

Technology Online Webinar – NCEA Change Package and Review of Achievement Standards Q&A

Q.

- What will the change mean for digital technology, in particular, the externals?
- Will we have more externals proposed so that we have balance between internals and externals in Digital Technologies?
- Will 50% of the Technology assessment have to be external? Can we design 100% internal courses?
- Is the 50/50 internal/external split going to be a requirement for courses or is this just the "available" suite of standards to select from?
- How does the change affect our ability to tailor assessment to individual student practice?
- Will we be required to offer 10 credits of externals?
- Why more Externals?

A. Through the Review of Achievement Standards (RAS), the achievement standards within each subject will be rebuilt. Each subject will have 4-5 available standards, worth around 20 credits in total. The number of standards **available** from internally and externally assessed standards will be rebalanced, aiming for an approximate 50:50 split.

However, no changes are being made to the types of credits needed to get an NCEA - it will still be possible to get NCEA entirely through internal assessment. Whether this is desirable from a curriculum and discipline cohesion perspective will be decided at the local level. The Ministry values the powerful learning inherent in each subject discipline which will be credentialed through the four achievement standards. When creating courses, schools will still have freedom of choice and will **not be required** to use specific standards, but there will be fewer standards available and the intention is to reverse the current overall trend away from external assessment. This is about balancing the amount of external and internal assessments students do across most subjects. The change will reverse the trend of fewer students sitting external assessments each year, which can mean they are missing out on important learning, and taking on too great a workload from internal assessments during the year.

Rebalancing the amount of internal and external credits, coupled with having fewer, larger standards (and therefore fewer assessment events per year) will have positive workload implications for both students and teachers.

Q.

- What will be the makeup of external standards?
- Will there be exams in every subject? Will they be compulsory for every student?
- Will the type of externals change for technology or will they be all essay/research style?

A.

External assessments will not become compulsory, but we do want to make sure the options available to teachers building their courses include the ability to balance out assessments across both internal and external methods

As part of the RAS the Ministry is working with subject specialists, technical assessment and curriculum experts to determine the appropriate mode of external assessments for each subject (which may be portfolios, reports, performances, common assessment tasks or exams). Later in the RAS process we will also be seeking input from the wider sector.

Q.

- Will the Assessment standards currently being used stay or be restructured to accommodate the new ideas for 50/50 internal external?
- Will there be new externals offered, or will some of the existing internals be made external?
- Are the present new AS's still okay to use?
- Which standards are being reviewed?
- Will the new Level 1 - 3 Standards that have recently been released remain?
- What is the expected timeline for the RAS?
- Who will be making the decisions and doing the rewriting of them? How much consultation will there be with those at the coal face?
- Do we leave behind the current standards?

A.

All achievement standards derived from both the *New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* will be reviewed. This includes all subject matrices, all achievement standards and all assessment resources, teaching and learning guides, and exemplars.

New achievement standards will be phased in. 2021 will be the first year that new level 1 achievement standards will be available to trial. Existing level 1 achievement standards will be deregistered at the end of 2022, following a transition year when both old and new achievement standards will be offered simultaneously. By 2023, the new level 1 achievement standards will be fully implemented. This process is repeated for level 2, 2022-24 and level 2023-25 (see RAS timeline in powerpoint).

The Ministry will work with subject matter experts from the education sector to determine the 'powerful learning' in each subject and use this to draft new teaching and learning guides. Later in the RAS process we will also be seeking input from the wider sector to provide feedback and test the subject matter expert's ideas on the 'powerful learning' which should be credentialled in the new achievement standards. We will then develop a new matrix of standards (4 standards at each level half internal, half external) to credential this learning.

Whilst some of the content that exists in the current achievement standards will be reflected in the new standards (depending on the outcome of the process to determine the 'powerful learning'), all existing achievement standards will expire and will be replaced with new standards.

The best way for you to stay informed on how you can be involved in the process is through your subject association.

Q.

- How do you define a subject?
- Will it still be possible to create flexible courses suited to individual learners, with choice about which assessments to take, within one subject?
- How will be able to tailor our courses to provide a future focused curriculum for pupils who want to keep pathways open?

A.

Currently, schools create courses by selecting from the available achievement standards, which are categorised by subject. They can either offer courses built from one subject (e.g., history, science or pāngarau), or select from multiple subjects to create 'integrated' courses.

Just like at the moment, new achievement standards will be developed as part of matrices: groups of standards within a certain subject, reflecting the way that teachers of particular disciplines are organised. While these matrices are a useful guide to the most important learning within a given subject, they aren't mandatory. Teachers can build cross-curricular or integrated courses from across matrices, just as they can now. However, with fewer, larger standards, each achievement standard will have a better grounding in the most important learning drawn from the National Curriculum.

Q.

Why are you recommending 20 credits per subject when there is only a 60 credit requirement for achievement?

A.

We are reducing the number of credits **available** per subject to around 20 credits for each level. Currently, many subjects have far more credits available (For example, level 1 English has 39 available credits), and it can be hard to identify what learning to focus on. Teachers will still be able to choose which standards to use and will continue to have flexibility in course design.

Q.

Can you use different subject standards as part of a 'course' and get endorsement?

A.

Yes, you can still offer cross curricular courses using standards from a variety of different subjects and students will be able to get endorsement at achieved, merit and excellence. All registered courses will require a brief course description describing its focus, and how it might fit into the student's future pathway and overall learning. This will appear on the student's record of achievement and give employers and tertiary providers a clearer indication of what a student knows and can do.

Q.

Will generic standards remain or will they all become subject specific?
What do they perceive the impact on implement standards and generic technology?
How will construction standards be intertwined or linked?

A.

The Ministry is working with all Technology subject associations to determine how the technology matrix will be structured. There will be discussions on the generic standards as well as the four 'specialist categories of technological knowledge and skills'.

Whilst the outcomes of these discussions are yet to be determined, the starting point for the RAS will be to determine the powerful learning in each learning area and then create a suite of 4 new standards per subject to credential this learning. Between now and mid-2020, we will be working with the sector to determine how this will look for Technology.

Q.

Who is in the RAS Reference Group?
Who will be writing these new achievement standards?
Who will be making all these exemplars and sample assessments?

A.

The reference group is comprised of representatives from every subject association and curriculum experts from across both the *New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*. It will include representatives of Māori education in dedicated settings and Māori language in English-medium schools, NZQA, PPTA and principals.

A team of 'subject expert groups' comprised of representatives from the sector with subject-specific expertise as well tertiary and industry experts will work in conjunction with a team of technical writers to develop the new matrix of achievement standards, assessment tasks and exemplars.

Q.

What will the vocational qualification look like?

Will hospitality standards be realigned to the NZC? (So that students can have both vocational and achievement standards in a course of study)

A.

The Vocational Entrance (VE) award will be broadly similar to the current University Entrance award at level 3. Achieving this award will show that a student has done the necessary learning required by industry, employers and tertiary education organisations, and is ready for direct entry into higher-level vocational education and training (VET) after NCEA. It will also help schools to design coherent, vocationally-oriented courses which prepare students for their next steps.

This will be part of a number of changes focused on recognizing excellence and achievement in vocational education, and building high quality and coherent packages of vocational learning in school and foundation tertiary education.

The development of VE is interdependent with Reform of Vocational Education (RoVE) decisions, and is likely to be implemented with the RoVE changes. We will work closely with the relevant standard setting bodies to determine how to strengthen the coherence and status of VET through NCEA. This includes exploring what the principle of 'fewer, larger standards' will look like in vocational courses offered in schools and foundation tertiary settings, and to determine how the VE award will be designed.

Q.

The new mātauranga Māori standards, how will you ensure the kaupapa?

A.

We are in the process of appointing a Whakaruruhau (mātauranaga Māori) advisory group to provide advice and guidance on the next phase of the review. This includes the development of new mātauranga Māori standards, as well as on all other changes to NCEA.

This group will be comprised of mātauranaga Māori experts with experience in delivering NCEA to ākonga Māori in both kura and English-medium settings. We will also be involving other key stakeholders from the wider community, including tumuaki, kaiako, peak bodies and iwi representatives.

The Ministry is conscious of the need to ensure partnership with mātauranga Māori stakeholders from the throughout the change process, to ensure the kaupapa is protected.

Q.

Will the credits allocated to standards be reviewed to reflect the time and commitment required by students to learn and achieve the Standards?

A.

Yes, as part of the RAS process we are working with technical assessment and curriculum experts to revisit the current credit allocation guidelines. We're currently looking at models to base this on that are more nuanced than the current '10 hours of learning and assessment per credit' guideline, which we know is inconsistently applied.

Q.

- I have a concern that there are different strands of Digital Technologies. If we can only select from a small number of credits this will not allow a course to be built for digital media or digital science for example.
- We used to run Digital Technologies as two subjects. 1 for Computer Science and 1 for Digital Media. Several subjects took both courses/subject. Would this be able to continue?
- Is four standards set in concrete or could we justify say a fifth standard if it sits nicely with the curriculum?

A.

The Ministry will be actively working with the relevant subject associations to figure out solutions to these types of learning area-specific issues. We are conscious that a 'one size fits all approach' is not appropriate and we will be considering the distinct needs of each subject on a case by case basis.

However, we are starting from a position of 4 standards, worth 20 credits for each subject at each level. The exact structure of the Technology matrix and the configuration of technology subjects will be determined in discussion with subject associations.

Q.

How do the changes impact a student who may be studying a particular subject at a higher level? e.g. at the moment, student could be taking Level 2 Te Reo Māori and Level 1 everything else. The Level 2 credits contribute to both Levels. Is that no longer possible?

A.

There are no plans to change the rules that allow credits from a higher level NCEA to count towards a lower level.

Q.

Where did the figure of 'a student should attempt no more than 120 credits per year' come from? (Change 5, Simplify NCEA's Structure)

A.

This figure is intended to set a clear expectation that 120 credits at levels 1 and 2 and 100 and level 3, is a full programme of learning, with counts above this potentially being excessive. This is based on a student entering an average year long programme comprising of six subjects or courses, each with a maximum of 20 credits.

This is not intended to be a number of credits to aim for, or that all students should be entering this many credits, but is intended to provide guidance on workload expectations.

Q.

Re-submissions becoming only NA to A - does that not lead to more re-assessments for students on the higher boundaries?

A.

This change is in response to feedback that teachers are pressured to offer multiple resubmission opportunities, in order to scaffold students into higher grades which leads to excessive workload and is outside the intended scope of the rules. Resubmissions are also offered inconsistently, with some schools choosing not to offer them. This means certain students are disadvantaged. This change ensures consistency and removes a source of pressure on teachers.

Unintended consequences such as this are something subject expert groups will be keeping in mind through the RAS process. Given there will be fewer internal assessment events (only 2 internally assessed AS per subject) and the broader nature of each standard there should be more scope for holistic judgements and innovative approaches to evidence collection - these should reduce the need for resubmissions.

Q.

Are these changes going to benefit or make it harder for border line students.

A.

Currently, there are many students who have access to a coherent, high quality qualification which sets them on a pathway for future success, but it doesn't work for everyone. The current system allows for poor practice to slip through, like the channelling of some students into 'safer' pathways which increases their likelihood of attaining NCEA, but means they are not exposed to important learning and not well prepared for employment or further study. This disproportionately affects Māori and Pacific learners. The changes to NCEA will empower all students to make better choices about their learning and future pathway. NCEA will become more relevant and coherent, and students won't miss out on vital, powerful learning.

The changes to NCEA will make the qualification more accessible and inclusive. NCEA resources that inform teaching, learning and assessment will be rebuilt, to ensure they are accessible and inclusive by design, so that everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve. This will mean explicit inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives and guidance on how to modify assessments to enable students with learning support needs and disabilities to succeed. We will develop new resources and invest in building teacher capability around culturally inclusive NCEA that is respectful to mātauranga Māori.

The changes will also allow teachers more time to teach and students more time to learn, with a shift away from numerous, fragmented, small assessments towards larger, more unified blocks of learning and assessment. Fewer assessment events per year will have positive implications on workload.

Q. How do you relate Achieved, Merit and Excellence to a standards based curriculum level?

A. Recognising A, M, E within the standards based assessment approach is one of the key principles from which NCEA is constructed. Work is underway at the curriculum level to clarify what progression looks like as learners move through the curriculum levels. How achievement is measured within any NCEA level (A/M/E) is something that subject expert groups will determine as part of the RAS and this will depend to some extent on the nature and structure of each subject and the disciplines/bodies of knowledge or practice they are derived from.

Q.

- Will UE be adapted to enable students to participate in cross curricular learning at L3?
- You can get endorsement for a course that is cross curricular but can you get UE if assessments come from different domains? Currently you cannot.

A. University Entrance was explicitly out of scope of the NCEA Review and there are no plans for the current university entrance requirements to be

reviewed at this stage.

Q.

Are they [the changes to standards] going to cater for soft skills such as "self regulation" seen in the 21st Century Learning Skills?

A.

As each subject develops their fresh NCEA matrix they will identify the powerful learning (including knowledge, skills and capabilities) central to their subject. There will be a clear expectation that the vision, competencies and graduate profile statements from the National Curriculum will also be woven through those standards (Self-regulation would fall with the KC "Managing self"). There is no intention to build skill / competency specific achievement standards.