

Confirming dependability

Confirming the dependability of evidence from all sources is fundamental to reaching a valid and defensible OTJ.

Students' performance will vary from day to day depending on:

- the nature of the assessment task
- the conditions in which the assessment is undertaken
- the purpose of the assessment
- the student's preparation
- the student's engagement and motivation.

When teachers experience some degree of inconsistency with assessment information, they should inquire into this further. If the inconsistency cannot be explained by normal variation in students' performance, then there may be a need to collect further information in order to reach robust judgments.

Moderation

Moderation can help to improve the dependability of an OTJ, and of the evidence that informs and supports it. Teachers should moderate both their assessments and their overall judgments in relation to National Standards. This process is discussed in more detail in the [Moderation section](#).

Student participation

Students should actively participate throughout the assessment process and in determining their OTJ. They may be encouraged to comment on or even question the OTJ if they believe evidence of their learning supports a different judgment.

This is a vitally important characteristic of [effective assessment for learning](#). It benefits the students' assessment capability by clarifying what they know, understand and can do, and what they need to learn next. All students can participate in the assessment process to some degree. As their assessment capability grows and develops, they can become more and more actively involved. Including the students in the judgment-making process will also give them confidence to talk about their achievement and progress with their parents, family and whānau.

[A Year 5/6 example](#) of this illustrates how, through conversation, the students become clearer about their learning, progress and achievement.

Questions for discussion

- How might I involve students in the process of making OTJs in my classroom?
- How much information might I need to determine an OTJ?
- How might I support the judgements I make and how dependable are they?
- What do I need to do to increase the dependability of my judgments?
- How does our school manage the moderation of OTJs?

Summary

- Making judgments involves both student and teacher.
- Evidence is collected cumulatively over the year, in contexts across the curriculum and is brought together to judge achievement in relation to National Standards.
- There is a need for information from a range of assessment approaches so that decisions are dependable.

- An overall teacher judgment (OTJ) is used to determine which standards are the best fit, then whether a student is above, at, below or well below the standards that relate to their level.
- Moderation improves both the dependability of OTJs and the evidence that supports them.
- Teacher curriculum and pedagogical content knowledge is essential for making a dependable OTJ.
- Overall teacher judgments, constructed with students, are the basis of the reporting in relation to National Standards.