



**Te Tāhuhu o  
te Mātauranga**  
Ministry of Education



**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government



# **National Certificate of Educational Achievement / NCEA changes: Summary of discussion document**



**Published: August 2025**

# What you will find in here

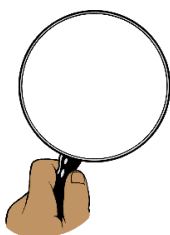
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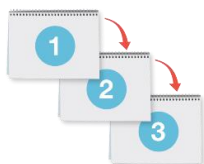
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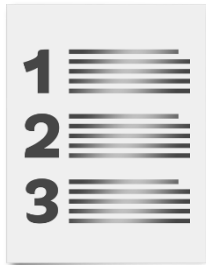


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# About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is a **summary** of a **change discussion document**.



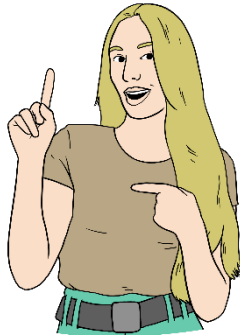
A **summary**:

- is shorter than the main document
- tells you the important ideas.



A **change discussion document** has information about changes that are being thought about.

The change discussion document is from **Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga – Ministry of Education**.



In this Easy Read **Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga – Ministry of Education** will be called the **Ministry of Education**.

Where it says **we / us** this means the Ministry of Education.



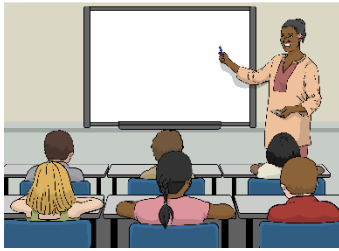
The change discussion document is about changes being thought about for **NCEA**.



**NCEA** stands for **National Certificate of Educational Achievement**.



It is the main **qualification** secondary school / high school students can get in Aotearoa New Zealand.



A **qualification** shows what skills / knowledge a person has to do a job.

A qualification shows that someone has finished:

- their education like school
- a type of learning.

# Why are we talking about changes to NCEA?



NCEA started in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2002.



Before NCEA started students were only assessed / marked in general things like:

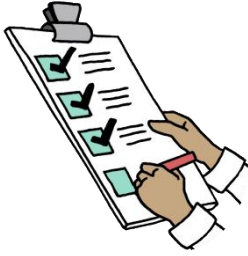
- maths
- English.



NCEA means students can be assessed / marked in more things that support them to get:

- jobs
- more training while doing a job.



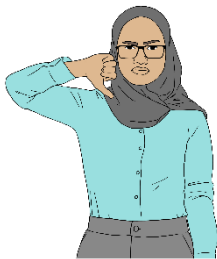


NCEA can be made better.



People are telling us NCEA is:

- too flexible / does too many things
- not always a valuable / useful qualification.



People say NCEA does not have enough **consistency** in how school subjects are:



- created
- taught
- assessed / marked.



Here **consistency** means making sure subjects do not have so many differences in what they look like



People are telling us that not all students doing NCEA have **coherent learning**.



Here **coherent learning** means making sure that students:

- learn all the things they need
- do not have gaps in their learning.





## Why are these changes needed?



People do not always trust that NCEA has made students ready for:

- work
- more study / school.



These people include:

- employers / those who hire people to do work
- tertiary education providers like:
  - universities
  - polytechnics
  - wānanga.



University



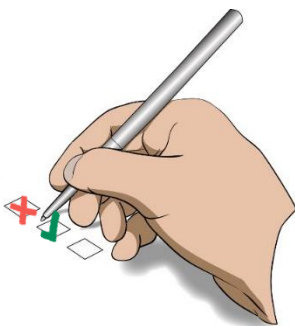
There are differences in:

- what subjects schools teach
- how subjects are taught
- how subjects are assessed / marked.



There are so many ways to pass NCEA that some students pass it without having all the important:

- skills they need
- knowledge they need.



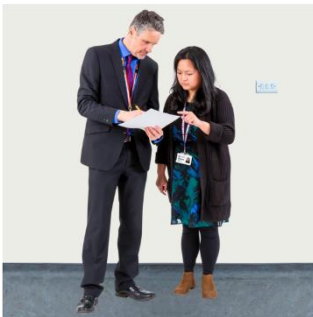
The **Education Review Office / ERO** put out a report that said we should reduce some of the flexibility / differences in NCEA.



## The **Education Review**

### **Office / ERO:**

- studies what goes on in schools
- reports to the Government about schools.

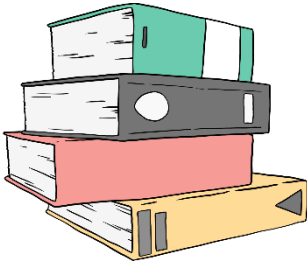


The Government has worked with school principals to think about what a new qualification could be like.



The Government is changing the school **curriculum** so that there is good **guidance** for:

- teachers
- students.



A **curriculum** is all the things students can learn at school like:

- subjects
- skills
- knowledge.



**Guidance** means information about how something should be done.



This is so everyone knows what is good:

- teaching
- learning
- assessment / marking.





The new qualification will need to:

- be consistent / reduce the differences
- have coherent learning / no gaps in learning for students.

# What are the changes?

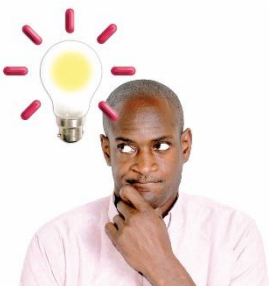


We want to:

- keep the good parts of NCEA
- and
- change other things.



The changes will mean the qualification will be more like qualifications other countries use.



We have some proposals / ideas we are **consulting** on.



**Consulting** means talking to people to find out what they think.



## Qualifications

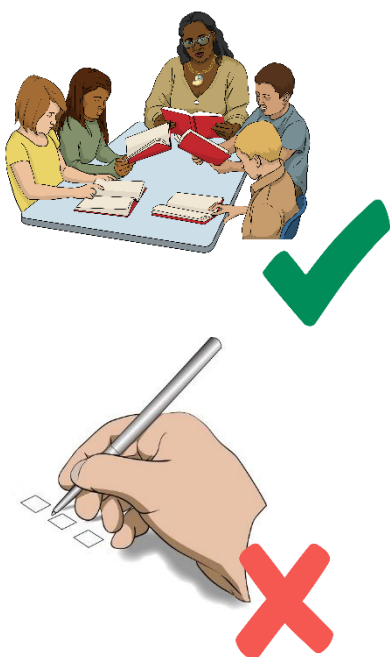
We are consulting with people on what the new qualification will be.



We want to make the:

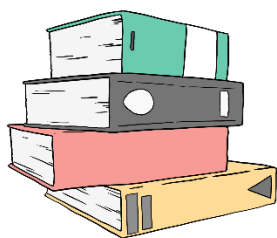
- Foundational Award for Year 11 which includes:
  - maths
  - reading
  - writing
- New Zealand Certificate of Education for Year 12
- New Zealand Advanced Certificate of Education for Year 13.





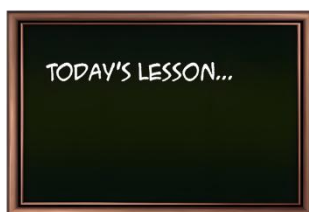
The new qualification will mean students will spend:

- more time learning
- and
- less time being assessed / marked.



## **Subject based approach**

We are consulting with people on making a subject based approach.



This means students in different schools will:

- do more of the same subjects
- do more of the same assessments / marking
- still choose some of their subjects.





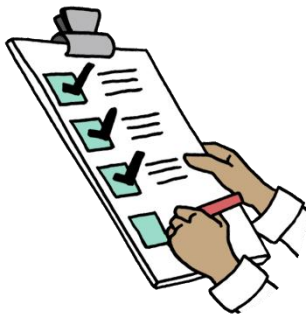
## Grades



We are consulting on what **grades** will be.



A **grade** is the mark students get for a subject.



Grades will:

- change
- look more like other grades students get like at university.

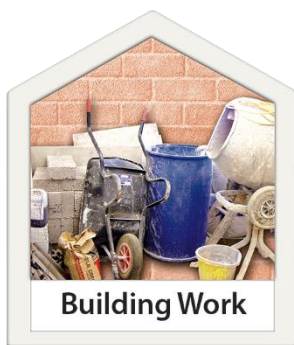


To get a qualification students will need to pass 4 subjects.

## Vocational learning



We are consulting with people to make sure **vocational learning** is better.



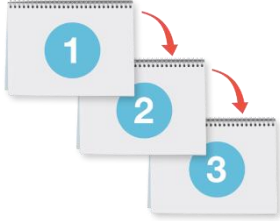
**Vocational learning** is doing school subjects about job skills like:

- construction / building
- hospitality which is working in places like restaurants
- tourism which is working in jobs that support:
  - visitors on holiday in Aotearoa New Zealand
  - New Zealanders to find holidays overseas.



We will know if vocational learning is better if people in the industries / jobs find it useful.

## When will the changes happen?



The changes to the qualification will happen slowly.



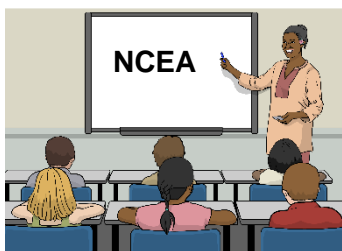
The first students to get the new curriculum will be Year 9 students in 2026.



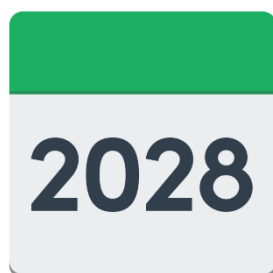
Students who are in Year 10 to Year 13 in 2026 will keep using the old curriculum.



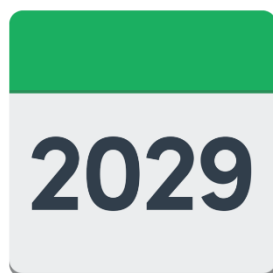
The students who start using the new curriculum will get the new qualification.



The students using the old curriculum will get the NCEA qualification.



The Foundational Award will be first given to Year 11 students in 2028.



The New Zealand Certificate of Education will be first given to Year 12 students in 2029.



The New Zealand Advanced Certification of Education will be first given to Year 13 students in 2030.



The Ministry of Education will:

- do more work before the changes happen
- support students so they can get the new qualification.



## Giving feedback – tell us what you think



You can give the Government your feedback on the proposals / ideas for changing the qualification.

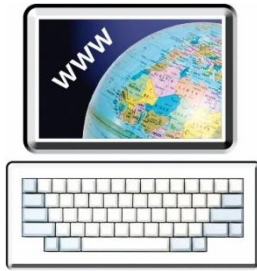


You can start to give your feedback from **4 August 2025**.

You need to give your feedback by **5 pm on 15 September 2025**.



We have made a survey for you to give your feedback.



The survey questions are at this  
**website:**

**[www.education.govt.nz/consultation-ncea](http://www.education.govt.nz/consultation-ncea)**



This website is **not** in Easy Read.

You can answer:

- some of the questions
- or
- all of the questions.



You can ask someone to support you  
to answer the questions like a:

- friend
- whānau / family member
- someone you trust.







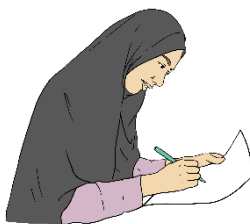
You can also give your feedback by **email** at:

**[nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz](mailto:nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz)**



If you send your feedback by email please add your:

- name
- email address
- which survey questions you are answering.



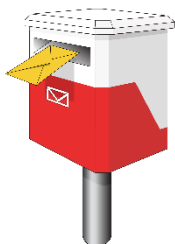
You can also send your feedback by **post** to:

**Education Consultation**

**Ministry of Education**

**PO Box 1666**

**Wellington 6140**





If you send your feedback by post  
please add your:

- name
- postal address
- which survey questions you are answering.





This information has been written by Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga – Ministry of Education.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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