

21 November 2006

Ms Christine Dunnington Fenton
Convenor
Education Special Interest Group
New Zealand Microbiological Society
C/- Nursing and Health Studies
Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki
Private Bag 2030
NEW PLYMOUTH

Dear Ms Christine Dunnington Fenton

Thank you for your letter of 29 October 2006 regarding the level 1 achievement standard 90188.

I am able to advise you that the National Assessment Facilitator for Biology will be conveying the concerns you have raised to a meeting of the examiners.

It must be remembered that assessment schedules reflect typical answers presented by candidates and considered acceptable. They are not all inclusive and any correct answer will be accepted. Marker judgements are made with consideration of "common understanding" which might not always be accurate and does indicate a need to be more transparent in conveying information in schedules.

Many of the comments you make in the attached review reflect levels of understanding beyond level 1, for example at that level, it would be unacceptable to require candidates to draw bacterium responsible for causing a sore throat.

You make reference in the executive summary to errors in commercially available resources. Assessment schedules are neither designed nor published to replace textbooks or to inform publishers. As I mentioned before, sample answers are not all inclusive and I am pleased to see that you have also been in touch with publishers regarding their material.

Thank you for the detailed review of this standard and I can assure you that all such professional input is welcome and considered.

Yours sincerely

Karen Poutasi (Dr)
Chief Executive