



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Redesigning the English and mathematics
and statistics learning areas in the
refreshed New Zealand Curriculum for
Years 0 to 10:
Ministerial Advisory Group
Terms of Reference

January 2024

NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY

Background

Context

Cabinet has now confirmed its plan for its first 100 days. This includes work to appoint an Expert Group to redesign the English and mathematics and statistics learning areas for Years 0 -10 students to outline the knowledge and skills that schools must cover year by year. This is part of work to better the 'teaching of the basics brilliantly', including reading, writing and maths.

The final mathematics & statistics and English learning areas were released early in 2023. Implementation activities for the refreshed mathematics & statistics and English learning areas are underway, working towards a planned requirement date of the beginning of 2025. Schools' implementation of the full refreshed New Zealand Curriculum is planned to be required from the beginning of 2027.

The consistent content model being used for learning areas in Te Mātaiaho | the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum is based on phases of learning, described in Mātairea (supporting progress): years 0 to 3, years 4 to 6, year 7 to 8, years 9 to 10 and years 11 to 13. There are eight progress outcomes per phase, one for each learning area. Collectively, these progress outcomes describe what students should understand, know, and do by the end of each phase. These signposts provide a safety net for understanding how each student is progressing across the curriculum pathway and intervening if needed.

Literacy and numeracy are foundational to all learning and are being woven into progress outcomes across the curriculum. Within the progress outcomes for English and mathematics and statistics, progress steps provide greater detail to alert teachers to the critical foundations of literacy and numeracy. The earlier implementation requirements for English and mathematics and statistics (ie being required from the start of 2025 instead of 2027) reflect this substantive literacy and mathematics learning progressions that sit in the English and mathematics & statistics learning areas. Discipline specific literacy and maths demands are also explicit within each learning area.

A draft common practice model for literacy & communication and maths has also been developed to support quality teaching of the refreshed curriculum. This is supported by draft phase-by-phase guidance which brings together the common practice model pedagogical approaches and practices with the progress steps and outcomes within the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum | Te Mātaiaho. The phase-by-phase guidance is intended to provide teachers with practical guidance appropriate to the phase of learning they are teaching. A draft year-by-year sequence for maths that has been developed as part of the draft phase-by-phase guidance, adding greater detail to the progression in the curriculum for the first four phases (Years 0 to 10).

During the development of these two learning areas and development of the Common Practice Model sector feedback supported the framing and detail of the content. There was mixed opinion on the level of detail to be included, some people wanted more and some less.

Evaluating the impact of the English and mathematics and statistics learning areas together with the draft common practice model in classrooms has not yet occurred. This was being planned for 2024.

Purpose of the Ministerial Advisory Group

The primary purpose of the Ministerial Advisory Group (the Group) is to report to the Minister on the English and mathematics and statistics learning areas in the first four phases. This may include advice, feedback or, where appropriate, samples of new or alternative material for the Minister to consider in the learning areas or any of the documents in scope.

This advice will focus on the clarity teachers need to support students' progress through the curriculum at a pace that keeps them on track for later success. This success includes obtaining the NCEA co-requisite and the dispositions, knowledge and skills they need for maths and literacy rich learning pathways and careers.

In preparing this advice, the Group will consider the content of the learning areas in the context of the full suite of guidance and supports and how they work together. This suite includes:

- The refreshed NZ Curriculum | Te Mātaiaho,
- the refreshed learning areas
- draft common practice model
- draft phase-by-phase guidance
- draft year-by-year sequence for maths

The advice needs to consider the science of learning, urgency about progress, and explicit and intentional teaching.

Note that as well as providing advice on the in-scope documents the group should also provide advice to guide the development of the draft year-by-year sequence for literacy and communication planned for as part of common practice model materials. This should include a sample year-by-year reading, writing and oral teaching sequence for years 0 to 3. This is in addition to their advice on year by year teaching expectations for the English learning area as a whole.

Recommendations should be based, as far as possible, on a consensus among the Group. The Group's recommendations must be cognisant of the current timelines for the New Zealand Curriculum Refresh and should include advice on prioritisation. The Group's advice should be based on consideration of:

- approaches in other jurisdictions
- the evidence-base
- meeting the needs of diverse students and supporting their wellbeing, presence, participation and progress
- lessons from New Zealand's prior efforts to support teachers to focus on progression
- overall manageability of teaching expectations and the practicality of teachers being able to design programmes that provide sufficient depth on the learning that matters most
- schools' obligations the Education and Training Act 2020 including in relation to The Treaty of Waitangi | Te Tiriti of Waitangi.

Once the Group has finalised its advice to the Minister, the Minister will decide which recommendations to progress further. All recommendations will be subject to curriculum timelines as the Minister of Education would like to maintain current timelines for implementation of the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum.

Scope

The scope of the Group is to provide advice to the Minister of Education on how the refreshed English and mathematics learning areas, common practice model and phase by phase guidance work together to provide teachers with the clarity needed on year-by-year teaching expectations and how they embed effective practices that reflect the science of learning. This would include providing advice on changes required on the English and mathematics statistics learning areas, the common practice model, phase-by-phase guidance and anything else identified as needed. This may include advice, feedback or, where appropriate, samples of new or alternative material for the Minister to consider in the learning areas or any of the documents in scope.

Matters that are out of scope include:

- the Understand, Know, Do structure of the learning areas (Mātaiaho)
- Year 11-13
- Literacy and numeracy NCEA corequisite
- advice on the specific provision of services contracted out by the Ministry.

Membership

The Minister of Education will invite members to belong to the Group.

The Group is not a representative group.

The Minister may review membership composition as work progresses to ensure the required expertise is represented on the Group at the time it is needed. Any changes to membership must be approved by the Minister.

Chair

It is proposed that the Group will have an independent Chair. The use of a Chair reflects the diverse interests in this work and the breadth of issues that might arise.

The Chair will need to be willing and able to effectively facilitate the group in both in-person and remote settings, including both settings simultaneously (i.e., where some members of the group are attending in person and others are participating remotely).

The Chair will be responsible for working with the Ministry to ensure it is able to meet the demands of the Group within its available resources.

A Deputy Chair will also need to be assigned to cover any duties that would normally be undertaken by the Chair, should they be unavailable. The Deputy Chair will be an existing member of the Group and will be appointed in consultation with the Chair.

Members

Collectively the expert group will benefit from having skills and knowledge which include:

- Knowledge, expertise, and appreciation of primary and intermediate schooling
- Knowledge, expertise, and appreciation of curriculum design
- Knowledge, expertise and appreciation of recent work, in particular the refreshed NZC progression model, the current refreshed two learning areas and the draft common practice model and associated guidance
- Specialist literacy and mathematics knowledge

- Knowledge of pedagogical approaches that reflect the science of learning.
- Knowledge of the Education and Training Act 2020, in particular curriculum and Te Tiriti o Waitangi requirements
- A deep understanding of practitioners' lived experience and expertise in teaching across a range of contexts with a diverse student population specifically within a primary school setting.

The Group will have access to data, research and analysis developed by the Ministry for topics under discussion. This will include material that is still under development, and that does not reflect either Ministry or Government policy and is not to be shared outside of the Group.

Responsibilities of Group members are that they:

- have the capacity and capability to fulfil the role and are fully committed for the duration stated, including being available to attend meetings¹;
- are able to provide constructive input and advice to the project.
- are able to actively assist with issue resolution.
- are committed to the project and understand the importance of their personal contribution to the project's success.
- are willing to maintain the confidentiality of information provided for their advice, comment, and critique (including by signing a non-disclosure agreement).
- are able and willing to differentiate between their own views and the views of the Group or the Ministry and will accurately report the views of the Group in any wider engagement with the sector or the public.

Commencement, functions, media, and confidentiality

Commencement

The Group will deliver an initial report to the Minister on matters within scope by the end of February 2024 to the Minister of Education.

Minister's decisions in response to the advice of the group (including any sample content) will be used to provide direction for the curriculum developers to draft the redesigned curriculum content for testing, alongside the draft common practice model and phase-by-phase guidance (which will also be updated in response to the Group's advice). The Ministry of Education will check-in with the Group as the work is being developed.

The Group will provide quality assurance for the updated curriculum learning areas and provide a report making further recommendations to support successful implementation by June 2024. The Minister will consider the final recommended actions and make decisions on any materials that will be released to schools for use.

The final redesigned learning areas are planned to be released in term 3 2024 and required for use from the beginning of 2025.

The Minister retains discretion to disband the Group at any time, however, will discuss this with the Chair and any stakeholders as the Minister of Education may consider appropriate before making any decision to disestablish the Group.

¹ The Ministry will endeavour to schedule meetings outside of school holidays, and with sufficient notice to allow members to attend.

Role

The Group will develop and provide independent advice to the Minister of Education on redesigning the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum English and mathematics and statistics learning areas.

As an advisory Group, it is not responsible for final decisions on policy or implementation matters, and Ministers remain responsible for directing their agencies to provide advice and make decisions including through any relevant Cabinet or Budget processes. The Group will be supported by and have access to advice and analysis from the Ministry of Education, as outlined below.

Media and confidentiality

The primary and paramount function of the Group is to advise the Minister. The Group and its members acting in that capacity, will not make media statements without the prior agreement of the Minister.

The work of the Group is confidential, unless otherwise agreed by either the Minister of Education or Ministry of Education as appropriate. Members of the Group will maintain this confidence and will not disclose information about the operation of the Group, or information and analysis shared with the Group, to any person without the above agreement.

All Group members will have completed non-disclosure agreements with the Ministry of Education.

If members of the Group are asked to provide comment on the work of the Group other than by the Minister or Ministry, the Group member(s) will forward that question or request to the Office of the Minister of Education, and to the Ministry of Education.

Role of the Ministry of Education

Secretariat functions

The Ministry of Education will provide secretariat functions for the Group. This includes providing support in coordinating meetings and arranging travel and accommodation as required.

The Secretariat is responsible for distributing the Group pack to the members where relevant. Members undertake to read the meeting pack and be prepared to contribute to discussions.

The Secretariat is responsible for formally recording the Group's discussions and recommendations and distributing draft minutes to Group members after the meeting.

The meeting pack may include but not be limited to:

- agenda.
- minutes.
- progress reports or verbal update.
- papers seeking feedback or for discussion.

Analytical functions

The Ministry of Education will also provide data, research and analytical support to the Group in their consideration of redesigning the refreshed English and mathematics and statistics learning areas. This could include:

- preparing background papers and evidence briefs on key issues.
- providing advice to the Group on the feasibility of options including implications on timelines for implementation,
- any other matters that may be relevant to the Group's deliberations.

The Ministry will be responsible for regular liaison with the Group

While the Group will be providing advice to the Minister of Education, regular liaison with the Group will be delegated to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education will also provide advice to the Group, on behalf of the Minister, to ensure recommendations remain within the agreed scope.

The Ministry will continue to provide separate policy and analytical advice to the Minister of Education

Both the Group and the Ministry will provide advice to the Minister on the redesign of the refreshed English and mathematics and statistics learning areas in good faith, and with regards to the interests of the other. The Ministry therefore will have a dual role of providing support and advice to the Group in their analysis, as well as to the Minister during and following the Group's deliberations.

Administration, meetings, work programme, and fees

Administration

The Chair will lead meetings of the Group, unless otherwise directed by the Office of the Minister of Education, or otherwise agreed. If the designated Chair is unavailable, then the Deputy Chair will be responsible for convening and conducting that meeting.

The Chair may also engage directly with the Minister, on behalf of the Group.

Meetings

The Group will meet as required by the Chair, with an agreed agenda and meeting focus. The meetings will be held based on availability of members, and meeting frequency will be determined once the Group has convened and established a work programme based on direction from the Minister of Education. Meetings will vary between being held in-person and remotely or in a hybrid format.

Work Programme and Advice

The Group will work within the work programme set by the Minister and the agreed scope. In any final decision making, recommendations or prioritisation, the Group will make these based on consensus of Group members where possible. Where this is not possible, the Chair may make final determinations on any recommendations, with individual members or sub-groups of members retaining the right to note points of difference in any advice.

Fees

The Ministry will cover all costs directly associated with hosting the meetings, including transport, catering and any other actual and reasonable expenses associated with members' attendance. This includes any agreed fees as approved by Cabinet in establishing the Group.

Fees for members of the Group have been assessed in accordance with the Cabinet Fees Framework, according to Cabinet Office Circular (22)2. The Ministerial Advisory Group falls within Group 4 ('All other committees and other bodies') and has been scored at 17 (Level 3).

If a Group member is a teacher or principal, it is up to their school's Board of Trustees to confirm how the member is to be paid fees. Teachers or principals can take annual or special unpaid leave to be on the Group and receive fees directly. The school can request Teacher Release Days be paid if the teacher or principal serves on the Group in normal business hours.

Conflicts of interest

As part of the ministerial appointment process, the members of the Group disclose their interests and any conflicts of interest relating to the Group and the redesign of the refreshed English and mathematics and statistics learning areas.

Members of the Group who have a specific, real or perceived conflict of interest in relation to an issue or item will advise the Chair and recuse themselves from consideration of those issues or items.

If members of the Group develop new, relevant conflicts of interest, whether real, potential or perceived, they will inform the Ministry's secretariat and the Chair as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Note that conflicts are manageable when the member has been asked to represent the views of an organisation or sector on the Group. This will be managed on a case-by-case basis in discussion with the Chair.

The Group will regularly review consider updates to the conflict of interests register form as a standing item of their forward agenda.

Should new members be invited to join the Group outside of the Appointment and Honours Committee process, any specific, real or perceived conflicts of interest will need to be disclosed to the Minister of Education prior to their appointment.

Resignation, removal, and continue to serve

Members can resign from Group by notifying the Chair in writing of intention to resign. Effective date of resignation will be when the Chair and the Minister of Education have both been notified.

Members may at any time be removed by the Chair and it is expected that the Chair take reasonable steps to mediate any potential disputes before removal of a member is considered. Removal will be by notice in writing stating the effective end-date. Terms include but are not limited to inability to perform the duties of a member, neglect of duty or misconduct

compromising the Group's ability to provide effective and independent advice to the Minister of Education. Any changes to the Group's membership must be approved by the Minister.

The Minister of Education will also review membership composition as work progresses. This is to ensure the required expertise is represented on the Group at the time needed.

The Minister can ask members to continue to serve on the Group past the end of their term to finalise any advice the Minister has requested.