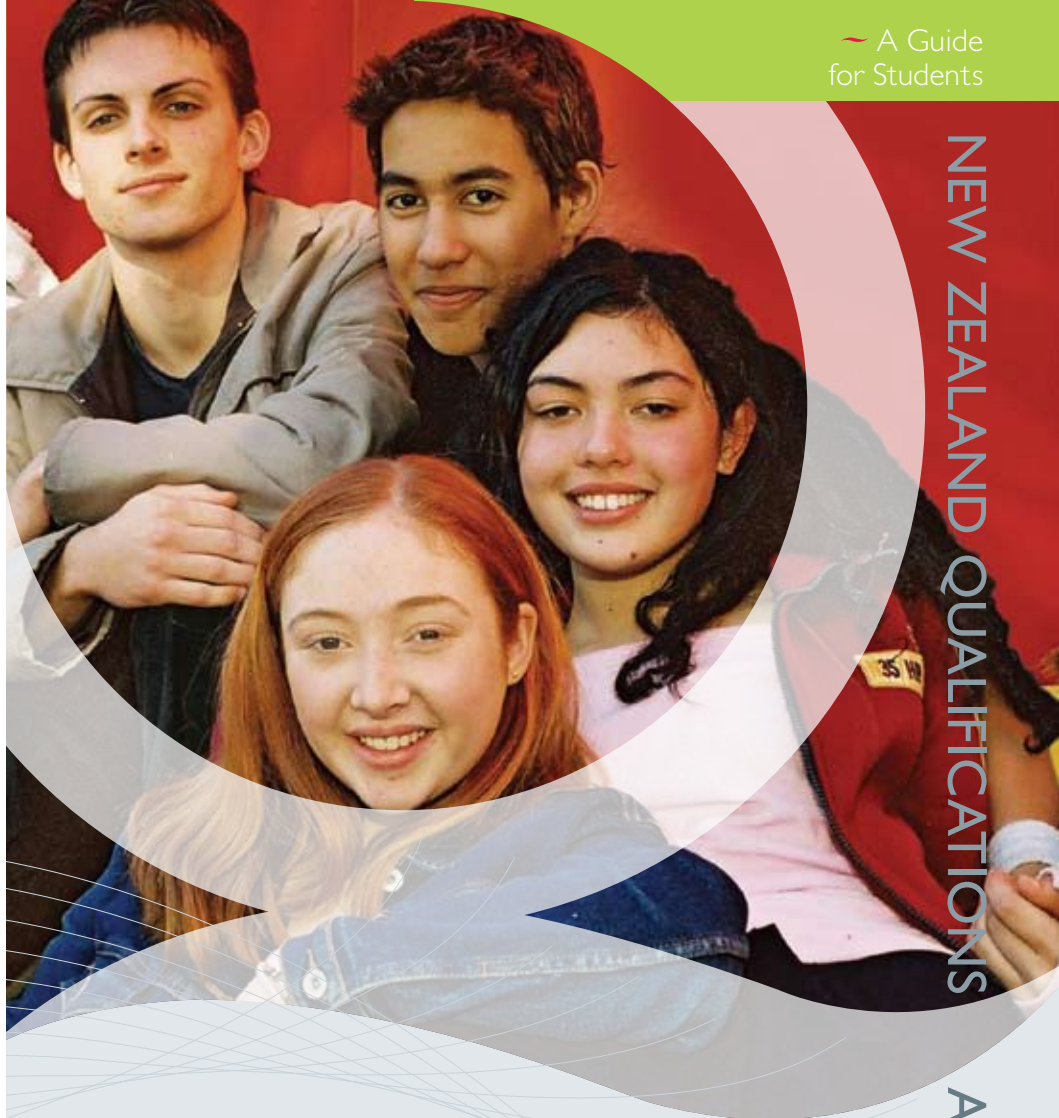


A Guide
for Students

NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS

AUTHORITY



NZQA

NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

Secondary School
Qualifications



Introduction

If you are a secondary school student in Years 11 to 13, this booklet is for you as it explains about the qualifications you will study and how they will be assessed during these years.

The basics

How will I be assessed?

The skills and knowledge you gain when you study subject areas like English, Science and Maths are assessed against standards. Qualifications are gained by building up credits, awarded for each standard you achieve. These are explained in detail later in this booklet.

Standards-based assessment measures your performance against pre-set standards. Your subject teachers will tell you what's required to achieve each standard.

Standards are organised into levels of increasing difficulty. Some standards are assessed internally, by your teachers, and some externally in end-of-year exams or by portfolios. A Mathematics assessment programme, level 1, may look like this (right). This programme assesses 22 credits.



**This brochure explains how these work.
Topics covered include:**

- the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and how National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEAs) fit into that
- other national qualifications you can do while at school
- other awards – University Entrance and Scholarship
- unit and achievement standards
- how assessment works for you
- your results
- what happens if you don't achieve some things
- appeals.

Please take this booklet home so you can check details later on. The information will also be useful for your family/whānau.

Your teachers can also answer questions and help you with any problems.

REGISTRATION NUMBER	ASSESSMENT	NAME OF STANDARD	CREDITS EARNED
5224	Internal	Use decimals and percentages to solve problems	2
5230	Internal	Carry out a statistical investigation and interpret data	3
5232	Internal	Determine probabilities in practical situations	2
90148	External	Sketch and interpret graphs	3
90149	Internal	Solve problems involving measurement of everyday objects	3
90150	Internal	Use geometric techniques to produce a pattern or object	2
90151	External	Solve straightforward number problems in context	3
90152	External	Solve right-angled triangle problems	2
90153	External	Use geometric reasoning to solve problems	2



Standards

There are two types of standards – unit standards and achievement standards. Both are used in schools.

For achievement standards you could reach achieved, achieved with merit or achieved with excellence. If you do not achieve the required standard you get a not achieved grade. For unit standards, you either get achieved or not achieved.

The standards assessed in schools are usually at levels 1, 2 and 3. Most students will start at level 1 in year 11, though students often study at a mix of levels depending on their ability in particular subject areas. For example, in year 11 you can attempt studies at level 2, 3 or higher, if your school has a suitable programme.

When you study a programme or course you don't have to be assessed against every standard in that subject area. Schools prepare a programme and use a mix of standards to assess students as they progress. Not all students will be assessed against the same standards. Your school will tell you what assessments you will be attempting.

Credits

Each standard is worth a certain number of credits. When you achieve a standard, these credits count towards your NCEA and may also contribute towards other national certificates, such as a National Certificate in Mathematics.

NCEAs are the national school qualifications typically assessed in years 11 to 13. They are just three of the many qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) manages the NQF which comprises over a thousand national qualifications. You may be able to start studying towards other qualifications while still at school. You can see what is available and the standards on which they are based at www.nzqa.govt.nz/framework/



How do I get these qualifications?

NCEA level 1

When you have achieved 80 credits at level 1 or higher, you have gained NCEA level 1. Eight of these credits must be from numeracy standards and eight credits from literacy standards. Literacy can be assessed in English or in te reo Māori. Your teachers can tell you which standards provide the required numeracy and literacy credits.

NCEA level 2

NCEA level 2 requires a minimum of 60 credits at level 2 or above and 20 credits at any other level. Credits can be used for more than one qualification; so some of your NCEA level 1 credits can count towards NCEA level 2. At level 2 there are no specific literacy or numeracy requirements.

NCEA level 3

For NCEA level 3 you will need to achieve 80 credits, of which 60 must be at level 3 or above and 20 at level 2 or above.

Rewarding achievement

This assessment system encourages all students to achieve to their potential.

You can now gain NCEA certificates with merit or excellence. If you get 50 or more of the required 80 credits at excellence level, you will earn an NCEA with excellence. If you get 50 or more credits at merit level (or a mix of merit and excellence), you will earn an NCEA with merit.

Excellence criteria are demanding and students who achieve with excellence for all or most of their standards will demonstrate higher-level thinking skills.



Other Awards

University Entrance

To gain entry to a New Zealand university, you will need to have 42 credits at level 3 or above on the National Qualifications Framework. See www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/for-students/ue/index for more detail of these and other criteria. Your teachers will also be able to tell you about these requirements.

Universities and other tertiary providers in New Zealand sometimes have other specific requirements for entry to particular programmes or courses. If you have a particular university programme in mind, check the entry criteria as soon as possible, to ensure that you are entering for the right standards at level 3.

Scholarship

Scholarship is externally assessed. It is designed to extend the very best students and to financially reward very able students who are going on to tertiary study. It is not a qualification.

Students sitting Scholarship will be assessed on their ability to think laterally and in the abstract. The exams or portfolios cover the same content as level 3 achievement standards, but the standard of performance required is much higher.

Please discuss Scholarship requirements with your teachers.



What else should I know?

Flexible, personalised learning

Today's assessment systems mean schools can run shorter courses, combine different levels and link with industry and local business to run courses in a broader range of subjects. This means that all schools can offer programmes to suit individual students and everyone is given opportunities to achieve and be successful at school.

How do I enter?

All students must enter for assessment through an accredited provider, usually a secondary school or area school or wharekura. If you're not enrolled at a school – for example, if you are home-schooled – you'll need to find a school which will make your entries.

Your school will be asked to send entries to NZQA during the year. You'll be able to make changes to your entries, if necessary, later on. Your school will tell you when you need to finalise your entries and pay your fees to them.

There is also a secure part of the website (Learner login on the NZQA website www.nzqa.govt.nz) where you use your National Student Number (NSN) and password to log in. If you have not logged in before, you must first register to generate a password. This enables you to access information NZQA holds about you that has been submitted by your school including your entries, results and Record of Achievement.



How will my work be assessed?

Each standard is either internally assessed by your school during the year, or externally assessed. Most external assessments are by exam at the end of the year, although for some subjects you will submit a portfolio.

How will I know what to do to achieve a standard?

As you learn a new skill or topic your teachers will explain to you what is going to be assessed and how well you'll need to perform.

Your teachers can provide feedback while you are learning to tell you if you are on the right track or advise on how to improve your work.

The 'Info for Students' area on the NZQA website www.nzqa.govt.nz is also a useful gateway to information including:

- the exam timetable
- past exam papers
- study tips etc.

How will I know that my internal work is marked at the same standard as other schools?

During the year, all schools have samples of their internal assessments in each subject area checked by NZQA moderators who operate independently of schools.

The information is returned to your teachers and principal, so they know they are applying the national standard correctly.

What happens if I don't achieve a standard?

For internally assessed standards, your school may allow you to be assessed again later in the year. For some standards, your school may delay your assessment until the final term, taking into account most of your year's work.

Remember that your teachers will be working hard to help you achieve each standard. They'll tell you what you need to do, how far you are from achieving each standard, and give you feedback on how to improve your work.

For externally assessed standards, there is only one opportunity to achieve the standard each year – the exam or other external assessment at the end of the year.



Can I use te reo Māori for assessments in other subjects?

You can take most external assessments in te reo Māori. Talk to your school about this when you first make your entries so NZQA can arrange to provide you with an examination paper in te reo Māori.

If I did not get the NCEA qualification I was aiming for last year, what are my options this year?

You do not have to achieve a level 1 or level 2 qualification before you study at the next level. Any credits you earn this year can be used toward your level 1 or level 2 qualification. At the same time you can begin work that will count for the next level up. This means the credits you earn may contribute to more than one qualification at the same time. You may study some courses at a higher level than others, or you may even attempt some standards within a course at a higher level. Your school will discuss what courses of study will best suit you and your situation.

Is NCEA the only qualification I can aim for at school?

No. NCEA levels 1, 2 and 3 are just three of the 1000 national qualifications on the NQF. Your school may offer tuition for some of these other qualifications. Examples are areas like childcare, sport, tourism, computing, electrical engineering, and business management. Some qualifications can be completed at school, such as the National Certificates in Employment Skills Hospitality, Mathematics, Retail and Travel & Tourism. Others you may have to start at school, and then finish in the workplace or at a tertiary provider.

Any courses you take this year with a tertiary provider and any time you spend in workplace training may also lead to credits. Any specialist unit standards that you achieve from these assessments also contribute to your NCEA qualifications. Your work might count for more than one certificate at the same time. Talk to your teachers about this.



Results

How and when will I get my results?

During the year you will be able to log on to the NZQA website and see what internally assessed results your school has sent to NZQA.

In January you'll get provisional results from this year for both internal and external assessment. This will include standards achieved and standards not achieved.

If you sat Scholarship exams your results will be sent to you in February.

When you leave school, you'll also receive a School Results Summary, listing all the standards you've attempted and the results, including not achieved results.

Record of Achievement

Each year around April, year 13 students will be sent a Record of Achievement (formerly called the Record of Learning). This records all standards achieved during your time at school. Students at other levels can apply for a copy if it is required.

A summary of your qualifications and achievement will be listed at the top of your Record of Achievement. Standards are then grouped according to related areas of study.


The standards you achieve each year will be added to your Record of Achievement. You can continue to add to it once you leave school and complete new qualifications or undertake workplace training.

You can access your Record of Achievement on the NZQA website through your learner login and also order a paper copy.

Can I appeal my results?

If you have a question about your internal assessments, your school has a process for sorting this out. You'll get this information in writing at the beginning of the year so keep it handy. Your teacher can tell you how the result was reached. If not, your school will tell you who to talk to next.

You can ask NZQA to review results from most external assessments after you get your results next year. You will be given detailed information about how to do this by NZQA.

Record of Achievement 

Andrew Steven Learner
Address 1
Address 2
Address 3
Address 4 Post Code

NSN: 101010101
Issued: 08th April 2007

Qualification and Achievement Summary

National Qualifications Framework Registered Qualifications	Date
National Certificate of Educational Achievement (Level 3)	04/2008
National Certificate of Educational Achievement (Level 2)	04/2008
National Certificate of Educational Achievement (Level 1)	04/2004

Scholarship 2006
Scholarship in French (2006) 12/2006

New Zealand University Entrance
University Entrance (2006) 04/2006

Standards Achieved

Each standard can have a range of results including "N" for Not Achieved, "M" for Achieved with Merit, or "E" for Achieved with Excellence. As some standards can not be awarded all of these results the result code is shown in bold where a candidate has reached the maximum possible result for that standard.

Communication Skills	Credits	Result	Date
Level 1	3	A	11/2003
Drama			
Level 2	5	A	12/2005
80200	3	M	11/2005
80209	2	A	12/2005
80210	3	M	10/2005
80211	4	E	10/2005
80202	5	E	06/2005
English			
Level 2	3	A	12/2004
80270	3	A	12/2004
80271	3	A	12/2004
80280	3	M	12/2004
80281	3	E	10/2004
80272	3	M	12/2004
80274	3	E	06/2004
80276	3	M	05/2004
Level 1	3	A	11/2003
80090	2	A	11/2003
80097	3	M	11/2003
80100	3	A	11/2003
80117	2	A	11/2003
80052	3	M	11/2003
80058	3	M	11/2003
80059	3	E	11/2003

Issued 18/04/2007 11:09 Page 1 of 4

New Zealand Qualifications Authority, PO Box 540, Wellington 6111, New Zealand, Telephone 04 4 663 3000, www.nzqa.govt.nz

A sample Record of Achievement

Will an NCEA be useful if I go overseas?

NCEAs are New Zealand's national school-leaver qualifications, readily accepted overseas, including by universities.

New Zealand has qualification recognition agreements with Australia and the United Kingdom and New Zealand qualifications are accepted for most purposes in the United States. NCEAs are included in the UK publication International Qualifications for Entry into Higher Education, which is used in the UK and internationally for tertiary entrance and selection. NCEA level 3 is broadly equivalent to English A Levels and Australia's Higher School Certificate.

NCEA level 3 results are used in the Australian Interstate Tertiary Index used for entrance to all Australian universities. If you give permission, NZQA will electronically send your results to Australian authorities early in January.

If you are an international student studying in New Zealand, you should discuss your tertiary education plans with your teachers. They will help you plan the appropriate study at school.

How will my results be recognised when I leave school?

NCEA and other national certificates are recognised by employers, and used as the benchmark for selection by universities and polytechnics. There are requirements for University Entrance (see page 4) based on a common standard. Independent research has shown that performance in NCEA is a good indicator of success at first-year university.

Your Record of Achievement details your achievements in a way that should be readily understood by employers and tertiary education providers.



More information

For more information/help, talk to your teachers, or contact NZQA:

P 0800 NCEAHELP or 0800 623243

E helpdesk@nzqa.govt.nz

www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea

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