



Industry and employers: Questions for submitters on a proposal to replace NCEA.

English language

This document contains the full list of questions for industry representatives and/or employers who are submitting on the Ministry of Education’s discussion document: Proposal to replace NCEA.

For most people, the easiest way to provide feedback on the proposals is through the online submissions portal. However, this document includes **the full list of questions** for industry and employers who prefer to submit their responses by post or email.

If you are not submitting as an industry representative or employer, refer to the Ministry’s website for the list of questions that are right for you.

Online submissions can be made here: <https://www.education.govt.nz/consultation-ncea>

The survey is being conducted in partnership with Allen + Clarke, an independent public policy consultancy engaged by the Ministry to support the analysis of responses. Only individuals involved in the analysis of submissions will have access to responses and personal information.

To use this document:

If you have not done so already, we encourage you to read about the Government’s proposals before submitting your feedback. Read about the proposals here:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/consultation-ncea>

Once you are ready to answer questions about the proposals:

- Answer **all** questions in the demographic section that are relevant to your situation.
- You may choose to answer some or all of the questions in parts 1-3. These questions are generally presented in the same order as the content in the discussion document.

Answering as many questions as possible will help the Ministry provide informed advice to the Minister on each proposal before Cabinet makes further decisions.

Your answers can be emailed to nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz or posted to:

Education Consultation

Ministry of Education
PO Box 1666
Wellington 6140
New Zealand

Public consultation closes at **5pm on Monday 15th September 2025** (NZST).

Information on privacy

Your personal details will remain confidential, will not be published or made publicly available, and will be used only for analysis purposes.

The Ministry may quote directly from responses; however these quotes will not be attributed to individuals or groups and the Ministry will not use any responses containing personal information.

At any stage, you can contact the Ministry of Education or Allen + Clarke for more information about how your personal details will be used in the analysis, or to request the withdrawal of your submission or deletion of submission data. Please email nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz or contact Dr Bo Ning at bning@allenandclarke.com to do this.

You can read more about why we collect personal information and how we use it on our website: <https://www.education.govt.nz/legal-and-privacy>

Demographic questions

Fill in all demographic questions before answering questions about the proposals.

Your personal details will remain confidential and will be used only for analysis purposes.
Your personal details will not be published or made publicly available.

Confirm your interest in the NCEA changes.

Teacher or principal
(‘educators’)

☐

Parent/caregiver,
family, or student

☐

Employer
(or someone from an industry)

☐

Continue answering the remaining questions **ONLY** if you selected the ‘employer’ option. If you selected any other category, refer to the Ministry’s website for a set of questions that are right for you.

The remaining questions will help us understand how feedback may vary across different industry or employer contexts.

Which of the following best describe(s) your industry or industries? **Tick all that apply.**
(These options cover the broad areas of Industry Skills Boards)

Automotive,
transport, and
logistics

☐

Construction and
specialist trades

☐

Food and
fibre (including
aquaculture)

☐

Infrastructure

☐

Electrotechnology
and information
technology

☐

Manufacturing
and engineering

☐

Services (including
hospitality and retail)

☐

Health and
community

☐

Other (specify)

☐

What is your position in the organisation or business? **Tick all that apply.**

Leadership
(e.g., owner,
director)

☐

Management
(e.g., a people
manager)

☐

Workforce and
independent
roles (e.g.,
employee, contractor)

☐

Not
currently
employed

☐

Other
(specify)

☐

This question is for those in LEADERSHIP and MANAGEMENT positions only:
What is the size of your team (management) or organisation/business (leadership)?

Choose one of the following:

Less than 10
employees

☐

11-50
employees

☐

51 to 100
employees

☐

101 or more
employees

☐

I am
unsure

☐

Region(s) of your operations. **Tick all that apply.**

☐ Northland

☐ Hawke's Bay

☐ West Coast

☐ Auckland

☐ Taranaki

☐ Canterbury

☐ Waikato

☐ Manawatū–Whanganui

☐ Otago

☐ Bay of Plenty

☐ Wellington

☐ Southland

☐ Gisborne

☐ Tasman / Nelson /
Marlborough

☐ Overseas

☐ Other (specify):

☐ Online **only**

Answering as many of the remaining questions as possible will help the Ministry to better understand your thoughts on the proposals and inform further work and advice to Government.

Part 1: Case for change

NCEA was introduced as a flexible, inclusive, and standards-based senior secondary national qualification. It offers a wide range of assessment opportunities, including those leading to vocational pathways like trades, hospitality, and tourism.

Under NCEA, students are assessed against standards that reflect groupings of key skills and knowledge in related areas. These standards are worth a certain number of credits, which students accumulate throughout the year. To achieve NCEA, students must gain 80 credits across their standards, including 20 credits from the co-requisite standards.

However, the flexibility of NCEA has led to some unintended consequences. There are few rules about which standards must be achieved within a subject or across NCEA Levels 1, 2, and 3. As a result, standards have begun to drive what is being taught in classrooms, rather than the curriculum driving the teaching. This has contributed to issues such as 'credit counting', where some students disengage from learning once they have enough credits to achieve NCEA.

Changes are needed to address the issues with NCEA and make sure the system is working for **all** students, family, educators, and employers. A strong curriculum should drive teaching and learning, and our national qualifications should clearly reflect student achievement.

This question relates to whether the curriculum should be driving assessments.

Do you agree that our national qualifications should assess against a national curriculum?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree
☐

I somewhat disagree
☐

I am neutral
☐

I somewhat agree
☐

I strongly agree
☐

I am unsure
☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- Describe any concerns you have about the proposed new qualifications assessing against a national curriculum.

This question relates to issues with the current system.

Do you agree that it is difficult to understand the value of NCEA? For example, how well a student's NCEA qualification reflects their readiness for work or training.

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree
☐

I somewhat disagree
☐

I am neutral
☐

I somewhat agree
☐

I strongly agree
☐

I am unsure
☐

*Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:*

- Which aspects of the current NCEA requirements do you value as a clear indication of readiness for work or training?

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- Which aspects of the current NCEA requirements do you think lead to an inconsistent measure of student knowledge, skills, and readiness?

Do you agree that the senior secondary qualifications system needs to improve?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree
☐

I somewhat disagree
☐

I am neutral
☐

I somewhat agree
☐

I strongly agree
☐

I am unsure
☐

*Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:*

- The discussion document identifies some problems with the current system. Which of those problems do you disagree with, and why?

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- Which parts of the senior secondary qualification system do you think should be prioritised for improvement?

The Government wants the senior secondary qualification to be coherent, consistent, and credible, including with access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects. Do you agree there are other opportunities for positive change with the new qualifications, outside of what has been raised in the discussion document?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:

- Describe other opportunities for positive change that are not covered in the discussion document.

Part 2: Proposals

Proposal 1: Working with industry to better integrate VET learning into the senior secondary qualification system

Under proposal 1, Industry Skills Boards (ISBs) will develop clear and consistent Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects – made up of skill standards – that will be delivered to students in partnership with tertiary providers and employers. ISBs will have the flexibility to draw on existing content and standards or develop entirely new content for VET subjects, based on industry needs and real post-school opportunities.

Aligning VET subjects with industry qualifications will allow students to work towards achieving the new senior secondary qualifications while potentially also making a meaningful start on a tertiary qualification.

The proposed new senior secondary qualification changes will be phased in from 2028 through to 2030.

Overall, do you support proposal 1? This proposal is that the government will work with industry to create Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects.

Choose one of the following:

I do not
support it at
all
☐

I somewhat
do not
support it
☐

I am
neutral
☐

I support it
☐

I strongly
support it
☐

I am
unsure
☐

*Answer the following question only if you **do not support it at all** or **somewhat do not support it**:*

- Which aspects of proposal 1 do you have concerns about, and why? For example, do you have concerns about a particular aspect of proposal 1 or the entire proposal?

*Answer the following question only if you **support it** or **strongly support it**:*

- What benefits do you think proposal 1 will have for student learning and achievement?

The government understands that investment is needed to make sure VET learning is a success. Aside from funding, are there any practical or operational implications you think need to be considered for schools, in partnership with Industry Skills Boards (ISBs), to successfully deliver VET subjects?

Proposal 2: Foundational Award and new senior secondary qualifications

Under proposal 2, a new Foundational Award will be introduced to replace the current NCEA co-requisite and NCEA Level 1. The Award will accredit literacy and maths or te reo matatini and pāngarau, helping students to build and demonstrate strong foundational skills.

NCEA Levels 2 and 3 will be replaced with the New Zealand Certificate of Education (for Year 12) and the New Zealand Advanced Certificate of Education (for Year 13).

These changes reduce the number of high-stakes assessment years from three to two, allowing Year 11 students to focus on deeper learning of foundational skills and knowledge, and creating more time in the classroom for students.

The proposed new senior secondary qualification changes will be phased in between 2028 and 2030.

Do you agree that it would be beneficial to remove NCEA Level 1 and for students to focus assessment effort on the Years 12 and 13 qualifications, having obtained a Foundational Award in literacy and numeracy (in Year 11)?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

*Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:*

- Describe any concerns you have about the Foundational Award replacing NCEA Level 1.

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- Describe the benefits you think a Foundational Award will have in replacing NCEA Level 1.

Do you think other areas of learning or achievement should be considered as part of the Foundational Award? For example, should a certain level of student attendance be required? Describe these areas of learning or achievement.

Proposal 3: Shifting focus to a structured and subject approach

Under proposal 3, students will focus on learning and achievement across a whole subject, rather than individual standards. Students will also generally be required to take five subjects, including either English and Mathematics or Te Reo Rangatira and Pāngarau at Year 11.

Within each subject, internal and external assessments will be marked consistently and aggregated into an overall grade and score out of 100.

This change will reduce the risk that students are unintentionally limiting their post-school options, for example, by not taking the subjects needed for University Entrance (UE). It also provides potential employers and tertiary educators with a clearer sense of students' knowledge and skills.

The proposed new senior secondary qualification changes will be phased in between 2028 and 2030.

Overall, do you support a subject approach to assessments at Years 12 and 13?

Choose one of the following:

I do not
support it at
all

☐

I somewhat
do not
support it

☐

I am
neutral

☐

I support it

☐

I strongly
support it

☐

I am
unsure

☐

*Answer the following question only if you **do not support it at all** or **somewhat do not support it**:*

- What are your concerns about a subject approach to assessments at Years 12 and 13?

*Answer the following question only if you **support it** or **strongly support it**:*

- What do you think are the main benefits to a subject approach to assessments at Years 12 and 13?

Do you agree that it is important for students to engage with the full curriculum (rather than segments) for vocational and general subjects?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree
☐

I somewhat disagree
☐

I am neutral
☐

I somewhat agree
☐

I strongly agree
☐

I am unsure
☐

*Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:*

- In terms of post-school work or training, what do you think are the benefits of being able to engage with parts of curriculum subjects (segments)?

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- In terms of post-school work or training, why do you think it is important to engage with full curriculum subjects?

Proposal 4: Strengthening achievement requirements

Under proposal 4, achievement will be more consistent and straightforward:

- There will be greater consistency in the way subjects are assessed. For example, internal and external assessments will contribute more fairly to students' grades.
- Terms like 'Excellence' and 'Achieved' will be replaced with marks out of 100 and letter grades such as A, B, and C.
- Students will need to achieve at least four subjects, along with the new Foundational Award, to gain the new qualifications.

These changes incentivise students to study and participate throughout the school year and in all their subjects. For example, students will be strongly incentivised to participate in external assessments where these are offered, because their final subject grades will be based on the combined score from all assessments.

The new grading approach will also align more closely with other marking systems, giving educators and employers a clearer understanding of students' levels of skill and knowledge.

The proposed new senior secondary qualification changes will be phased in between 2028 and 2030.

Do you agree that the proposed achievement requirements for the new qualifications are easy to understand? This includes that students must achieve a passing grade in at least four subjects and achieve the Foundational Award.

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- What parts of the proposed achievement requirements do you find confusing to understand?

Do you agree that the proposed achievement requirements will provide employers with a clearer record of student knowledge, skills, and achievement?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- What parts of the proposed achievement requirements are you concerned about as an indication of student knowledge, skills, and achievement?

Part 3: Implications and next steps

Proposals 1-4 are designed to address key challenges with the current NCEA system and ensure that the proposed New Zealand Certificate of Education and New Zealand Advanced Certificate of Education are credible, coherent, and supporting students to develop important skills and knowledge.

However, a lot will need to happen between now and 2028 to prepare for these changes. The Ministry of Education is inviting feedback to help shape the final design and implementation. Once consultation closes, the Ministry will carefully consider feedback before reporting back to Cabinet.

Before the qualifications are introduced, there will be a strong focus on quality implementation, ensuring that teachers have the right resources and supports to confidently deliver the new qualifications.

The changes will be phased in between 2028 and 2030, ensuring that students and educators are well-prepared.

Do you agree the proposed changes (proposals 1-4) will be beneficial for your business in the future?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- Describe why you consider the proposed changes will not be beneficial for your business in the future.

Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:

- Describe how you consider the proposed changes will be beneficial for your business in the future.

Do you agree that the proposals will make it easier to identify what knowledge and skills a job candidate has, when compared to the current NCEA?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- Describe your concerns about the proposals making it easier to identify what knowledge and skills a job candidate has.

Do you agree that the proposals will improve the credibility and coherence of the national senior secondary qualifications?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- Describe your concerns about the proposals improving credibility and coherence of the national senior secondary qualifications.

Is there anything else that you would like to say about the proposals?

The following two questions are needed to verify your submission.
This information will NOT be shared with others and will be used only to verify your submission and/or contact you for clarification if needed.
If you would like more information about how your personal details will be used in the analysis, contact us at nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz

Provide your contact information.

Name: _____

Email: _____

(Optional) Provide the name of your organisation.

Name of organisation: _____