



The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is the main national qualification for secondary school students in New Zealand. NCEA is recognised by employers, and used for selection by universities and polytechnics, both in New Zealand and overseas.

How it works

Requirement: There are 3 levels of NCEA certificate, depending on the difficulty of the standards achieved. In general, students work through levels 1—3 in years 11—13 at school. When a student achieves a standard, they gain a number of credits.

Students must achieve at least 80 credits at each level to gain a NCEA certificate.

NCEA	Must (credits)	Alternative (credits)
Level 1	80 at any level	Inc Literacy (10) and numeracy (10)*
Level 2	60+	20 from any level
Level 3	60+	20 from level 2 or 3

* **Literacy and Numeracy credits:** These often come from English and Maths classes, but students can also get these through subjects in which they have to use a lot of English or Maths skills. For example level two History or Geography essays would provide *literacy* credits.

Subjects: Each year, students study a number of courses or subjects. A typical course generates between 18 and 24 credits.

NCEA Levels	NCEA Subjects
Level 1, 2 & 3	Accounting, Agricultural & Horticultural Science, Art History, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Chinese, German, English, French, Japanese, Latin, Spanish, Samoan, Classical Studies, Dance, Drama, Economics, Geography, Health, History, Home Economics, Mathematics and statistics, Media Studies, Music, Physics, Social Studies, Te Reo Māori, Te Reo Rangatira
Level 2 & 3	Earth and Space Science
Level 2	Education for Sustainability
Level 1	Science, Literacy and numeracy

Assessment: In each subject, skills and knowledge are assessed against a number of standards. For example, a Mathematics standard could be: *Apply numeric reasoning in solving problems.*

*Students do not have to complete NCEA qualifications within one school year – they can accumulate credits towards qualifications over any number of years.

Achievement: Students are recognised for high achievement at each level by gaining NCEA with Merit or NCEA with Excellence. High achievement in a course is also recognised.

Result	Not Achieved	Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Scores	0 – 10	11 – 17	18 – 24	25 – 32

Endorsement: For an NCEA certificate to be endorsed with **Excellence** a student must gain 50 credits at Excellence at the level of the certificate or above. So, if a student has 50 Level 1 credits at Excellence they may have their Level 1 certificate endorsed with Excellence. Likewise, if a student gains 50 credits at **Merit** (or Merit and Excellence) at Level 1 their NCEA Level 1 certificate may be endorsed with Merit.

University Entrance

University Entrance (UE) is the minimum requirement to go to a New Zealand University. To qualify student will be required:

1. N.C.E.A level 3
2. Three approved subjects* from Level 3 (14 credits each)
3. 10 credits at Literacy from Level 2 or above (5 credits both in reading and writing)
4. 10 credits at Numeracy from any Level

***Approved subjects for University Entrance**

Accounting, Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Design, Digital Technology, Drama, English, French, Geography, Graphics, History, History of Art, Health Education, Home Economics, Languages, Media Studies, Music Studies, Physics, Physical Education, Photography, Print Making, Science, Statistics, Technology, Te Reo Maori.

Source: www.nzqa.govt.nz