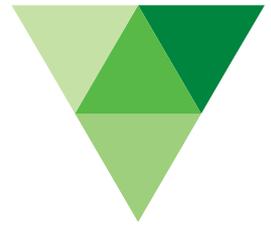


NCEA | Taumata Mātauranga ā-Motu Kua Taea

NCEA Review 2018

Purpose and outcome statements for NCEA

1. A brief history of NCEA
2. Themes in NCEA literature
- ▶ **3. Purpose and outcome statements for NCEA**
4. Trends in NCEA
5. Levels of NCEA
6. Connections with pathways into further education and/or employment
7. Course coherence in NCEA
8. Non-standards based learning and NCEA
9. Māori medium and NCEA
10. Literacy and numeracy requirements for NCEA
11. Accessing NCEA
12. Over-assessment and its impact on students and teachers
13. NCEA online
14. How NCEA is recognised overseas
15. Quality assurance in NCEA



NZQA requires each qualification registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework to be regularly reviewed so that the qualification remains useful and relevant and continues to meet the needs of the learners, industry and stakeholders for which it was developed. NCEA is scheduled to be reviewed by December 2018.

This paper introduces a proposed new development for the NCEA | Taumata Mātauranga ā-Motu Kua Taea¹, the purpose and outcome statements for the three NCEA levels. It also contains discussion questions for consideration.

Focusing question

What could a purpose and outcome statement for NCEA look like?

Background and context

The Ministry of Education is required to meet the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) listing and operational rules for NCEA. There is an opportunity to refresh the qualification and ensure it is valuable for all students, both for employment and for further education and training.

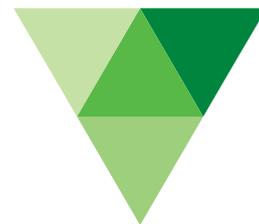
What were the key features of NCEA when it was introduced?

NCEA was established in 2002 as a flexible, standards-based model that included all students and learning pathways and has become one of the most open and transparent school qualifications systems in the world. The universal principles of assessment (validity, reliability, manageability and fairness) played an important role in the design and implementation of NCEA.

The key features of NCEA, as agreed by Cabinet (Cab (98) M 38/13), are:

- a single system of national qualifications and improved coherence with the national curriculum (through achievement standards developed by the Ministry of Education)
- recognition of achievement derived from other bodies of knowledge (through unit standards developed by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and industry)
- internal (school-based) and external (including examinations) standards-based assessment, with high performance recognised through Excellence and Merit grades and assessment for NZQF level 4 scholarships
- assumes that success should be available for all and designed to be a flexible, modern national qualification for secondary school students; NCEA aims to provide students, parents, tertiary organisations and employers with a comprehensive picture of an individual's achievement.

¹ Taumata Mātauranga ā-Motu Kua Taea is the Māori name for NCEA. "NCEA" is inclusive of both Māori and English medium.



Where does NCEA sit on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework?

Although primarily a school qualification, NCEA is not restricted to students enrolled in schools/kura. It is an open field qualification, located on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) and administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). The NZQF:

- conveys the skills, knowledge and attributes a graduate has gained by completing a qualification
- requires the development of integrated and coherent qualifications that meet the needs of individuals, groups, industry and the community
- enables and supports the provision of high-quality education pathways
- enhances confidence in the quality and international comparability of New Zealand qualifications.

The NCEA qualifications were originally developed in the late 1990s and introduced in the early 2000s. A single unified framework was created in 2010, following the Targeted Review of the Qualifications System. The NZQF levels range from 1-10, with level 10 being the most complex. Each level descriptor broadly defines what a graduate is expected to know, understand and be able to do as a result of learning at that level.

NCEA has not been reviewed since the listing requirements for the NZQF were introduced in 2010.

How is NCEA different to other qualifications?

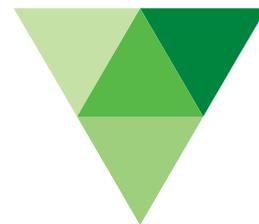
Unlike school qualifications in other countries, New Zealand has a dual system. For NCEA in Māori medium, paerewa paetae (achievement standards) are aligned to levels 6, 7 and 8 of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (TMoA), the Māori medium curriculum.

An NCEA qualification is gained through credits derived from assessment standards (both achievement and unit standards).² Achievement standards are aligned to the achievement objectives in the national curriculum.³ In principle, teachers preparing students for NCEA should base their learning programmes on the national curriculum. This is unique to the NCEA qualification at each level and may not be well communicated to all providers.⁴ NCEA qualifications also have no common core of required learning, apart from numeracy and literacy requirements, which can be met through a wide range of studies.

² Achievement and unit standards are listed in the Directory of Assessment Standards (DAS) administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). Achievement standards are based on the national curriculum; unit standards are based on skills, knowledge and capabilities identified by standard-setting bodies, including industry training organisations.

³ National curriculum refers to the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.

⁴ The "Accessing NCEA" paper states that many tertiary education organisations are able to assess learning against assessment standards for NCEA.



Questions for consideration

How specifically do we want to anchor NCEA to the national curriculum?

If we decide that the national curriculum and NCEA are intertwined, what are the implications for providers and for students?

What are the listing requirements?

The NCEA qualifications at levels 1 to 3 are registered on the NZQF and are subject to the [NZQF Qualification Listing and Operational Rules](#), based on section 253 of the Education Act 1989.

The Rules outline qualification listing details and responsibilities for qualification developers, including the requirement to review qualifications. NZQA requires a review of NCEA levels 1 to 3 every five years to ensure that the qualification is still relevant, up to date and credible. The next review is due by December 2018. The new requirements for NCEA include:

- a strategic purpose statement that clearly states the qualification's use and relevance to learners, industry and the communities – this statement should also “acknowledge the cultural and social aspirations of Māori, Pasifika and other communities where these are reflected in the need for the qualification”⁵
- outcome statements describing the knowledge, skills and attributes of a graduate – including a graduate profile, education pathways and employment pathways (definitions are summarised in *Guidelines for Approval of New Zealand Qualifications at Levels 1–6 for Listing on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework*).

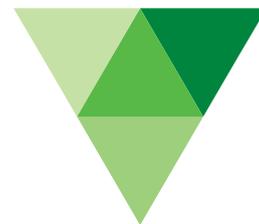
Proposed approach

1. Introducing a set of principles to guide the development of strategic purpose and outcome statements

NCEA assesses students who have undertaken courses of study that provide them with:

- a sense of themselves as able to achieve and able to judge how well they are meeting their learning goals, and as experiencing and valuing ongoing **success as learners**, including opportunities for Māori to enjoy and achieve education success **as Māori**
- the **knowledge and skills** valued by them and their communities for participation in future employment and wider life contexts
- opportunities to learn in a range of areas that provide **pathways** to further learning or employment
- a **coherent picture** of how their courses contribute to the qualification, and how the overall learning relates to and is relevant to their future

⁵ *The New Zealand Qualifications Framework*, page 7.



- the ability to be able to **access and use a range of information**, including digital information, for both learning and other purposes (such as leisure reading, being numerate in life contexts).

These are the principles for building strategic purpose and outcome statements. We want to capture the vision, values, principles and learning area statements of the national curriculum and make sure this is reflected in overall course design in schools/kura. The requirement must therefore be explicit in the purpose and outcome statements.

Question for consideration

What is missing and/or what would you change in the proposed set of principles?

2. Overarching strategic purpose statement

NCEA is a bundle of qualifications, unlike other qualifications on the NZQF. NCEA does not have NZQA programme approval and relies on disaggregated decision making. Therefore, the inclusion of an overarching statement is necessary to set the direction for each NCEA qualification at levels 1, 2 and 3.

Our proposed overarching statement is: When students successfully obtain NCEA qualifications they will benefit from the opportunity to continue on pathways to develop capabilities to live, learn, work and participate successfully in an ever-changing society.

Read the following three strategic purpose statements and then consider these questions.

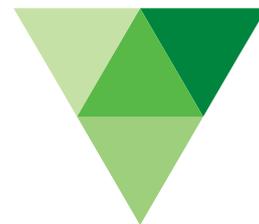
- Does the overarching statement successfully underpin the three purpose statements?
- Is there a step up at each level?
- Do the three purpose statements clearly identify why the qualifications should be listed on the NZQF?
- Do they clearly state the qualifications' use and relevance to learners, industry and communities and acknowledge the cultural and social aspirations of Māori, Pasifika and other communities?

Questions for consideration

What should be amended in the overarching statement?

Is the statement future-proofed against different learning contexts and pathways?

Is the statement inclusive of studies outside of formal school/kura learning?



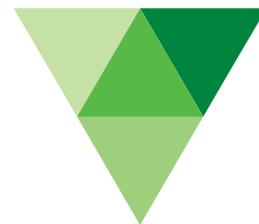
Strategic purpose statements

| | Current | Proposed |
|----------------|---|--|
| Level 1 | A certificate at level 1 qualifies individuals with basic knowledge and skills for work, further learning and or community involvement. | <p>NCEA level 1 qualifies individuals with basic knowledge and skills for life, including employment and further study.</p> <p>Learners, through experiencing achievement success in meaningful contexts, are enabled to continue on a learning pathway.</p> |
| Level 2 | A certificate at level 2 qualifies individuals with introductory knowledge and skills for a field(s)/area(s) of work or study. | <p>NCEA level 2 qualifies individuals with knowledge and capabilities aligned with level 7 of the national curriculum.</p> <p>Learners have choices and opportunities for further study and/or employment pathways.</p> |
| Level 3 | A certificate at level 3 qualifies individuals with the knowledge and skills for a specific role(s) within fields/areas of work and/or preparation for further study. | <p>NCEA level 3 qualifies individuals with knowledge and capabilities aligned with level 8 of the national curriculum.</p> <p>Learners have a robust foundation for further study and/or for diverse employment pathways.</p> |

3. Outcome statements for consideration

Outcome statements describe the knowledge, skills and attributes of a graduate, as stated in the national curriculum. They should be explicit regarding what graduates can “do, be and know”, and indicate future pathways for education, employment and how they can contribute to their community on completion of the qualification.

Each outcome statement includes a graduate profile, an education pathway and an employment pathway.



3a. Graduate profiles

Graduate profiles should be aligned to the national curriculum (guided by the proposed NCEA principles above) and set the expectations for what we want all students to know and to be able to do successfully. Students, knowing that their learning is valued and recognised by future employers, that there are further education opportunities (including universities/wānanga), and that they are prepared as well-rounded individuals for the future, will have the confidence to continue and make decisions on their chosen pathways and participate confidently in society.

Each graduate profile:

- describes what all learners awarded the qualification must be able to do, be and know
- considers the full range of capabilities and competencies the graduate will need.

Overarching expectations have been developed for the graduate profile to assist the process of developing the expectations at each level.

The process for developing graduate profiles

The relevance of the graduate profile/te āhua o te ākonga ka puta was first considered in Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.⁶ This outlines the collective aspirations of whānau, hapū, iwi and kura for student learning in and through te reo Māori. It allows whānau, hapū, iwi and kura to understand the vision and strategic direction they are working towards for their young people. Te Marautanga o Aotearoa concludes that a graduate profile should include statements about:

- high levels of educational achievement
- a wide range of life skills
- quality career choices.⁷

These three categories provide useful content and directions for the outcome statements required for graduate profiles and education and employment pathways in NCEA.

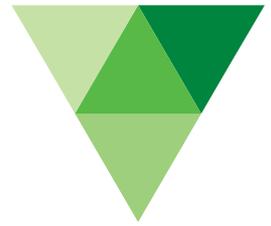
An NCEA graduate will be able to display knowledge, capabilities and competencies.

Knowledge

- Apply in different contexts the knowledge, key competencies, attitudes and values essential to succeed and act in effective and successful ways.

⁶ The New Zealand Curriculum does not have a graduate profile.

⁷ See Appendix for a description of each statement.



Capabilities and competencies

- Display the characteristics of successful, innovative, collaborative and confident learners, who participate meaningfully and confidently in their own communities, country and beyond, without compromising their identity, language and culture.
- Make informed decisions about multiple pathways and make choices to transition to further education, training and employment that lead to positive social and economic outcomes, including those capabilities that are likely to promote better health, resilience and well-being and lead to success in life.
- Competently and confidently manage the learning process to achieve success through using language, symbols and texts to acquire and process knowledge and develop other kinds of competencies.
- Take personal responsibility for their own learning and the learning of others.

3b. Education pathway

It is generally expected that one level of the qualification should prepare the graduate for the next NZQF level. The education pathway outlines the next step for the graduate.

The NCEA qualification can lead to further learning and employment opportunities ...

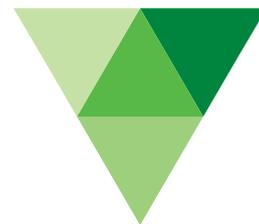
3c. Employment pathway

The employment pathway identifies the areas in which the graduate may be qualified to work or make a contribution to their community.

Holders of NCEA will have the knowledge and skills ...

4. A framework for bringing all the components together and presenting outcomes at each NCEA level

| | NCEA level 1 | NCEA level 2 | NCEA level 3 |
|--|--|--|---|
| Purpose statement DRAFT | NCEA level 1 qualifies individuals with basic knowledge and skills for life, including employment and further study. Learners, through experiencing achievement success in meaningful contexts, are enabled to continue on a learning pathway. | NCEA level 2 qualifies individuals with knowledge and capabilities aligned with level 7 of the national curriculum. Learners have choices and opportunities for further study and/or employment pathways. | NCEA level 3 qualifies individuals with knowledge and capabilities aligned with level 8 of the national curriculum. Learners have robust foundation for further study and/or for diverse employment pathways. |
| Graduate profile Knowledge* | Demonstrates general or foundation knowledge in a range of curriculum areas. | Demonstrates a grasp of several bodies of curriculum knowledge and emergent conceptual understandings. Demonstrates emergent awareness of how disciplinary knowledge is created and validated. | Demonstrates a knowledge of core concepts in several discipline areas. Combines individual components of learning in meaningful contexts (coherence). Demonstrates awareness of how disciplinary knowledge is created and validated. |
| Graduate profile Competencies /capabilities** | Demonstrates a basic understanding of language, symbols and texts used to make meaning in a range of subject areas (multiple literacies). Demonstrates evidence based reasoning (critical inquiry). Demonstrates some responsibility for own learning (managing self and relating to others), without compromising identity, language and culture. | Demonstrates an understanding of how various language, symbols and texts shape and convey meaning in a range of subject areas (multiple literacies). Conducts basic critical inquiry into meaningful problems or issues. Demonstrates responsibility and persistence in own learning and supports the learning of others, without compromising identity, language and culture. | Demonstrates critical literacies that enable students to access further learning. Conducts more complex critical inquiry into meaningful problems or issues. Demonstrates agency and responsibility for own learning, when working individually and as part of a team, without compromising identity, language and culture. |
| Education pathway | Can lead to industry training and study at level 2. This is only needed if learners are at risk of not continuing on an education pathway. | Can lead to a range of tertiary courses and leads to further study at level 3. | Can lead to further study at level 4 and beyond, in a range of courses offered by tertiary providers (including universities/wānanga). Prerequisite for University Entrance. |
| Employment pathway | Has the basic skills and knowledge to participate in a limited range of employment pathways. | Can access a range of employment pathways, including opportunities often associated with employment-based learning (for example, apprenticeships). | Has a wide range of employment pathway options. |



Notes

*Knowledge

- **Declarative** knowledge is predominantly factual. It promotes a memorisation and recall learning approach.
- **Conceptual** knowledge organises information into coherent systems. It encourages students to link ideas and to understand past and present theories within the explanatory domain of a discipline.
- **Epistemic** knowledge relates to the disciplinary inquiry processes used to construct and test new theories. It promotes an understanding of the process of producing knowledge in a discipline (for example, how we know what we know, and on what basis certain knowledge claims might be judged more valid than others).

**Competencies and capabilities

- Although sometimes used as synonyms, we have differentiated these to highlight the role that “key competencies” should play in purposeful curriculum design.
- Capabilities are demonstrations of a specific type of learning for a specific (authentic) purpose. In order to demonstrate a specified capability, students will draw on relevant knowledge and skills and aspects of all their key competencies. Capabilities bring the different parts of the New Zealand Curriculum together.
- The National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA) is currently working with three broad capabilities that are relevant across all the New Zealand Curriculum learning areas: critical inquiry, perspective taking and disciplinary meaning-making.
- Gaining competencies and capabilities does not compromise identity, language and culture.

Questions for consideration

How well are the progressions across levels 1 to 3 captured?

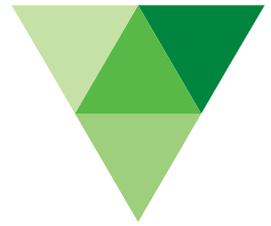
To what extent will the framework address some of the issues already discussed?

What impact are these statements (or some of these statements) likely to have on NCEA qualifications as they are currently implemented?

Inserting “New Zealand” in place of “National”

NZQA has changed the titles of some qualifications listed on the NZQF. When a qualification is reviewed and listed at levels 1–6 on the NZQF, “New Zealand” can be used in the title instead of “National”.

However, NZQA does state that the word “National” will continue to be used to distinguish secondary school qualifications at levels 1–3 (National Certificates of Educational Achievement, known as NCEA).



Questions for consideration

How well is the notion of identity captured (what it is to be a New Zealander)?

Is there a role for NCEA to clarify what it is to be a New Zealander, or is this a curriculum issue?

Do you agree that the name should stay as National Certificate of Educational Achievement?



Appendix

The following sources have been used to support the thinking about the development of a graduate profile:

- Te Marautanga o Aotearoa
- New Zealand Scholarship expectations
- The principles of the New Zealand Curriculum
- Initial thinking from an evidence base
- SACE (South Australian Certificate of Education) capabilities.

From Te Marautanga o Aotearoa

Graduate profile Te āhua o te ākongā ka puta

A graduate profile articulates the collective aspirations of whānau, hapū, iwi and kura for student learning in te reo Māori.

The development of a graduate profile provides the opportunity for whānau, hapū, iwi and kura to work towards a shared vision and to set the strategic direction for the realisation of that vision.

A graduate profile should include statements about:

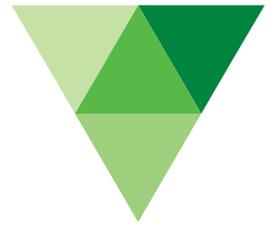
- high levels of educational achievement
- a wide range of life skills
- quality career choices.

High levels of educational achievement will enable students to:

- achieve their individual potential
- have successful educational outcomes
- be proud to be Māori
- contribute to the well-being of whānau, hapū and iwi
- participate in te ao Māori me te ao whānui
- confidently represent te ao Māori in other cultural settings.

A wide range of life skills will enable students to:

- develop a good work ethic
- use their initiative
- apply skills in multiple careers
- have quality career choices.



Quality career choices will enable students to:

- live successful and fulfilling lives
- participate positively in society
- contribute to the growth of the economy
- respect others
- pursue lifelong learning.

From New Zealand Scholarship expectations⁸

New Zealand Scholarship provides recognition and monetary reward to top students in their last year of schooling. New Zealand Scholarship assessments enable the most able candidates to be assessed against challenging standards in each subject. Assessment is by a written/spoken examination or by the submission of a portfolio or report of work produced throughout the year.

Scholarship candidates are expected to demonstrate high-level critical thinking, abstraction and generalisation, and to integrate, synthesise and apply knowledge, skills, understanding and ideas to complex situations.

This is achievement beyond what is expected at NCEA level 3.

From the principles of the New Zealand Curriculum⁹

The principles set out below embody beliefs about what is important and desirable in school curriculum – nationally and locally. They should underpin all school/kura decision-making.

These principles put students at the centre of teaching and learning, asserting that they should experience a curriculum that engages and challenges them, is forward-looking and inclusive and affirms New Zealand’s unique identity.

Although similar, the principles and the values have different functions. The principles relate to how curriculum is formalised in a school/kura; they are particularly relevant to the processes of planning, prioritising and review. The values are part of the everyday curriculum – they are encouraged, modelled and explored.

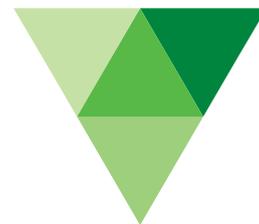
All curriculum should be consistent with these eight statements:

- **High expectations**

The curriculum supports and empowers all students to learn and achieve personal excellence, regardless of their individual circumstances.

⁷ From NZQA’s website.

⁸ From *The New Zealand Curriculum*, page 9.

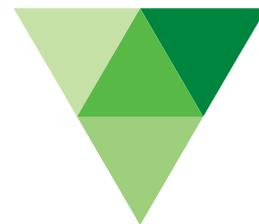


- **Treaty of Waitangi**
The curriculum acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand. All students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga.
- **Cultural diversity**
The curriculum reflects New Zealand's cultural diversity and values the histories and traditions of all its people.
- **Inclusion**
The curriculum is non-sexist, non-racist and non-discriminatory; it ensures that students' identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and that their learning needs are addressed.
- **Learning to learn**
The curriculum encourages all students to reflect on their own learning processes and to learn how to learn.
- **Community engagement**
The curriculum has meaning for students, connects with their wider lives and engages the support of their families, whānau and communities.
- **Coherence**
The curriculum offers all students a broad education that makes links within and across learning areas, provides for coherent transitions and opens up pathways to further learning.
- **Future focus**
The curriculum encourages students to look to the future by exploring such significant future-focused issues as sustainability, citizenship, enterprise and globalisation.

From initial thinking from an evidence base

In developing this proposal, assumptions made in relation to what students are entitled to, including:

- curriculum/body of knowledge inclusive of the front end of NZC is reflected in course design
- appropriate courses for continuing their education pathway
- “all” is inclusive of all students up to age 19
- coherent courses and purposeful learning
- effective learning outcomes
- recognition of success/achievement and recognition of the value of merit/excellence
- learning to learn
- pathways to employment, further training and education
- benefits to learner (the learner can contribute to society positively and be an active citizen).



Broad categories that should be evident in our graduate profile are:

- the quality and appropriateness of student learning
- engagement
- innovation
- quality assessment
- manageability
- flexible pathways to encourage and facilitate lifelong learning.

From the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)

Information about capabilities

The capabilities comprise an integrated and interconnected set of knowledge, skills and understandings that students develop and use in their learning through SACE subjects.

Students develop their “capabilities” when they apply knowledge and skills confidently, effectively and appropriately in changing circumstances, both in their learning at school and their training and lives outside school.

Through its subjects, the SACE Board fosters the development of a common set of capabilities to ensure that all students, whatever their learning pathways, are able to develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understandings for success in the SACE and beyond.

There are seven capabilities that underpin SACE:

- literacy
- numeracy
- information and communication technology capability
- creative and critical thinking
- personal and social capability
- ethical understanding
- intercultural understanding.