



# NCEA

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is NCEA?**

NCEA stands for National Certificate of Educational Achievement. NCEA is the most common qualification you will be working towards in Years 11 to 13.

### **Why should I work towards NCEA?**

This is the main secondary school qualification in New Zealand and is recognised by employers and used for selection into courses by universities and polytechnics. NCEA is also accepted by employers and universities overseas. If you do well in NCEA, you are likely to do well in your first year at university.

### **How do I get NCEA?**

NCEA is gained by building up credits. Credits are awarded for each standard you achieve in the course you are studying.

- Standards indicate the skills or knowledge that you are expected to achieve or know in a course.
- Assessments measure how well you meet these standards. Assessments can be internal (a test, activity or assignment) or external (an end-of-year exam or portfolio).
- When you achieve a standard, you achieve a number of credits for that standard.
- When you achieve a certain number of credits, you gain NCEA. There are three different levels of NCEA you can get, depending on the difficulty of the standards you achieve.

### **How do I enter for NCEA?**

The school will enter you for NCEA and tell you when to check your entries and pay your fees (\$76.70 each year). Each student has a unique National Student Number (NSN). This helps you to look up the information NZQA holds about you.

### **How do I achieve each standard?**

When you study a programme or course, your work is measured against pre-set standards using assessments. As you study a new topic your teachers will explain to you what is going to be assessed. Teachers will tell you if you are on the right track or help you to improve your work.

### **How will my work be assessed?**

Assessments measure your performance against the standards in your subjects. If your work meets the requirements of the standard, then you achieve that standard and you gain credits towards your qualification. Many standards are internally assessed by your teachers during the year, in assignments or tests. Most external assessments are by exam at the end of the year, although for some subjects (e.g. Art) you will need to submit a portfolio of your work.



### **How will I be graded in each standard?**

Your grade will depend on the type of standard being assessed.

- For achievement standards you can get:
  - Achieved (A) for a satisfactory performance
  - Merit (M) for very good performance
  - Excellence (E) for outstanding performance or;
  - Not Achieved (N) if you don't meet the requirements of the standard.
- For unit standards you can only get Achieved (A) or Not Achieved (N).

### **What happens if I don't achieve a standard?**

For internally assessed standards, your teacher may allow you (and others in your class) to be assessed one more time. 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.

### **What do I need for an NCEA Certificate?**

Each standard is worth a set number of credits. When you achieve a standard, these credits count towards NCEA. They may also contribute towards other national certificates.

### **What if I miss out on Level 1 NCEA?**

It is possible to study at level 2 before achieving a level 1 certificate. Any credits you earn at level 2 will count towards level 1; at the same time you can begin work towards level 2. This means the credits you earn may contribute to more than one qualification at the same time. You may study some subjects, or standards, at a higher level than others. Your dean and teachers can help you decide what courses to study.

### **How will I get my results?**

Your teachers will tell you the results of your internal assessments as they are completed. Once they have reported these results to NZQA you will be able to see them by logging in to your learner home page on the NZQA website [www.nzqa.govt.nz/login/](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/login/), using your National Student Number (NSN) and school password. You will do this in your form class once a term. If you lose your number or password, ask your form teacher or Ms Wards.

The results of external assessments for NCEA are released in January. In 2013 you will be able to see these results on your learner home page and you can ask to receive a printed School Results Summary, a Certificate, and a Record of Achievement. You won't be sent anything unless you request it online.

### **Can I appeal my results?**

If you have a question about the marking of an internal assessment, you should discuss this with your teacher at the time your work is returned. You can ask NZQA to review results from most external assessments after you get your results and your exam papers are returned.



## Credits and NCEA

One credit represents about ten hours of learning and assessment. This includes teaching time, homework and assessment time.

Students need a total of 80 credits for each NCEA qualification:

- NCEA Level 1 – 80 credits at any Level, including credits in literacy and numeracy.
- NCEA Level 2 – 60 credits at Level 2 or above, plus 20 credits from Level 1 or above.
- NCEA Level 3 – 60 credits at Level 3 or above, plus 20 credits from Level 2 or above.

### Literacy and Numeracy

- To complete the literacy and numeracy requirements for a Level 1 certificate, students must have achieved a total of 10 literacy and 10 numeracy credits, either all achievement standard or all unit standard credits. These may be gained in a range of subjects.
- Your NCEA certificate will say if you have met the literacy and numeracy requirements.

### University Entrance

- This is the minimum standard students need to reach to apply for entrance to university and some other tertiary courses. Universities and polytechnics will specify NCEA courses that students should complete and the minimum results required.
- Students who have achieved both University Entrance and Level 3 do better in tertiary study than those who have not.
- You should find out what the requirements are for what you want to do when you leave school. Talk to your teacher, the Careers Advisor, your Dean, your family, and do your own research.
- To qualify for UE in 2012 or 2013 you will need:
  - Approved subjects - 42 credits at **Level 3 or higher**, made up of:
    - 14 credits in one approved subject
    - 14 credits in another approved subject
    - 14 credits from one or two additional domains or approved subjects
  - Literacy requirements - 8 credits in English or Te Reo Maori at **Level 2 or higher**, made up of:
    - 4 credits in reading
    - 4 credits in writing
  - Numeracy requirements - 14 credits in Numeracy at **Level 1 or higher**, made up of:
    - credits in Mathematics or Statistics and Probability or Pangarau or unit standards 26623, 26626, 26627.
- To qualify for UE from 2014 you will need:
  - NCEA Level 3
  - Three subjects – at **Level 3 or above**, made up of:
    - 14 credits each, in three approved subjects
  - Literacy – 10 credits at **Level 2 or above**, made up of:
    - 5 credits in reading
    - 5 credits in writing
  - Numeracy – 10 credits at **Level 1 or above**, made up of:
    - Achievement standards – specified achievement standards available through a range of subjects, or
    - Unit standards – package of three numeracy standards.



### Tips for parents and caregivers

- Ask your son/daughter how NCEA works – most students understand it well.
- Provide support (e.g. time, space, homework help) to help your son/daughter study – remember they will be assessed throughout the year, not just in final examinations.
- Encourage your son/daughter to use the school library. It is open for students until 4pm every day.
- When helping your son/daughter choose subjects, encourage them to take a broad range at level 1, but to start thinking about what areas they might focus on for future study or career at levels 2 and 3.
- Encourage your son/daughter to aim for higher grades – Merit and Excellence. These may help them to get the job they want, or get into the tertiary course of their choice.
- If your son/daughter has a particular career or tertiary course in mind, check out what level 2 or level 3 standards they may require with the university or polytechnic where they intend to study.
- Ask your son/daughter's school or teachers for guidance on how they are progressing. Most schools also hold very helpful qualification information sessions for parents.
- Fill in the Study Planner each term. Cross out when your son/daughter is busy or you are doing things as a family. Talk together about how much time he/she will spend doing homework and studying, and how much time needs to be spent on other things. Reward him/her for working well. Put the Study Planner where everyone can see it.
- See the NCEA information on the NZQA website [www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea)

### To help you aim for Excellence

- Certificate endorsement
  - NCEA with Merit – a completed NCEA qualification with at least 50 credits at Merit or better.
  - NCEA with Excellence – a completed NCEA qualification with at least 50 credits at Excellence.
- Course endorsement
  - 14 or more credits at Merit and/or Excellence within a school course.
  - There must be a mix of internally and externally assessed credits where this is possible.
- Top students may enter New Zealand Scholarship examinations. These are mostly suitable for Level 3 students, and require a lot of study at a very high level. Successful students get at least \$500 for each exam passed, from NZQA.



Weekly study planner for \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6-7 am							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-12							
12-1							
1-2 pm							
2-3							
3-4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-12							

Fill in the activities that are already scheduled, e.g. class times, sport commitments  
 Fill in your study times