The HPE Scholarship performance standard defines these terms as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Bio-physical principles</i> refer to the principles of anatomy, biomechanics, exercise physiology, sports psychology, and nutrition as they relate to human body movement.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Socio-cultural factors</i> relate to social and cultural environments and contexts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Biophysical principles</b> will tend to be relevant only to PE focused topics that related to one of the SportNZ resources.</p> <p>For Health Education purposes we usually frame <b>sociocultural factors</b> this in relation to the socioecological perspective (see Part 3) or the social determinant of health if it is an issue involving social and economic inequities.</p> <p>Note it says <b>AND/OR ...</b> and <b>‘as relevant’</b>. Health Education focused reports need only refer to sociocultural factors.</p>
<p>primary data / own evidence, reflections and / or personal learning experiences</p>	<p>Evidence is all-important for this critical evaluation.</p> <p>Note that <b>data</b> is the uninterpreted information – the quantitative (number) data or the qualitative data (what people said or what was observed). Data becomes <b>evidence</b> once it has been <u>analysed</u> and is used to support a claim or argument. Data and evidence can come from a variety of sources, and this will vary depending on the nature of your topic and whether it is a topic you are personally invested in or if it just something you are interested in and can relate to in some way.</p> <p>Data and evidence can come from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• existing research – published in reports and articles</li> <li>• data you have collected yourself through interviews, surveys etc</li> <li>• (purposefully recorded) personal reflections based on own observations experiences (see the end of Part 2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Further detail about data and evidence is provided in Part 3.</b></p> <p>A critical evaluation must have evidence to support claims and the case or argument being presented in the report.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence from at least one of the four documents</li> <li>1. <i>Overview of Youth Health NZ 2024</i></li> <li>2. <i>The Child and Youth Strategy 2024-27 NZ,</i></li> <li>3. <i>Active NZ: Participation Trends 2017-2023,</i></li> <li>4. <i>Sport NZ Strategic Plan 2024-2028.</i></li> </ul>	<p>The way (one or more of) these documents is used will vary depending on your topic. However you choose to make links to the selected report it needs to be reasonably substantial – it needs to be more than a single reference so it is worth thinking about how your selected document will feature in various ways across your report.</p> <p>For some topics you may be able to make direct use of the information contained in the selected document and build on this, whereas for other topics you may need to extend or extrapolate ideas beyond what they document is specifically stating and offer a different angle or interpretation of the information.</p> <p>Note that you don’t have to agree with what is in the document and offer alternative ideas. As this is a critical evaluation you may decide that the issue lies in what is lacking or absent in the document rather than what is in it.</p>

**These ideas are expanded in more detail across the following sections.**

# What is critical thinking as a process for learning?

## **HPE Scholarship Performance Descriptor: Critical thinking**

- *High level, sophisticated, critical response and synthesised report.*
- *Issues, theories, and practices are questioned and challenged with sophisticated insight and perception.*
- *Independent reflection and extrapolation, employing sophisticated insight and perception.*
- *Divergent ideas surrounding the selected topic.*

Scholarship Judgement statement for scoring a mark of “7 or 8” in critical thinking.

- **Critical thinking is a process.** Critical thinking is an essential **process** for learning in HPE.
- To be able to complete a critical evaluation you need to be able to think critically.

**Understand that critical thinking is not an end in itself.** It's the **process** that enables you to make sense of and understand your selected information in order to be able to write your critical evaluation. Simply answering a series of critical thinking questions does not result in a critical evaluation report.

You still need to synthesise all of your ideas and show the Scholarship marker that you are able ‘to **demonstrate high-level critical thinking, abstraction and generalisation, and to integrate, synthesise and apply knowledge, skills, understanding and ideas to complex situations**’.

For critical thinking to be meaningful in its learning area or subject context requires the selection of questions that support students to synthesise their own knowledge and collected information with academic knowledge (the HPE underlying concepts for example).

There are many frameworks for thinking critically available online. The previous table introduces some general purpose questions for describing (what, who, when, and where), analysing (how and why), and evaluating (so what, now what). However, these may not provide enough scope for showing deep insight into your topic and more detailed, HPE-specific questions might be needed (see framework following).

## Critical thinking framework

Test the suitability of your topic and a sample of topic-related information with these critical thinking questions. If you cannot answer several of these in relation to your chosen topic, you may need to rethink your topic selection, or reframe your evaluative question in a way that allows you to make a judgement about the value, quality or importance of your topic or issue.

- What do you know about this issue or situation?
- How did you come to know this?
- How do you feel about this issue or situation?
- What is the evidence for this knowledge?
- What are your beliefs about this knowledge? Why do you believe this?
- What information is missing from this picture?
- Why is this information missing?
- Have the social, cultural, economic, political, and/or ethical aspects of this situation been considered?
- Whose voice is heard in this writing, article, or classroom activity?
- Whose interests are being served? Who has the power in this situation?
- Who is being advantaged?
- Who is not being heard or served?
- Who is being disadvantaged?
- What are the inequalities that exist in this situation?
- What needs to change?
- How can you contribute to this change?

Original source: *The Curriculum in Action: Making Meaning Making a Difference Years 11-13* (Ministry of Education, 2004, p.27, based on Brookfield, 1995, and Smyth, 1992). Now online [here](#).

For a more detailed account of critical thinking and a greater range of questions see the [Foundation for Critical Thinking](#) website

# Being a critical user of digital information

With so much HPE-related information available on the internet you will need to be **digitally fluent** to be able to locate, access, select, and use information relevant to your topic. **The critical thinking process described in the previous section is essential for developing digital fluency.**

## Digital fluency encompasses:

- **digital capabilities** – being digitally adept and innovative; able to confidently choose and use digital tools to learn, create, and share
- **digital principles** – demonstrating values when working digitally; being an ethical, respectful, and responsible digital citizen
- **digital literacies** – being discerning and critical; able to locate, understand, organise, evaluate, and adapt digital content.

See also the Netsafe [Digital citizenship](#) material.

## How can I know whether this website is a credible and useful source of information?

When you find something on the internet that you think might be useful, as a first step – and before you start to think critically about the content of the website - consider:

- Why does this website exist? What is their ‘business’ or purpose? Who is the intended audience? Who are they aiming to support or inform? Why do I think it might be useful for my evaluation?
- Is the website content **objective or subjective**? What information tells me this?
  - Objectivity relates to being without bias or prejudice, even-handed, fair, open-minded, equitable, neutral, or impartial or detached.
  - Subjectivity relates to being influenced or shaped by personal likes and tastes, feelings, opinions, conjecture, where information may be biased, opinionated, prejudiced, and where only narrow meaning is given to a situation and without other perspectives, where views from those with the loudest voices dominate.
- How do I know if the information on this website is **accurate** e.g. the result of sound investigation and research? In an age of false or fake news and misinformation, how do I trust that what I am reading is true?
- What **authority** does this website have? For example, does the domain name suggest it comes from a reliable and informed source such as:
  - .org – e.g. recognised non-government organisations;
  - .govt for NZ (or .gov – overseas) for official government websites; or
  - .ac or .edu which are usually university or other tertiary and education-based sites?
- How **up to date** is the information (try and find a date that shows when the site was last updated).

Overall, too few references, or poor-quality references such as Wikipedia are inadequate for Scholarship. Popular movies or YouTube clips (other than as examples to give context) are also unsuitable as knowledge references. *See also the section on topic-related information, data, and evidence in Part 3.*

Also, use the **TRAAP model** - *Timeliness, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, and Purpose* (or CRAAP where C = Currency) or the **Rauru Whakarare Evaluation Framework** to help evaluate the relevance and quality of your

information. Use an online search for these materials and select one of the New Zealand university sites for further information.

## Using generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) applications

It can be tempting to use AI applications to help write your report. Although AI can be a useful tool for generating ideas, the use of it in Scholarship is limited – as well as not permissible.

The need to synthesise a range of material related to the selected strategy statement, apply HPE underlying concepts, and use own and locally sourced content all in a unique way, as well as provide extensive referencing for materials, is not something AI does well.

Your submission also needs to be your own writing.

AI is often not a good tool for providing a unique perspective – because it draws its learning from across a wide and known range of international knowledge. High levels of Scholarship require a clear New Zealand component to support the links with the selected strategy statement.

It is also limited in its ability to produce a critical and evaluative piece of persuasive writing. AI has a tendency to be all-inclusive of the various aspects of an issue and can have trouble taking a particular position to argue a case.

Overall, AI tends to provide accounts of descriptive writing, not critical or persuasive writing about a topic.

Also, be aware that the markers of your Scholarship submission are subject experts and get to mark a LOT of student work, so they are familiar with how students write and the style of writing typical of AI generated text. The markers are also able to use AI detection tools if they suspect use of AI in a submission.

**Note the 2026 requirements in the HPE Scholarship Assessment Specifications about NOT using generative AI to produce your report.**

### **Conditions of assessment**

The use of chatbots, generative AI, paraphrasing tools, or other tools that can automatically generate content is not permitted and material generated by these tools should not be submitted as part of the candidate's work.

# Using (critical) reflections as data and a source of evidence

Many scholars have defined ‘**reflection**’. The common features of these definitions describe it as:

- **A process of looking and thinking back on what has done or what happened, thinking deeply about this, and learning from what did or didn’t work.**

Reflecting is not simply giving your opinion on a topic or issue or making unsubstantiated assumptions about a health-related situation.

In consideration of your Scholarship report being a ‘critical evaluation’ it is reasonable that any reflections you include should be ‘critical reflections’. We can think of a critical reflection as thinking deeply about something, and to deliberately and purposefully look at our feelings and responses, experiences and actions, and then make sense of, interpret and analyse these, so that we can learn from them.

## Critical reflection requires critical thinking.

Not all topics selected for Scholarship will warrant critical reflection. This process will have most relevance if you are using information from your own health education learning experiences, such as taking part in some form of health promoting action, or gathering information from an event you have participated in, or an event like listening to a particularly challenging or engaging guest speaker visit.

Note the how the series of questions for reflection run parallel with the steps for critical evaluation in the previous section.

## Steps for critical reflection

Critical reflection commonly use questions like:	A critically reflective person is able to:	Steps to critical reflection – select questions relevant to your well-being situation
<b>What?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe their interpretation of the events that occurred</li> <li>• Provide a detailed account of the situation which captures the main points</li> </ul>	Describe in detail what happened (as relevant): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the situation? Where were we? When did it occur?</li> <li>• What did I do? What did others do?</li> <li>• What were my feelings at the time? What were their feelings?</li> <li>• What else was going on around us?</li> <li>• Was there anything unexpected happening?</li> </ul>
<b>Why?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain why, showing awareness of key aspects of events, and analyse and interpret these</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do I think things happened in this way?</li> <li>• What are my instincts saying about why things happened the way they did?</li> <li>• Why did I act in that way? Why might other people involved have acted the way they did?</li> <li>• What was going on for each of us?</li> <li>• How might my feelings or situation have affected my behaviour?</li> <li>• Was time a factor?</li> <li>• What were some of the options I considered?</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were there other contributing factors? e.g. Something that was said? People’s knowledge or skill level?</li> <li>• What was done in the past in situations like this?</li> </ul>
<b>So what?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically analyse the situation and use your knowledge of the HPE underlying concepts and other topic specific concepts as the foundation for your analysis</li> <li>• Use insights to see ways to move forward from this point</li> </ul>	<p>Think about the overall meaning and application of your realisations so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why did this event seem to be worth reflecting on? <i>Think about this in relation to well-being.</i></li> <li>• What might an ‘ideal’ situation have been?</li> <li>• What might I learn from this?</li> <li>• What key qualities or skills do I need to overcome mine or others (or circumstantial) limitations?</li> <li>• How might this change my future thinking, behaviour, and interactions with others?</li> <li>• What questions remain for me?</li> </ul>
<b>Now what?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively action plan for next steps</li> <li>• Demonstrate ability to use models and frameworks for action</li> </ul>	<p>Deciding on and designing actions that will promote and support well-being in future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there other people or resources I should include as I reflect on this event?</li> <li>• If so, who and what would we communicate about?</li> <li>• How does HPE knowledge (and relevant research) support my understanding and interpretations?</li> <li>• Next time a situation like this presents itself, what do I want to remember to think about and do?</li> <li>• What are some specific patterns or trends that seem to be emerging from my reflections? e.g. When I experience ....., I need to .....</li> <li>• Given these details, what is the big picture goal for the future?</li> <li>• How could I plan to improve well-being outcomes in future?</li> </ul>

These steps to reflection are adapted from this [source](#).

### Critical reflection

If the information or data you are using for your critical analysis is based around your **personal participation** in a well-being related activity, carrying out a **critical reflection** on your involvement is highly recommended. Your critical reflection may form a section of the body of the report (*see the template in part 5*), or ideas may be incorporated across the various sections of the report.

# PART THREE

## Understanding HPE knowledge

This section contains information about:

- The importance of showing HPE knowledge in a Scholarship report
- What is 'knowledge' and what is 'information'?
- The HPE underlying concepts
- Health Education specific knowledge
- Topic-related information, data, and evidence

# The importance of showing HPE knowledge in a Scholarship report

**Application of knowledge** is one of the three marking categories for HPE Scholarship.

## **HPE Scholarship Performance Descriptor: Application of knowledge**

- *Sophisticated integration and abstraction of concepts and ideas. (This is inclusive of, but not limited to, appropriate use of issues, theories, practices, and learning experience.)*
- *Exceptional depth of understanding and a balanced response (theory and practice).*
- *Complex syntheses of highly developed knowledge, concepts, and ideas.*
- *Divergent ideas and independent conclusions related to future actions to enhance well-being.*

Scholarship Judgement statement for scoring a mark of “7 or 8” for application of knowledge.

Since the PE Scholarship (now HPE) report was introduced in 2015, the annual assessment reports have continued to highlight the importance of the underlying concepts of HPE in *The New Zealand Curriculum* alongside other subject or topic specific concepts.

All learning areas or subjects have a body of knowledge that is unique to that subject. This body of knowledge is made up of theories and concepts (applied to a range of subject relevant contexts or situation) that are commonly understood to relate to that subject – sometimes called discipline knowledge. Specific content or topic *information* alone does not necessary make it ‘HPE knowledge’.

Until the **HPE underlying concepts** are applied to the topic, it is not ‘HPE knowledge’. However, just mentioning the HPE underlying concepts superficially is not enough as these need to be well integrated into the evaluation.

Use the annual assessment report as a check list to ensure that your report is incorporating HPE knowledge in a way that reflects the highest level of the **Application of knowledge** aspect of assessment schedule above.

# What is ‘knowledge’ and what is ‘information’?

Academics have debated ‘what is knowledge?’ for centuries. This debate continues in the 21<sup>st</sup> century given the way access to information via the internet adds further challenges to deciding ‘what is information?’ and ‘what is knowledge?’.

It is important when preparing your HPE Scholarship report that you understand what is meant by HPE knowledge and what is meant by HPE-related information as **you need to critically evaluate HPE-related information using HPE knowledge to make sense of the information.**

There are many online sources that describe the difference between knowledge and information. A summary of ideas relevant to HPE are noted below.

## Differences between knowledge and information

<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is the theoretical, conceptual and/or practical understanding of a ‘subject’.</li> <li>• Knowledge is what you get when information is combined with analysis and experience.</li> <li>• Knowledge is the concise, systematic and appropriate collection and organisation of information that makes it useful.</li> <li>• All knowledge is information and knowledge is ‘useful’ information.</li> <li>• Knowledge is the relevant and objective information and skills <i>acquired</i> through purposeful learning, education and experience. Gaining or acquiring knowledge requires some level of cognitive (thinking) and analytical ability.</li> <li>• Knowledge is <i>acquired</i> through examination and analysis of the recurrent ideas, themes or patterns across various sources of information. This analysis or examination is needed to understand what the information is saying. Acquiring knowledge is more than just a literacy comprehension exercise. Examination and analysis requires thinking and using concepts or theories to help understand what the information is showing and then to be able to communicate this (knowledge) understanding.</li> </ul> <p>HPE knowledge is based on a selection of concepts and theories – see the following table.</p>
<b>Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information is all of the raw data from all forms of research. It is also lists of facts or instructions, written articles, video (TV, news, film), social media postings and so on - all information is (potential) data.</li> <li>• Acquisition of information is often ‘for free’ in that you don’t have to actively learn about in a systematic and disciplined way as you do with knowledge – you simply search or seek it out or are offered it by others.</li> <li>• All information need not be knowledge. The internet for example is full of information – very little of it would be considered ‘knowledge’.</li> <li>• Information is needed to be able to gain knowledge.</li> <li>• Information deals with the way data are related e.g. a collection of articles and artefacts that are all about a particular health topic are just information until they are examined or analysed using particular conceptual and/or theoretical understandings.</li> </ul> <p>To carry out a critical evaluation for Scholarship you need to have a range of information to which you can apply HPE knowledge. Applying HPE concepts to your information requires the use of critical thinking skills.</p>

There are many parts to knowledge. The following table describes some aspects of knowledge that are relevant to HPE. ‘Concepts’ are particularly important.

## Other aspects of knowledge

<b>Theory</b>	<p>A theory is a <b>system of ideas</b> intended to explain something, especially one based on general principles (principles are based on values, ideology, philosophies, ethics, etc). For health education purposes, a ‘theory’ could be an ideal set of facts, a belief, policy, or procedure followed as the basis of an approach to understating something, or the basis for an action.</p> <p>The difference between a theory and a concept is that a concept is an idea whereas a theory is an underlying explanation of how something works, or why something is what it is.</p>
<b>Concepts</b>	<p>Concepts are a principle or idea. These ideas are ‘abstract’ and exist in the mind as thoughts or notion. We say they are ‘abstract’ because they have no physical or concrete existence. They are also a generic idea that can apply to several situations – that is, concepts are not specific content knowledge that apply only to one situation.</p>
<b>Underlying concepts</b>	<p>HPE knowledge in <i>The New Zealand Curriculum</i> is based around four underlying concepts: <b>hauora, the socio-ecological perspective, health promotion, and attitudes and values</b> (see the following pages).</p>
<b>Subject and topic specific concepts</b>	<p>Like Physical Education and Home Economics, Health Education draws on additional subject and topic specific concepts to understanding topics more deeply, and to be able to link the topic with the HPE underlying concepts. These subject specific concepts in health education include, for example: resilience, social justice, inclusiveness and diversity, fairness, ‘othering’, ethics and ethical thinking, gender and sexuality, determinants of health, equality, equity, social inclusion, social coherence, social capital, cultural capital, culture, subculture, harm minimisation, collective action, empowerment, agency, rights (and responsibilities), etc.</p>
<b>‘Big ideas’</b>	<p>Big ideas can mean many things depending on the situation where the term is used. For some it might mean theories or concepts. In other situations it might be about the overarching ideas that hold everything together.</p> <p><i>For example</i>, the way many of the Health Education Achievement Standards require students to explain the interconnectedness of the influences on an issue, the consequences for well-being when a range of factors have impacted well-being, and strategies that could be used to promote well-being, is an important ‘big idea’ in health education.</p>
<b>Construct</b>	<p>You may come across the term ‘construct’ in some academic literature (it’s used here as a noun and not the verb that you will be more familiar with). A construct is an idea or theory containing various concepts. Constructs are not always considered to be objective and they are not necessarily based on empirical evidence, but are useful for exploring possible ways of thinking and understanding situations.</p>
<b>Context</b>	<p>A context is simply the situation, or the circumstances. For example, your selected topic is the context you have chosen for Scholarship.</p>
<b>Content</b>	<p>We tend to think of content knowledge as the specific subject or topic ideas, or the detailed context specific information or knowledge included or contained in an account of a situation.</p>

Your HPE learning will cover a range of theories and concepts. You don’t need to be unduly concerned if something is a concept or a theory, a construct, or a ‘big idea’, as long as it is an aspect of knowledge commonly understood to be relevant to HPE and your topic. What is important is that you can use topic-relevant theories and/or concepts in your critical evaluation.

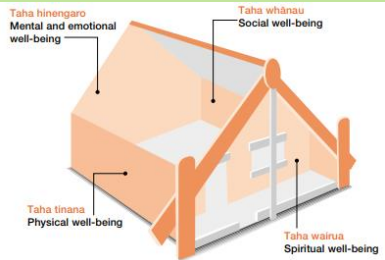
# The HPE underlying concepts

HPE Scholarship requires you to show application of the HPE underlying concepts from the New Zealand Curriculum. These are the main ideas that give shape and purpose to all the topic matter learnt about in HPE subjects. There are MANY ways these concepts can be applied to a topic.

Many Health Education resources designed for use by teachers and students contain activities to show how to apply the underlying concepts to health topics. The following summary presents some main ideas about the ways the underlying concepts could be used in a critical evaluation as well as links to other resources that you may find useful.

See the 2021 NZHEA resource on the [Underlying Concepts](#). Although this resource is designed for teachers it also provides a useful guide for students completing a Scholarship report.

**Table 10. The HPE underlying concepts**

<p><b>Hauora</b></p>  <p>The diagram shows a house with four pillars. The pillars are labeled: Taha hinengaro (Mental and emotional well-being), Taha whānau (Social well-being), Taha tinana (Physical well-being), and Taha wairua (Spiritual well-being). The house is supported by these pillars, illustrating how they all contribute to overall well-being.</p>	<p><b>Hauora – a Māori philosophy of well-being that includes the dimensions taha wairua, taha hinengaro, taha tinana, and taha whānau, each one influencing and supporting the others.</b></p> <p><b><i>In health and physical education, the use of the word hauora is based on Mason Durie’s Te Whare Tapa Whā model (Durie, 1994). Hauora and well-being, though not synonyms, share much common ground. Taha wairua relates to spiritual well-being; taha hinengaro to mental and emotional well-being; taha tinana to physical well-being; and taha whānau to social well-being. (NZC p22).</i></b></p> <p>The distinction between ‘health’ and ‘well-being’ is not universally agreed to. To complicate matters, the subject we call Health Education in New Zealand is about <i>well-being</i>. The opening line of the HPE statement in The New Zealand Curriculum states that <b><i>‘In health and physical education, the focus is on the <u>well-being</u> of the students themselves, of other people, and of society through learning in <u>health-related and movement contexts.</u>’</i></b></p> <p>In NCEA we tend to thoroughly assess understandings of hauora at Level 1, and then in Level 2 and 3 state that it is expected that teacher or an examiner can ‘read’ or interpret understandings of hauora and well-being from a student’s work without them having to explicitly state the links to the dimensions when these ideas are included.</p> <p>In your Scholarship report you have time and space to explain your understanding of the way the concept applies to your topic. Convince the reader of your report that you understand your topic as a well-being issue, and one that has relevance to society.</p> <p>Ideas for your critical evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider explaining how you <u>see</u> your topic relating to the concept of hauora (holistically), and the dimensions (individually), and the Interconnectedness of these dimensions.</li></ul>
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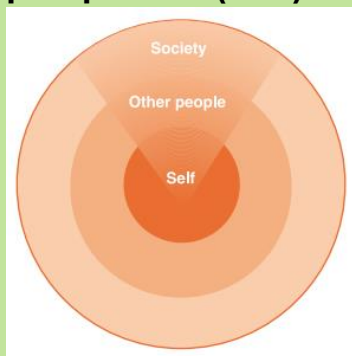
- As you analyse your information: what is being ‘said’ about your topic as a health or well-being issue? Is the coverage holistic (ie. it considers all dimensions) or does it focus on only one or two dimensions and why do you think this is the case?
- If relevant, consider explaining the similarities and difference(s) between ‘health’ and ‘well-being’ and how your topic is talked about in your selected information.
- What model of health or well-being dominates the information you are critical evaluating?
- Consider looking up other definitions of health and well-being e.g. the World Health Organisation, the NZ Ministry of Health, the NZ Mental Health Foundation (or other NGOs – non-government organisations) with responsibility for overseeing the situation related to your topic to see if their definitions apply.
- Where relevant, compare the use of health and well-being definitions with the concept of hauora and other models (e.g. Pacific or other indigenous models).
- If relevant, design your own version of a health model based on others to better reflect the context / topic for your report.

Overall, your report will need to show that you understand the concept of hauora, even if the information you are evaluating does not.

*Note there are a lot of health models and if looking beyond just te whare tapa whā, it can be overwhelming sorting your way through them. You also need to be able to separate health models from health promotion models (which are more to support taking action). A health education teacher should have access to a diversity of material about health models (or links to these) and be able to help work out which might be the more useful to consider – if this is relevant to your topic.*

This [folder of resource materials about health models](#) was developed for teacher use although students preparing a Scholarship report – especially one that is considering indigenous (Māori and Pacific) perspectives on health – may find some of the references useful.

## Socio-ecological perspective (SEP)



***The socio-ecological perspective – a way of viewing and understanding the interrelationships that exist between the individual, others, and society.*** (NZC p22)

At NCEA Level 1 and 2, understanding of the SEP is assessed in relation to topic specific consideration of inter-related personal (individual/self), interpersonal (with others), and societal factors associated with an issue, noting that societal could be split into (local) community and (wider) society.

Just as hauora encourages an understanding of well-being as being multidimensional (and not just physical health for example), the **SEP encourages us to see issues beyond just ourselves.**

There are **many, many** ways the SEP can be applied to health topics and your learning in Health Education will provide you with an extensive background to this concept.

If your selected topic relates to a population health issue where social and economic inequity feature, you will need to consider using the **social determinants of health** as one of the concepts for your critical evaluation. A useful introductory video (Let's Learn Public Health - Social determinants of health) can be found at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PH4JYf4Ns>

## Health promotion



This diagram is adapted from one originally printed with the Ottawa Charter (World Health Organisation, 1986).

***Health promotion – a process that helps to develop and maintain supportive physical and emotional environments and that involves students in personal and collective action.*** (NZC p22)

There are actually many different concepts and theories related to health promotion and there are a range of textbooks that focus just on health promotion. To keep this manageable for Health Education, just a few ideas are selected although for Scholarship, you may wish to look more broadly than these.

Key to HEd are considerations of individual action (things we can do ourselves) and collective action (things people do in small or large groups).


When you are evaluating your information sources, what (if any) understandings of health promotion are apparent?

Or, what model(s) could be applied to your issue to achieve more just and equitable outcomes?

Like the SEP, there are many ways that understandings of health promotion could be applied when critically evaluating your topic-specific information.

Sources of information to guide your application of the concept of health promotion include the following. Note that although these materials are generally written for teachers, students may find many parts of these resources useful.

- **For an overview of health promotion in Health Education** see [Health promotion as an underlying concept in health education: Position statement and professional learning and development resource](#). (2017) New Zealand Health Education Association (NZHEA).
- The NZ Ministry of Education has produced a number of guides for teachers, principals and boards of trustees on topics such as sexuality, alcohol and other drugs, relationships and inclusive practices to support LGBTIQ+ students. Search for these on Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI), Tāhūrangi, and the Ministry of Education websites (or see the reference section of this resource).
- [Well-being for success: a resource for schools](#) (2016) from the NZ Education Review Office is useful for any topics that focus on well-being at school and whole school approaches to well-being.
- NZCER (NZ Council for Educational Research) also produces a number of NZ research documents related to the promotion of well-being at school.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International charters and policy documents for health promotion include the Ottawa Charter (especially for public health issues), and, Geneva Charter for well-being, etc.</li> <li>• For NZ purposes Te Pae Mahutonga may be a useful model. The NZ Health Promotion Forum is useful for issues particular to Māori and Pasifika health.</li> <li>• If the selected topic is on alcohol or other drugs, a harm minimisation approach will need to be considered.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Attitudes and values</b></p> 	<p><b><i>Attitudes and values – a positive, responsible attitude on the part of students to their own well-being; respect, care, and concern for other people and the environment; and a sense of social justice.</i></b> (NZC p22)</p> <p>The nature of Health Education topics inevitably raises issues about fairness, equality and equity, inclusiveness (of diversity), (non)discrimination, the distribution of power in relationships, and social justice.</p> <p>Which of these concepts and ideas applies to your selected topic – or should apply? How are these considerations (particularly the lack or absence of them) implicated in your issue?</p> <p>If your topic is about the ways a minority group of people in a population are included or excluded (e.g. people with diverse sexual and gender identities, ethnic groups, or people with disabilities, etc) consider whether the concept of ‘othering’ applies – that (despite good intentions) the labelling of the group still positions them as ‘the other’ and separate from the majority or dominant group – and therefore not truly ‘included’.</p>

**Students can also access information about the underlying concepts on the Ministry of Education [Tāhūrangi](#) website.**

# Health Education specific knowledge

The scope of the Health Education topics intended and suitable for HPE Scholarship comes from page 23 of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. The Health Education statement describes what ‘health-related’ topics noted in the HPE performance descriptor refers to.

*In health education, students develop their understanding of the factors that influence the health of individuals, groups, and society: lifestyle, economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental factors. Students develop competencies for mental wellness, reproductive health and positive sexuality, and safety management, and they develop understandings of nutritional needs. Students build resilience through strengthening their personal identity and sense of self-worth, through managing change and loss, and through engaging in processes for responsible decision making. They learn to demonstrate empathy, and they develop skills that enhance relationships. Students use these skills and understandings to take critical action to promote personal, interpersonal, and societal well-being.*

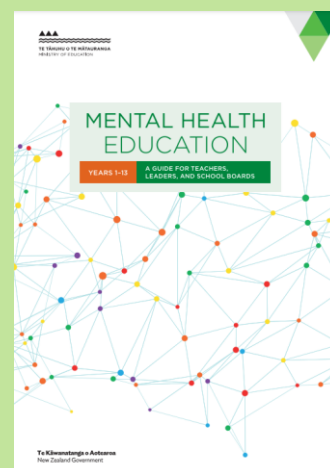
Source: [The New Zealand Curriculum](#) HPE statement p. 23.

For a HPE scholarship report, you can draw on knowledge from **within one subject**, or **across any HPE subjects** (Health Education, Physical Education and/or Home Economics) as the requirement is that **‘the student will use knowledge of the health and physical education learning area to critically evaluate information related to health and physical activity ....’** It is your consideration of the way a relevant combination of the **four underlying concepts** are applied to your topic that make it a HPE Scholarship response.

To give context (or a topic focus) to this statement, you need to apply it to the seven HPE key areas of learning (KALS) which list the main contexts for learning in HPE - **mental health, sexuality education, food and nutrition**, body care and physical safety, physical activity, sport studies, outdoor education. Most senior secondary health education draws from the KALS highlighted.

**Students can also access the Ministry of Education Guide for Mental Health Education**

[Mental health education: A guide for teachers, leaders, and school boards](#)



The Health Education statement is unpacked in the following table to explain what is intended. Students wishing to include topics from HEC and/or PE are encouraged to ask their teacher to help them understand the many possibilities for suitable topics in derived from these subjects.

## Unpacking the NZC Health Education essence statement

<i>In health education, students develop their understanding of the ...</i>	<b>Notes and guidance about what this part of the ‘essence’ statement refers to:</b>
<b>factors that influence the health of individuals, groups, and society</b>	The personal, lifestyle, and social determinants of health.
<b>lifestyle</b>	Application of the socio-ecological perspective – personal, interpersonal and societal considerations.
<b>economic, social, cultural, political, environmental factors</b>	Lifestyle choices (as a personal determinant) – usually related to food and nutrition, exercise and recreation, alcohol and other drug use and could apply to other health behaviours that people choose to do or not to do. This could also include managing and reducing stress through lifestyle choices.
<b>competencies</b>	The various aspects of the social determinants of health – these are very important for senior secondary learning.
<b>mental wellness</b>	Skills and abilities that require knowledge of what they are as well as how and when to use them.
<b>reproductive health</b>	Mental and emotional well-being as part of overall or holistic well-being.
<b>positive sexuality</b>	Sexual health – knowledge and skills for preventing unplanned pregnancy and STIs.
<b>safety management</b>	Includes a range of considerations such as inclusiveness of diverse sex, sexuality, and gender identities, positive romantic and sexual relationships, and extends to issues of gender equality.
<b>nutritional needs</b>	Includes for example, addressing power imbalances in relationships, rights and responsibilities, safe use of alcohol and minimising harm from alcohol and other drug use for self and others, specific topics - driving, water safety, safety playing sport – all of which require knowledge of potential risks and informed decision making.
<b>build resilience</b>	Healthy eating that meets nutritional needs and maintains well-being.
<b>strengthening their personal identity and sense of self-worth</b>	Understanding the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress and bouncing back from difficult experiences.
<b>managing change and loss, responsible decision making, empathy</b>	Includes consideration of body image, sex, sexuality and gender identity, cultural identity, and other ways of identifying ourselves; makes links particularly with the spirituality dimension of hauora.
<b>skills that enhance relationships</b>	Knowledge and understanding of a range of skills to use personally or individually to support self, and interpersonally to support others.
<b>take critical action</b>	Specifically effective communication skills – listening, negotiation, compromise, problem solving.
<b>promote personal, interpersonal, and societal well-being</b>	Strategies (approaches) and actions that seek to change the factors that influenced the well-being issue in the first place in order to make sustainable improvements to people’s well-being.
	Health promotion – models and concepts to understand effective health promotion; strategies and actions for taking individual and collective action which promote personal, interpersonal and societal well-being.

Students in PE and Home Economics can ask their teacher to help them unpack the knowledge implied in ‘essence’ statements specific to their subject

## Other Health Education relevant concepts – some of these may provide ideas for deciding what perspectives you bring to your report

This is not an exhaustive list of possible concepts, and many others can be added to this list.

Concept	Example of a topic where it might be applied
<b>Resilience</b>	Any context where people experience life changes that impact well-being and ways they coped or managed the situation. Also contexts where people are learning knowledge and skills that prepare them to cope with possible stressful life events in future.
<b>Social justice Inclusiveness (of diversity) and 'othering', fairness</b>	Any context where people are treated differently or unfairly because of (perceived) differences e.g. sexuality and gender, cultural and ethnic issues, power imbalances in relationships.
<b>Ethics and ethical thinking</b>	Any context whether there are different perspectives on the matters and people have different morals and beliefs about right and wrong, or where the situation presents with opposing viewpoints – irrespective of the legal position on the matter.
<b>Gender (which could branch into either gender roles and stereotyping or diverse gender identities)</b>	Any context where gender features, noting that there are two distinct aspects to gender issues, one around gender role stereotyping and power relations which position males and females differently, and the issue of diverse and fluid gender identities.
<b>Sexuality Sexual identity</b>	Any context where diverse sexual identities and relationships are a feature.
<b>Social determinants of health Equality, equity Social inclusion, social coherence, social capital, social mobility</b>	Any health-related context where inequities exist across whole populations or population groups e.g. the relationship of poverty with health and well-being.  <i>(Note that instead of the determinants of health, PE tends to use SPEEECH – social, political, economic, environmental, ethical, cultural, historical).</i>
<b>Culture, subculture Cultural capital</b>	Any context where the attitudes, values, beliefs, customs, practices and traditions, and social behaviour of a particular people or society are a feature of the topic.
<b>Harm minimisation</b>	Any alcohol or drug related topic.
<b>Collective action</b>	Any context where change for improved health and/or well-being outcomes requires all people to contribute and participate in some capacity. This would be accompanied with understanding of relevant health promotion models and national and international frameworks and law/ policy documents.
<b>Empowerment and agency Rights (and responsibilities)</b>	Any context where people are disempowered or have unequal access to opportunities to act independently and to make their own free choices because of their economic or social class, gender, sexual identity, ability, ethnicity, cultural customs, religion, age etc.
<b>Sustainability</b>	In situations which need to achieve more equitable health and well-being outcomes for a group or people across a population, actions to promote health and well-being need to consider what is sustainable into the future and not be one-off, quick fixes that won't last.
<b>Intersectionality</b>	The interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage (Oxford)

## Using other Health Education concepts

If you are using these (or other) HPE-relevant concepts, make sure you locate a definition that shows:

- A commonly understood and agreed to meaning of the concept,
- How the concept relates to the HPE underlying concepts,
- What you understand the concept means, and
- How or why you are using it to support your critical evaluation.

Note: Students selecting topics related to Physical Education topics will need to include consideration of PE concepts and big ideas such as:

- **Bio-physical principles** - which relate to understandings of the principles of anatomy, biomechanics, exercise physiology, sports psychology, and nutrition as they relate to human body movement.
- **Socio-cultural factors** – which relate to social and cultural environments and contexts, and
- The concept of **‘in, through and about’ human body movement**.

## Indigenous knowledge

Indigenous knowledge, such as mātauranga Māori and Pacific knowledge’s can be increasingly found in published sources, both online in and books that can be borrowed through libraries.

Indigenous knowledge can also be accessed through people sharing their knowledge.

If you choose to include indigenous knowledge in your report consider the following.

- Make sure you include the knowledge in a respectful, meaningful, and detailed way and not as a tokenistic add on.
- Remember you are carrying out a critical evaluation, so it is not simply a case of reproducing knowledge but using it as a lens on a topic to help understanding it in more depth.
- If the knowledge is from an online source, be assured of the quality of the information as you would for any online information source and reference the source.
- Try to determine if these are ideas held nationally or regionally (e.g. by hapū and iwi) – avoid making sweeping claims that (all) Māori think about or understand a situation a particular way as often this won’t be the case.
- Think about issues related to permission to use the knowledge this way and if accusations of (mis)appropriation are going to be an issue.
- Think about the ethics of the situation - in relation to how the information was accessed and gathered, and how it is being used.

# Topic-related information, data, and evidence

## Sources of quality information and data

There are many easily accessed print and digital (online) sources of information relevant to HPE. These include:

- Reports from government ministries e.g. education, health, social development, justice
- Reports and information non-government organisations (there are many of these) e.g. Mental Health Foundation, Drug Foundation, Health Promotion Forum, Te Whatu Ora. Sexual Well-being Aotearoa.
- Reports from health and well-being research projects produced by universities and other education or research organisations e.g. Youth 2000 series, NZCER (NZ Council for Educational Research), ERO (Education Review Office), sports and recreation organisations.
- News and current affairs items from reputable news agencies.
- For international issues, organisations like WHO, World Bank, United Nations including UNESCO, OECD, UNICEF.

It is not expected that you will have access to university level texts and journals as it is unfair to expect students in all parts of the country to live near a university library, or know someone who can access academic journals online for them. These materials are written for an audience beyond students at secondary school. You might have access to such materials and may include ideas from them in your critical evaluation, but make sure you understand them well enough to use them convincingly.

**Potentially, all information can be used as a source of data, but note that the difference between data and evidence:**

- **Data** is the raw information – qualitative (related to the quality – where data are expressed in words and ideas, images etc), and quantitative (numerical data).
- **Evidence** is the data that is selected to justify a claim or make a case.

If quantitative (statistical) data is part of the information you are using to support your critical evaluation, make sure you understand what the statistics are saying. It is not expected that all students have done a year 13 statistics course. *If you don't understand* what the 'high level' statistical analysis in a report means, *don't include this information in your report*. Stick with the basic descriptive statistics, and then, only where these are relevant to the topic to either explain your purpose or implications. It becomes apparent to the reader of a student's report whether or not they know what these statistical terms mean, or if the information has been copied for effect and to give the appearance of sophisticated thinking and understanding.

## Data and information from popular sources

- Ideas for many HPE topics of interest to you may, in the first instance, come from popular sources such as news items, social media, film, TV, and internet, as well as your personal experiences of the world. Information from these sources are fine to help you define your purpose and why you are considering a topic, but once the critical thinking process to deeply understand your topic is underway, you will need to access high quality information to support your evaluation. Keep references to popular sources like news articles, YouTube video (etc) to an absolute minimum.
- Also use 'primary' sources of data and information – that is, where the information came from in the first place. Wikipedia is a 'secondary' source of data where people put information that was first

published in other places. The quality of information on Wikipedia is highly variable as what goes online is moderated by other interested people who may or may not be experts in on the matter.

- See also part 2 about being a critical user of digital information.

## Data and information from your own HPE investigations and learning

**Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly integrate connections with their own experience or New Zealand examples.**

Sources of information for your critical evaluation can include data that has come from your own investigations. These forms of information still need to be supported with a range of other high quality information like that listed above. For example:

- School survey of opinions, experiences, attitudes and values of students, teachers and leaders, or parents.
- Interviews with peers at school, or teachers and leaders, or others outside of the school about matters related to your topic.
- Feedback collected ethically from special interest (sports, arts and culture) or support groups in school.
- Information sourced ethically through social media – which is systematically collected and analysed.
- Your analysis of a media source for a particular purpose e.g. roles of females in music videos, or males in TV situation comedies.
- Your report of your health promoting action carried out in the school or community which already contains an analysis and evaluation.
- An assessment completed for another part of your course which contains data relevant to your Scholarship topic.
- Artefacts (posters, video, blogs, presentations, etc) produced by yourself and/or your peers during learning activities in class.
- Participation in whole school events that contribute to well-being.
- Your own performance or contribution to a school event – sporting or cultural, health promotion etc. To make sources of data like this useful for your critical evaluation, you make need to carry out a critical reflection. See the section on critical reflection in Part 2.

Students often ask, ‘how many references (items of information) should I have?; to which teachers and lecturers usually reply ‘*how long is a piece of string?*’ which is basically saying there is no magic number as it’s all about relevance and quality of your selected information. If you need help to find and source good quality, NZ relevant information to support your critical evaluation, ask your teacher.

Most of your information should be New Zealand based unless your topic has a particular international aspect to it.

*For information about referencing information sources – see part 5.*

Have a look of the exemplars of completed reports online showing Scholarship and Outstanding Scholarship performance. Take note of the number and type of references used in these reports.

# PART FOUR

## Topic selection

This section contains information about:

- Topic selection

**The Assessment Specification for 2026 requires you to produce a report that critically evaluates a significant well-being challenge or issue facing young people in New Zealand today.**

**To critically evaluate means to:**

- identify the nature of the health or physical activity challenge or issue (supported by relevant data)
- provide two or more perspectives on the challenge (bodies of thought, as supported by evidence)
- propose future solutions and / or health promotion actions to address the challenge and enhance young people's well-being.

**The report should integrate the following:**

- hauora, attitudes and values, the socio-ecological perspective, and health promotion concepts
- bio-physical principles and / or sociocultural factors as relevant
- primary data / own evidence, reflections and / or personal learning experiences
- evidence from at least one of the following documents:

### ***Documents***

<b>Document One</b>	<b>Document Two</b>
<a href="#">Overview of Youth Health NZ 2024</a>	<a href="#">The Child and Youth Strategy 2024-27 NZ</a>
<b>Document Three</b>	<b>Document Four</b>
<a href="#">Active NZ: Participation Trends 2017-2023</a>	<a href="#">Sport NZ Strategic Plan 2024-2028</a>

# Topic selection

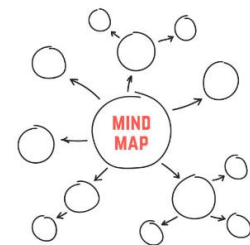
As this is an NZHEA resource developed to support students submitted reports with strong **health education** themes, the following discussion focuses only on the:

- **Overview of Youth Health NZ 2024**
- **The Child and Youth Strategy 2024-27 NZ**

This same process can be used for the other documents, although the topic specific aspects will need to change.

Selecting a topic for your HPE Scholarship report is bit of a **balancing act between what you are interested in and what you can find in one of the documents that you can shape your topic around.**

1. **Start by brainstorming a variety of child and/or youth focused health and well-being challenges** you might be interested in considering, and any particular aspects of these that might be useful to consider in more detail.



2. **Locate and download the documents.**

- Overview of Youth Health NZ 2024
- The Child and Youth Strategy 2024-27 NZ

*These documents are each 12 pages long although the useful material takes up less than that. Look at the main topics and themes in each document (see below).*

**Can you make any initial connection between the topics you are interested in and either of the documents? If so, pursue this. If not, do a bit more reading of the documents and be thinking about the possibilities.**

## Overview of Youth Health NZ 2024

*Main headings in the document with annotations. Do not be limited by these few suggestions.*

### Health status of young people

- The determinants of youth health are broad

**Key issues – this list provides some obvious well-being topics (or parts of topics) – as underlined. See the details in the report for more information.**

- high levels of youth mental distress – think of the various forms this take and the causes of it
- variable access to health care services
- impacts of substance use and other modifiable risk factors – substance use includes any of alcohol, cannabis and other drugs, vaping, prescription medication, tobacco smoking in high deprivation areas; modifiable risk factors include nutritional and physical activity
- high levels of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and gaps in HPV vaccination coverage
- impacts of housing-related conditions – relates to poverty
- risks associated with family violence and sexual violence (FVSV)

- some young people have higher health needs – a focus on population groups with higher health needs such as Māori of Pacific children and youth

**The health system provides a range of health services** – how do some of these relate to the selected well-being challenge?

**Listening to young people is key to designing services that improve their health outcomes** – is there evidence in relation to your selected topic where this is happening, and is it one idea you could use for health promotion?

## The Child and Youth Strategy 2024-27 NZ

*This strategy requires a different approach. Whereas the overview document provides some obvious well-being topics, a lot of this strategy is around addressing issues related to poverty. That said, the section on ‘preventing child harms’ also lists possible topic areas like drug and alcohol use and mental health challenges. You might think about how some of these ideas could be applied to a critical evaluation of a child or youth well-being situation in your community. Perhaps think about what you think is missing from this strategy – the previous version for example contained far more action areas. Do not be limited by these few suggestions.*

### Contents list

- Early investment will drive positive impacts across a range of later life outcomes
- **Priority 1:** Supporting children and their families and whānau in the first 2,000 days
- **Priority 2:** Reducing child material hardship
- **Priority 3:** Preventing child harm
- How we will know if we’re making a difference
- Putting the Strategy into action

<b>And then ....</b>	<b>Note that the order of these tasks may vary, and you will likely need to circle back to some these ideas several times before deciding on your final topic.</b>
<b>3. Skim read each document</b>	<p><b>First reading of the documents</b></p> <p><b>Answer these questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the main purpose of each document?</li> <li>• Who is the intended audience (and how do you know this)?</li> <li>• Why is it needed?</li> <li>• What other ideas are surfacing that might be interesting to consider? Look for other health education concepts, theories or big ideas like: resilience, concepts related to sexuality and gender, ethics and ethical dilemmas, sustainability, social determinants of health, poverty, imbalances of power, (in)equity or (in)equality – the implications of these for social justice, fairness, inclusiveness, different cultural perspectives on health and well-being ... etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Highlight or annotate</b> statements (perhaps with a code or key) that seem to make connections with these concepts. Add notes where you see that some of these ideas might apply.</p>

#### 4. Looking at the bigger picture

### Reading in detail

As you engage with the text of these documents, start considering the following points – you don't need to answer these questions straight away but be thinking about what might be possible.

#### What is the document saying about:

- Action. As you develop your report, how will the idea of taking action (ie promoting well-being) feature?
- Improving well-being. Which aspect(s) of well-being could be feature highly in your report and how could all dimensions of well-being be considered?
- Families, schools, communities, groups and organisations, councils, and governments working together to improve outcomes for children and young people. How will the socio-ecological perspective feature in your report?
- Reducing inequities so that all children and young people can have good well-being outcomes. How will your report consider values like fairness, inclusiveness, and the overall concept of social justice?

#### HPE underlying concepts

Highlight in another colour where you see the HPE **underlying concepts** have relevance ie

- Text that shows understanding of hauora and well-being as a holistic concept.
- Text that is about the inter-relationships of individual young people (self/personal), with others, and in context of their communities/NZ as a society.
- Text that indicates the values of social justice are being considered – what's fair and inclusive.
- Text that talks about improving young people's well-being through taking action (health promotion).

Keep these ideas in mind as you read these materials, decide your topic, plan and develop your report. The people who mark Scholarship reports know these concepts and will be looking to see that you have integrated these ideas *somehow* across your report.

**Remember the report should integrate the following: hauora, attitudes and values, the socio-ecological perspective, and health promotion concepts**

#### 5. Pinning down your topic

### Deciding on your topic

You will need to make a decision about your topic before you can really get going on the details of your report.

Reports framed by a named topic or context are likely to be much more straightforward, and related topic material will be easier to find.

However, a topic could also be based around a concept or a big idea – if you take this approach make sure it doesn't become so complex that the focus of the report is hard to sustain. *Remember you need to centre your report around a well-being challenge so don't stray too far from this central idea.*

Your topic may relate specifically to one of the issues in one of the documents, or it may be an interpretation of the ideas or themes in these documents – If you take this approach make sure it is clear to the reader how you are connecting your topic to the document.

	<p><b>Children or youth?</b> One document considers <b>children and youth and one youth only people</b>. Which age group will you focus on? One or the other, or all young people?</p> <p>Whichever approach you take, make sure you can sustain links to the ‘evidence’ within the selected document across your report.</p> <p><b>Remember the report should integrate the following: evidence from at least one of the documents.</b></p>
<p><b>6. How can you see this topic being developed as a report?</b></p>	<p><b>What is your point? What is your purpose?</b> If you are to produce a report that is a maximum of 26 pages long:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHAT IS THE POINT you want to make? What’s YOUR PURPOSE for choosing this topic?</li> <li>• How are you going to ‘shape’ your topic?</li> <li>• What overall evaluative question and sub-questions do you want to respond to or (try to) answer across your report?</li> <li>• What material will you need to find for your critical evaluation? Are you sure you can find this material and sustain this topic for the duration of the report?</li> <li>• Will your report be based around action you take (with others), or require data you need to collect from people – and if so, how will this influence the topic selected for your report?</li> </ul> <p><b>Remember your overall task is to produce a report that critically evaluates a significant well-being challenge or issue facing young people in New Zealand today.</b></p> <p><b>You need to clearly identify the nature of the health or physical activity challenge or issue (supported by relevant data).</b></p>
<p><b>7. Frame your report with questions</b></p>	<p><b>Developing your critical evaluation question(s)</b> <b>Try to decide one overarching question that will frame your report. What big question will your report provide an answer for?</b></p> <p>Develop a series of <b>sub questions</b> about your topic that will help explore it as an issue. Keep the assessment specifications requirements in mind as you shape these sub questions to ensure you cover everything you need to. Make sure your questions are leading you toward the overall point of the report as a <b>critical evaluation of a significant well-being challenge or issue facing young people in New Zealand today.</b></p> <p><b>Evaluative questions need to consider your topic in a way that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involves making a judgement about the quality of something related to the topic e.g. ‘how well ...’</li> <li>• Enables you to see implications and solutions, and to draw conclusions and make recommendations</li> <li>• Views a topic from many different angles, and/or</li> <li>• Questions something related to the topic in order to attribute some value to it.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note that you do not need to include these questions in your final written report, but it is a very useful device to help you stay on track as you develop the report.</b> For many topics you will find a LOT of ‘interesting’ information, but you won’t be able to use it all. Framing your report writing with questions also helps to decide which information to include and what to leave out, as well as how to write about the material you select.</p>

<p><b>8. Think about HOW you are going to use evidence from the document</b></p>	<p><b>Evidence from the selected document</b></p> <p>There is no one ‘right’ way to use the selected document, and it may not become wholly apparent until you are well into writing your report what this is, but start with some ideas e.g.</p> <p>Will the evidence in the document relate to how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The well-being challenge is connected with one of the key issues or priority areas?</li> <li>• The themes in the document relate to the HPE underlying concepts?</li> <li>• The different knowledge perspectives or bodies of thought feature in the selected documents?</li> <li>• Or something else?</li> </ul> <p><b>Remember the report should integrate evidence from at least one of the documents listed in the assessment specifications.</b></p>
<p><b>9. Locating and selecting a wide range of other material to support your report</b></p>	<p><b>Materials to help explain the well-being challenge – the issue or topic:</b></p> <p>A quality report will draw information from a variety of sources such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research reports</li> <li>• Academic articles or books</li> <li>• Documentaries</li> <li>• Information from specialist agency or organisation websites</li> <li>• Interview with an expert</li> <li>• Data collected by you (see part 3)</li> <li>• You can use a <u>small amount</u> of material from popular sources e.g. newspapers, social media, blogs, Tik Tok videos or other form of online post, which are useful for demonstrating the nature of the issue, but make sure these are supported by quality material from the sources listed above.</li> </ul> <p><b>Materials to help explain the bio-physical principles and / or sociocultural factors</b></p> <p>For a Health Education focused report this will focus on only on <b>socio-cultural factors</b>.</p> <p><b>Socio-cultural factors relate to social and cultural environments and contexts.</b></p> <p>It is very difficult to avoid socio-cultural factors in Health Education and it would only be if someone focused entirely on the biomedical side of STIs or substance for example that they would miss this point!</p> <p>Ensure most material selected materials consider the wider social and cultural picture.</p> <p><b>Culture:</b> Note that ‘cultural’ here does not (only) mean ethnicity or race-based considerations of culture. Examples of definitions (there are many more):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Among sociologists, “culture” just as often refers to the beliefs that people hold about reality, the norms that guide their behaviour, the values that orient their moral commitments, or the symbols through which these beliefs, norms, and values are communicated. <a href="#">Oxford Bibliographies</a></i></li> <li>• <i>Behaviour peculiar to Homo sapiens, together with material objects used as an integral part of this behaviour. Thus, culture includes language, ideas, beliefs,</i></li> </ul>

customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, works of art, rituals, and ceremonies, among other elements. [Britannica](#)

**Remember the report should integrate the following: bio-physical principles and / or sociocultural factors as relevant**

**KEY  
CONSIDERATION**

**Perspectives**

There are many ways to address the requirement to *provide two or more perspectives on the challenge (bodies of thought, as supported by evidence)* – noting that these may include the socio-cultural (or biophysical) factors noted above.

The 2025 assessment report noted that many candidates did not cover this requirement well. The assessor made the following points which can be used as recommendations for developing a Scholarship report in 2026.

**Some successful examples of perspectives included:**

- using opposing viewpoints (for and against)
- a range of perspectives (e.g. youth, public health, government, or Sport NZ)
- different socio-ecological perspectives (e.g. personal, interpersonal and societal etc.)
- lenses guided by models and theories (e.g. healthism, Te Whare Tapa Whā, and determinants of health)
- perspectives from specific disciplines (psychological, biophysical, or sociocultural).

**Perspectives are intended to be viewpoints that are either:**

- held by a group of people who have some form of investment in the nature of the well-being challenge. Instead of focusing only on the opinions of the groups, the focus needs to be on the **body of knowledge or thought behind the viewpoint** the groups espouse or articulate, e.g. **using opposing viewpoints from groups of people for and against, or a range of group perspectives (e.g. youth, public health, government, or Sport NZ), and/or**
- drawn from academic understandings e.g. **different socio-ecological perspectives (e.g. personal, interpersonal and societal etc.), lenses guided by models and theories (e.g. healthism, Te Whare Tapa Whā, and determinants of health), or perspectives from specific disciplines (psychological, biophysical, or sociocultural).**

**Groups of people invested in the well-being challenge could include:**

- professional groups who provide a form of health service related to the well-being challenge
- academics who research the topic that is the focus for the well-being challenge
- policy makers – political and civic leaders (etc)
- groups of people directly affected by the well-being challenge (including their families)
- population demographic groups (based on age, ethnicity, sex or gender, health status, region, etc)
- indigenous people or other ethnic or cultural groups
- lobby or activist groups
- health promotion groups (including agencies or organisations), and
- other identifiable groups with some form of investment in the well-being challenge.

What the marker wants to see is that you can apply **at least two different perspectives** to the well-being challenge at the centre of the topic of your report, with a focus on the underpinning bodies of thought (ie the concepts, theories or types of knowledge) that give shape to these perspectives.

These ideas below add to the lists above, and for the purpose of illustration, show how two perspectives could be used for one topic. Some of these perspectives are in opposition to each other, some are ideologically in different spaces (they are just different knowledge perspectives), and some offer different concepts or angles to come to a similar position.

- Individualised healthism approaches vs socioecological and holistic understandings of health and well-being
- Indigenous knowledge and academically disciplined subject knowledge
- Psychological and sociological knowledge e.g. identity from psychology and intersectionality from sociology (there are MANY other psychological and/or sociological concepts or theories that could be used this way)
- Biomedical view and a social determinants of health approach to a health issue
- Differing ethical perspectives such as individual (human) rights versus the greater social good, and perhaps in comparison to a legislative approach
- Social justice and equity in relation to theories of power

The point is to find at least two different perspectives to add some depth of understanding to the well-being challenge you're focusing on. The topic you select will help determine which perspectives will be more sensible and viable to use for the critical evaluation. **Make it clear in your writing when you are presenting ideas related to these perspectives.** Don't be limited to two if your topic lends itself to being explored through multiple perspectives.

**Note of caution:** there is a temptation to try and sound really smart by selecting complicated academic concepts and terminology. If you can understand these that is fine, but it becomes apparent to the marker when you don't, so choose only knowledge perspectives (bodies of thought) that you understand and can apply to your topic in a meaningful way and throughout the report. Avoid mentioning these only once and not returning to them.

**Read the 2025 Assessment report for more ideas about providing different perspectives.**

**Remember the report should provide two or more perspectives on the challenge (bodies of thought, as supported by evidence). Make it clear to the reader when you are talking about these perspectives.**

### Using evidence

See Part 3.

**Remember the report should integrate the following: primary data / own evidence, reflections and / or personal learning experiences.**

### Ideas for health promotion

Many research reports make recommendations for health promotion and taking action and can be used as a source of ideas.

You could also consider some of the models or approaches for taking action. There are MANY frameworks or sets of principles, models, charters, treaties, policies and laws, that say something about taking action to promote health and well-being. Consider selecting material that relate to your topic to add depth to your recommendations.

A key consideration for taking action is to change the factors that caused the problem in the first place or the factors that sustain the problem – try and avoid quick fix solutions that do not address the underlying problem.

**Remember you need to propose future solutions and / or health promotion actions to address the challenge and enhance young people’s well-being**

### How many references to other materials?

There is no fixed requirement for how many references you must use for your report. Have a look at the Top scholar reports online. 40-50 references are common for a high quality, well-informed report.

#### 10. As your write your report

### Writing

*(See Part 5 of this resource)*

- Make sure you include some reference to your selected document throughout the report.
- In the introduction, name the document you have used and indicate why you have selected this one.
- In the detail of your report, ensure that it is clear to the marker HOW and WHY you have used your selected document – and not added a reference to it as an afterthought.
- Make sure there are clear connections between the knowledge, theories and concepts used in HPE and where/how you see similar ideas are featured in your selected document.
- Remember the learning outcome is a critical EVALUATION – how and what are you evaluating throughout your report?

#### 11. What new ideas, tools, or resources can you offer?

### [Optional] Does your topic lend itself to you designing something new?

This can be done in a range of ways e.g.

- an overview of a new education programme for children or young people
- an educational resource (print or digital)
- a model to show how ideas connect or how an idea can be shown symbolically
- a set of principles or protocols
- a process for taking action on an issue
- a survey or other data collection tool.

If you develop something like this, a model might be included in the body of your report but most of the other tools would be included using a small number of pages in the appendix (but don’t use up 10-20 pages of your report all in appendices). If you develop a resource and it’s quite long, just provide a summary of it, perhaps with an image or a link to an online source of this.

*Note that this approach is not essential for your report* and if used should be clearly linked to your critical evaluation of the topic. For example if the resources you found were inadequate - based on what your critical evaluation revealed - you may look at

designing something new (or an overview or framework of something new that could be developed further).

## Some dos and don'ts about topic selection

Don't ....	Do .....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select a topic of interest for which you can only tell a descriptive account of the topic that is little more than a collection of 'information about....'</li> <li>• Select a topic that is difficult to critically evaluate in relation to the HPE underlying concepts.</li> <li>• Submit an NCEA assessment. A Scholarship response needs to show critical insights beyond the scope of a single Achievement Standard assessment task. That said, it is expected that the topic you choose has links with your learning – which is likely assessed with one or more Achievement Standards.</li> <li>• Copy a topic idea very similar to an online exemplar of a successful report from a previous year.</li> <li>• Choose a topic that is so complex or unfamiliar you don't understand it.</li> <li>• Select a topic that is deeply personal or personally distressing for you. Think about your ability to think critically and dispassionately about your topic when you are immersed in the issue yourself, and how you might feel if you disclose personal information and then not receive a Scholarship. Also, assessors are ethically bound to report any information that they find troubling or concerning and NZQA will follow this up. It is preferable that you discuss troubling thoughts with your school counsellor or another trusted adult.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check out your topic idea(s) with your teacher to check for suitability</li> <li>• 'Test' the suitable topics with the critical thinking question (See part 3.)</li> <li>• <b>Frame your topic as an evaluative question (with sub-questions).</b> This helps you think about your topic in ways that will enable you to write a critical evaluation report. You may not choose to include the actual question in your report but it helps you to maintain your focus while you are planning and writing your report. <i>Examples of evaluative questions are included in the previous list of topics ideas.</i></li> </ul>

## Topics that are personal to you

If your topic is **something you are personally passionate about**, have personal experience of, or have personal involvement in, make sure you maintain a 'critical' and balanced focus throughout your report. A critical approach requires you to think seriously and deeply about something (which requires critical thinking) and the use of theories, concepts and/or big ideas to help make sense of your experiences. A critical evaluation is not a personal outpouring (or a rant and rave) about a topic you are passionate about. *See the section on critical reflection in part 2.*

## Ensuring an element of originality report

HPE Scholarship has for many years required **a unique and original approach to the selected topic.**

What this means is that your report should be NOT be something that simply consolidates a range of existing material to reproduce information in a coherent manner and give an account of a situation - much like a research essay or an AI generated response.

Deciding what is original and 'unique' is difficult to know as you cannot be expected to know what has been written universally about the selected topic, nor will you have access to other examples of topics already covered in previous Scholarship reports that the markers have seen before.

It is not expected that your topic selection will be so unique that no one has ever heard of it before – after all you need to be able to find a range of information about your topic to critically evaluate it – it's what you do with the information as you carry out the critical evaluation that makes it original.

### As a guide, avoid:

- Simply forcing a recently popular or successful topic to 'fit' into the framework of ideas provided in your selected document. Convince the person marking your report that you have worked from the document rather than making some incidental connections back to it after the fact.
- Repeating or reusing topics that you have seen used successfully in previous year's scholarship submissions (like the topics in the online exemplars, or reports gaining Scholarship or Outstanding Scholarship submitted by other students at your school that you are shown by your teacher).
- Using topics taken directly from your Achievement Standard assessments – aspects of some of these topics can certainly provide the basis for your report but you need to add something unique and different such as applying a different theory or concept, looking at the issue from different perspectives, adding your own data, etc.

### Uniqueness and originality can be enhanced by:

- Adding convincing examples or insights from your own experiences, or data collected from your school or local community (e.g. from your own investigations, surveys, interviews, health promotion actions, or performance).
- Selecting a topical or newly emerging topic featured in the media to which you can apply an original idea that others may not think of. You need to think beyond what has been reported and how you will apply the HPE underlying concepts and other relevant concepts or theories in ways you haven't seen before. *Newly emerging issues are likely to be popular choices for the current year's Scholarship submissions, so what are you going to do with it that will be different to the way the issue has already been reported, and different to what other candidates might do with it?*
- Selecting an established topic or issue and giving it some 'new' treatment by applying concepts or perspectives that may have been used for a completely different topic or joining aspects of issues across health education and physical education.

# PART FIVE

## Writing a report

This section contains information about:

- Format of the assessment
- What is a report (and not an essay)?
- Critical writing
- Template
- Referencing styles

# Format of the assessment

The NZQA website has a number of important things to say about the format of the report. It is essential that you take note of these requirements.

## The Assessment Specification for 2026 states that:

The report must:

- not exceed the equivalent of 26 double-spaced single-sided A4 pages
- have numbered pages
- use a font the approximate equivalent of 12 point Arial
- provide references in one consistent format, preferably footnotes.

The report may contain relevant and meaningful images, sketches, diagrams, illustrations, and other forms of graphic representation.

Material obviously in excess of the maximum limit will not be marked. Repeated or extraneous material may be seen as evidence of flawed communication.

Appendices to the report must contain only selected relevant information that is directly referred to in the report, e.g. a questionnaire or brief video. Appendices are included in the 26-page limit.

## Submission requirements

Evidence may be submitted as ONE document file (PDF, DOC, or DOCX), with a maximum file size of 5GB.

## Conditions of assessment

The use of chatbots, generative AI, paraphrasing tools, or other tools that can automatically generate content is not permitted and material generated by these tools should not be submitted as part of the candidate's work.

The assessment reports continue to comment on problems with the format and layout of reports. These matters are easily avoided with careful planning and checking. **You do not need to use up the 26 pages.**

Regardless of whether you are submitting your report digitally, or typing it, printing and sending it as a hard copy, make sure you are confident using a word processing programme that allows you to meet the formatting requirements above. Use the features in Word (or other) application to check the accuracy of your spelling and grammar. If you are not used to writing long documents on the computer, or have difficulty accessing a suitable computer for this purpose, talk with your teacher to find a suitable solution.

Remember that the markers mark hundreds of these reports each year. Make the best impression you can with a neatly laid out, coherently written, and well organised report.

# What is a report (and not an essay)?

It is important that you understand what a report looks like and how it is put together. **A report is not an essay**, although the writing process for essays and reports share many features in common.

## THINK .... Report - *not* essay

There are many online sources of information about the differences between reports and essays.

## Report and essay comparisons

	Essay	Report
Purpose	To write a well-argued response to the question or proposition. An essay establishes a proposition (thesis).	To investigate, present and analyse information thoroughly and logically. Often to recommend action to solve a problem. A report usually makes proposals.
Topic	Usually a question or proposition. Based on reading, sometimes fieldwork.	Often a problem or case study which sets up a hypothetical situation. Based on reading, fieldwork or practical work.
Audience	Written for the lecturer.	Usually written for the audience established in the topic, but in reality the teacher (and examiner) is also the audience.
Format	Usually no headings or subheadings.	Always in sections and subsections with headings, with their order often shown by numbers or a combination of letters and numbers. It's important to know what sections are required and what information they should contain. <i>But having headings and subheadings alone does NOT make it a report!</i> (See a suggested template later in this section of the resource.)
Style	May be a little subjective.	Must be objective.
Assessment	Success depends on the argument, how one point is related to the next and how well it establishes the proposition.	Success depends on the demonstration of good research skills and the objective presentation and analysis of relevant information.

Source: adapted from RMIT (Australia)

# Critical writing

Section 3 of this resource focused on critical thinking and critical evaluation. In this final section the focus shifts to **critical writing** and how to put all of your critical thinking into a report. There are many useful websites with information of how to write critically (e.g. university library websites).

The following guidance is offered about the difference between descriptive and critical writing.

## The difference between descriptive writing and critical writing

Descriptive writing	Critical writing
<p>With descriptive writing you are setting the scene and providing the background within which you develop your argument or state your case.</p> <p>Descriptive writing does not develop an argument.</p> <p>You are presenting the situation as it is without any analysis or discussion.</p> <p>Descriptive writing is relatively simple.</p> <p>The catch is that in the process of describing your situation you use many words that eat into word or page limit.</p> <p>When providing only a description, you are presenting and reproducing what is already known, but not ‘transforming’ information. That is, you are reporting ideas but not taking them forward in an innovative and new way.</p> <p>However, a certain amount of descriptive writing is needed in your report to establish for example (and as relevant to the topic):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an overview of the well-being issue;</li> <li>• the setting or context for your particular focus of the topic (school, community, digital environment);</li> <li>• the people or population group that are the focus for your report;</li> <li>• some examples of health statistics;</li> <li>• a brief summary of the history leading up to an event, or an account of current concerns related to the issue.</li> </ul>	<p>With critical writing you are participating in the ‘academic debate’ which is more challenging and risky because you have to make a case and defend what you say.</p> <p>You need to weigh up the evidence and arguments of others, and to contribute your own. You will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider the quality and relevance of the information you have read;</li> <li>• identify key positive and negative aspects you can comment upon;</li> <li>• assess their relevance and usefulness to the case that you are making in your report; and</li> <li>• identify how best these ideas can be woven into the argument or the case that you are developing.</li> </ul> <p>The characteristic features of critical writing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a clear and confident refusal to accept the conclusions of other writers without evaluating the arguments and evidence that they provide (<i>that is, you don’t passively and uncritically accept what they say and agree with them – you have to analyse what they say and draw your own conclusions</i>);</li> <li>• a balanced presentation of reasons why the conclusions of other writers (of your various sources of information) may be accepted or may need to be treated with caution;</li> <li>• a clear presentation of your own evidence and argument, leading to your conclusion; and</li> <li>• a recognition of the limitations in your own evidence, argument, and conclusion.</li> </ul>

**Source:** Ideas for this table are adapted from University of Leicester writing resources

### **Use of paragraphs: There are several ways in which you can use the paragraph to enhance your critical writing.**

You can use paragraphs to make a clear and visual separation between descriptive writing and critical analysis, by switching to a new paragraph when you move from description to critical writing, and vice versa. This can help in:

- emphasising to the reader that you are including both description and critical analysis, by providing a visual representation of their separation; and
- pushing you to produce the necessary critical writing, especially if you find that your description paragraphs are always longer, or more frequent, than your critical analysis paragraphs.

A paragraph break can provide a brief pause for your readers within a longer argument; giving them the opportunity to make sure they are keeping up with your reasoning. Paragraphs that are overly long can require readers to hold too much in their mind at once, resulting in their having to re-read the material until they can identify the point you are making.

You can also use paragraphs to push yourself to include critical writing alongside descriptive writing or referencing, by considering each paragraph almost as an essay in miniature. Within each paragraph you would:

- introduce the point you want to make;
- make the point, with supporting evidence;
- reflect critically on the point.

Source: Extract from University of Leicester writing materials

## **Using online exemplars of past Scholarship reports**

Online (at the HPE Scholarship subject page) you will find exemplars of reports that gained Top Scholar, Outstanding Scholarship and Scholarship in the previous year (these are made available each year in April along with the assessment report).

Students may find these exemplars helpful for gaining ideas about the quality of writing expected for Scholarship. Try to avoid becoming distracted by the topic the person chose and be confident that you can do as good a job with your selected topic. Use the checklist following to look more at the features of their writing and the structure of their report.

## **Self, peer, teacher (or other adult) review**

The following **checklist** provides a range of prompts that you can use as you self-review, and as a framework of ideas that a peer, or teacher/adult can use when reviewing and giving you feedback on the quality of your writing.

# Report writing reviewer checklist

ASPECTS OF WRITING TO CONSIDER ACROSS THE REPORT	Prompts for the reviewer
<b>Sense of purpose</b>	Is there a clear sense of why this is an important and relevant topic for HPE and is it clearly well-being related?
<b>Line of argument</b>	Is there coherence and a logical sequence and flow of ideas across the report? Does the focus remain on the well-being aspects of the topic?
<b>Convincing the reader</b>	Ask yourself 'why should I believe what I've just read?'. ( <i>Recommend reworking sections that are unconvincing.</i> )
<b>Unsubstantiated statements</b>	Are there any generalised, sweeping statements that are not supported by evidence? ( <i>Recommend re-phrasing or remove the statement.</i> )
<b>Balance between descriptive and critical writing</b>	Use two coloured pens (or the highlighter in a Word doc) to mark whether the lines of writing/sentences are descriptive or critical. The balance will change across the report, but make sure there is enough of the colour that represents critical writing.
<b>A reason for everything</b>	Is there a reason for everything that is included in the report – does anything seem pointless or superfluous, or not on topic?
<b>Appropriate tone and voice</b>	Is there any cynicism, arrogance, dismissiveness, unfounded opinionated comments, pot shots and throw-away comments, prejudice, or assertions made without reason? <i>Recommend removing or reworking these sentences.</i>  Instead, is there a healthy scepticism, confidence, critical judgement, justified opinion, careful evaluation, and fair assessment?
<b>Images, sketches, diagrams, illustrations, etc</b>	If these are included, are they referred to in the report? <i>If not, recommend referring to them or removing them.</i> Do they add value to your argument, and is their purpose for inclusion clear?
<b>Valid and substantiated conclusions</b>	Is the conclusion well supported by the preceding analysis and argument? Do the conclusions make sense, rather than being a surprise, or an unconvincing leap of logic?
<b>Paragraphs</b>	Does the paragraph structure enhance the writing? ( <i>See previous extract.</i> ) Within each paragraph do you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduce the point you want to make;</li> <li>• make the point, with supporting evidence;</li> <li>• reflect critically on the point.</li> </ul>
<b>Quotes</b>	Are quotes used effectively to support the argument and with a clear purpose? Are the quotes interpreted for the reader, to explain their relevance, discuss their validity, and show how they relate to other evidence? Is the number of quotes reasonable and restrained or is there an excess of quotes at the expense of original writing?

<b>Grammatical accuracy of writing and spelling</b>	Are there grammatical or spelling errors that need to be corrected?
<b>Structure of the report</b>	Does the report conform to the expected structure for a 'report'? (See <i>report template</i> .)
<b>TECHNICAL FEATURES</b>	<b>Does the report meet these technical requirements?</b>
<b>Font size</b>	Must be the approximate equivalent of Arial 12.
<b>Pages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 26 single-sided A4 pages</li> <li>• Double line spacing</li> <li>• Must be numbered.</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	Must be given in an appropriate format, preferably footnotes.
<b>Appendices</b>	If included, do these add any essential information to support the readers understanding of the report? E.g. add authenticity, provide a visual representation of a situation where this was hard to explain in words.
<b>Finally</b>	Re-read the previous year's assessment report – especially the statement about students who gained Outstanding Scholarship and Scholarship – does this relate to your submission? Are there any areas you can strengthen? Read the statement about students who did not gain Scholarship - does this relate to your submission? If so, seek to improve these aspects of your report – with support from your teacher or other adult if required.

# Template/writing frame

TEMPLATE	
Section	<i>This is a suggested approach to preparing and organising a report. You may find other models online that you prefer.</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	<p>Present your selected topic and write a paragraph or two to introduce the ‘big-picture’ aspects of your topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What idea are you proposing?</li> <li>• What are the main facts, statistics, evidence or points that you are using to establish the relevance or importance of your topic?</li> <li>• How does it relate to your selected document? Make this clear, don’t just imply it.</li> </ul> <p>Briefly establish the conceptual or knowledge framework of ideas that you use to carry out your critical evaluation.</p> <p>Include your evaluative question and sub-questions in your introduction OR if you choose not to frame your report with an actual question, make sure you have clearly described to the reader the purpose of the report and what you will show, or make a case for.</p> <p><i>In a 26 page (maximum) report an introduction may take around 1 page.</i></p>
<b>Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why have you selected this topic?</li> <li>• Why is it important and how does it relate to HPE?</li> <li>• Keep some focus on the way your selected document is helping shape your report and how you are using it. This may happen in various ways across your report.</li> </ul> <p><i>In a 26 page (maximum) report additional background information should be kept to a minimum – about a page.</i></p>
<b>Methodology (optional)</b>	<p><i>The report exemplars available online and markers reports to date <u>do not</u> stress the need for a methodology section with this approach to a report. This suggests that this section is <b>not essential</b>.</i></p> <p><i>However, if you think it is helpful for the reader to understand how and why you selected the information you are critically analysing, you could:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Explain HOW you went about your selection; and</i></li> <li>• <i>WHY you did this – what were your criteria for deciding which information you would use and which information you wouldn’t?</i></li> </ul> <p><i>How and why you went about selecting certain information is an actual component of a critical analysis so it wouldn’t hurt to explain your approach.</i></p>
<b>Body of the report</b>	<p>This is where all your <b>critical thinking</b> about the information you have selected, related your topic, is reported in a logical and coherent sequence of <b>main ideas</b>.</p> <p>You will need to decide how many <b>main ideas</b> are apparent in your analysis of your information. There is no required number of main ideas. As a general rule, aim for</p>

fewer, well thought out and argued ideas, substantiated with high quality and convincing evidence, rather than lots of small ideas that are not well developed.

This is also where your writing will make extensive use of the relevant **HPE underlying concepts and any topic specific concepts** that you have used to make sense of all of the information you are evaluating.

*In a 26 page (maximum) report the body will take up the biggest part – at least half of your report.*

**Main idea One: State your first main idea** and your judgement on this – that is, the point you want to make. There should be a clear logic to your selection of your first main idea. It needs to be something the reader needs to know about before anything else – without this main idea the rest of the points you make won't make the sense you want them to.

**Support point one** with evidence from quotations, examples, expert authorities, cases, statistics, and comparisons to similar subjects, (etc) as relevant.

**Keep in mind 'if it's worth including, say why'** – a certain amount of descriptive writing is essential, particularly in the earlier parts of your report so the reader knows what your topic is about, and the points you are making have 'context'. When you describe evidence relevant to your case you need then to why it is relevant. The logic of your explanation contributes to the critical component of your writing. The next few sentences need to explain what this evidence contributes to the argument you are making.

**Address any inconsistent, opposing, alternative or different reasons or viewpoints related to this main idea** (if and where these are apparent in your information). Challenge or question these, refute them as applicable – and with justification.

**Main idea Two:** Repeat the process with **the next main idea that follows logically from your first point**. Make connections back to your first point to explain the development of your ideas (how or why you are moving from the previous point to this point). The amount of descriptive writing should become less as most of your situational information (what, who, where, and when) should have been covered previously.

**Main idea Three (and more):** Repeat above.

**Using headings and subheadings:** Help the reader follow your thinking and development of ideas by giving each of these main ideas a suitable heading. Consider using subheadings to draw attention to distinct parts of your argument, or if there are several sub-points that relate to the overall point being made.

## Discussion

**Overall, what was found out and what does it all mean?** Keep in mind your evaluative questions.

This section draws together some big ideas from across your main points, in consideration of your evaluative question(s), and in preparation for you making some final concluding statements in the conclusion section.

**What recommendations do you have based on your analysis and evaluation of your information?** Explore the possibilities. Think about the 'so what?' and 'what next?' type

	<p>questions. Do you have any suggestions for further investigation into this topic or issue? What needs to happen to ensure equitable health outcomes in the future?</p> <p><i>In a 26 page (maximum) report the discussion may take 3-5 pages. More than the conclusion and a similar / slightly larger amount than your initial introduction and background.</i></p>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<p><b>Restate the most important comments from the introduction. Sum up the main points from your critique in a way that responds to your evaluative question(s).</b></p> <p>You may find you don't provide a single neat 'answer' to your question(s) in your conclusion but more of a possible response to the questions and perhaps what remains unanswered or unclear. This will tend to depend on the nature of your topic.</p> <p>Make recommendations for a way forward, what still needs to happen as you see it (as a consequence of your critical evaluation of your selected information).</p> <p><i>In a 26 page (maximum) report the conclusion may take up to a page. Conclusions are usually quite short in relation to the whole report.</i></p>
<b>References</b>	Use consistently, an approved referencing style (see following).
<b>Appendix</b>	<p><b>(Only if relevant)</b></p> <p>Evidence of own data or record of physical activity or performance needed to help explain an aspect of your report.</p> <p>Only have an appendix if you really need to because it counts as part of your 26 page maximum.</p>

# Referencing styles

There are many ways to cite all of the information you use for your report.

To 'cite' means to refer a source that you are using as evidence to support back up the points you are making.

This link to Massey University provides a useful summary of these with further links to the basic 'rules' for the most popular referencing styles used in New Zealand, although all university library websites will have a version of this.

Each style has its own rules for properly citing sources.

- Author-date styles (e.g. APA, MLA, and Harvard) put the author's name inside the text of the assignment
- Documentary-note styles (e.g. Chicago and Oxford) put the author's name in a footnote at the bottom of each page, or in an endnote at the end of the assignment

Source: <http://owl.massey.ac.nz/referencing/referencing-styles.php>

Note that the use of 'ibid' in the footnotes, meaning to refer back to the previous citation, is now an out of date convention. Check with online referencing guides about contemporary ways to do this – usually a shortened version of author name and date.

The education sector in New Zealand typically uses APA referencing.

Scholarship requirements do not stipulate which style you should use although a footnotes method of referencing is recommended.

**Choose one style and use it consistently.**

# References and acknowledgements

## Part One

All HPE Scholarship information is accessed from <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/scholarship-subjects/health-and-physical-education/#e5386>

## Part Two

All HPE Scholarship information is accessed from <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/scholarship-subjects/health-and-physical-education/#e5386>

The critical evaluation overview was developed using ideas sourced from [http://www2.eit.ac.nz/library/ls\\_guides\\_descriptivewriting.html](http://www2.eit.ac.nz/library/ls_guides_descriptivewriting.html)

Critical thinking in HPE is from <https://newzealandcurriculum.tahurangi.education.govt.nz/critical-thinking-and-critical-action/5637166568.p>

The steps to reflection are based on ideas sourced from <https://www.usask.ca/education/documents/fieldexperiences/tools-resources/focus/four-steps-reflection.pdf>

## Part Three

All HPE Scholarship information is accessed from <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/scholarship-subjects/health-and-physical-education/#e5386>

All diagrams are from *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum* (1999), Ministry of Education. The text describing the underlying concepts is from *The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007), Ministry of Education <https://newzealandcurriculum.tahurangi.education.govt.nz/the-underlying-concepts---ng-ari-matua/5637165653.p>

The Health Education statement is from *The New Zealand Curriculum* HPE statement, p23. <https://newzealandcurriculum.tahurangi.education.govt.nz/new-zealand-curriculum-online/new-zealand-curriculum/new-zealand-curriculum-2007/5637144666.c>

### Additional resources:

Education Review Office (2016). *Well-being for success: a resource for schools*. Wellington: ERO. Available at <http://www.ero.govt.nz/publications/well-being-for-success-a-resource-for-schools/>

Robertson, J. (2017). *Health promotion as an underlying concept in health education: Position statement and professional learning and development resource*. NZ: New Zealand Health Education Association (NZHEA). <https://healtheducation.org.nz/resources/>

## Part Four

All HPE Scholarship information is accessed from <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/scholarship-subjects/health-and-physical-education/#e5386>

## Part Five

All HPE Scholarship information is accessed from <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/scholarship-subjects/health-and-physical-education/#e5386>

Ideas for the report and essay differences are from RMIT (Australia)

[https://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/2\\_assessmenttasks/assess\\_pdf/diffbet\\_reportsessays.pdf](https://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/2_assessmenttasks/assess_pdf/diffbet_reportsessays.pdf)

Ideas for critical writing were adapted from Leicester University – see other sources