

NCEA Questions and Answers



What is NCEA?

NCEA is the National Certificate of Educational Achievement. It is the main qualification at all levels of senior secondary school.

What is External Assessment?

External assessment is mostly assessment through exams. It is always at the end of the academic year and is assessed by external markers, instead of teachers in our school.

What is Internal Assessment?

This makes up the bulk of assessment for most students. It takes place in class, during the year. It can take many forms. It is assessed by teachers, who check their marking with other teachers.

What are Credits?

The points collected for passing standards. Each standard is worth a different number of credits, depending on how much learning time and difficulty it is estimated that each standard is measuring.

What are Standards?

The assessment opportunities or tasks students are offered to show their learning and to earn credits towards NCEA. There are two different types of standards: Unit Standards and Achievement Standards. Unit Standards are also offered by other tertiary institutions. Achievement Standards are connected to the New Zealand Curriculum and are designed specifically for use in secondary schools. Realistically, however, the only difference to students is that

- in most of the Unit Standards we offer, students have only the opportunity to either **Achieve** or **Not Achieve**
- in Achievement Standards students may earn **Not Achieved**, **Achieved**, **Merit**, or **Excellence**



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What do I need to do to get a NCEA Level 1 Certificate?

Earn 80 credits at any level (level 1, 2 or 3). At least 10 of these credits must be from specific numeracy standards and at least 10 more must be from specific literacy standards.

Most students get their Level 1 Certificate by earning 80 credits from level 1 standards. They usually do this over one or more years, starting in year 11.

What do I need to do to get an NCEA Level 2 Certificate?

Earn 80 credits. At least 60 of these credits must come from standards at level 2 or above.

What do I need to do to get an NCEA Level 3 Certificate?

Earn 80 credits. At least 60 of these credits must come from standards at level 3 or above, and the other 20 from level 2 or above.

Can credits count towards more than one certificate?

Yes. Credits gained at one level can be used for (or count towards) more than one certificate. They may also be used towards other qualifications. For example, unit standards in the domain 'generic computing' might be used towards a Level 2 NCEA certificate, as well as towards a National Certificate in Computing (Level 2); or 20 credits gained at Level 1 can also count towards a Level 2 NCEA certificate.



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What is Subject Endorsement?

Course endorsements show that students have performed well in an individual course. Credits earned must be gained at the level of the certificate or above. For example, Level 2 credits will count towards endorsement of a Level 1 NCEA course, but Level 1 credits will not count towards endorsement of a Level 2 NCEA course.

Students will gain an endorsement for a course if, in a single school year, they achieve:

- 14 or more credits at Merit or Excellence, and
- at least 3 of these credits from externally assessed standards and 3 credits from internally assessed standards. Note, this does not apply to Physical Education, Religious Studies and level 3 Visual Arts.

What is Certificate Endorsement?

NCEA certificates can be 'endorsed' to reflect high achievement in a significant number of standards, across a range of courses. If a student gains 50 credits at Excellence, their NCEA will be endorsed with Excellence. Likewise, if a student gains 50 credits at Merit (or Merit and Excellence), their NCEA will be endorsed with Merit.

NB. This information is a summary of the information available from the NZQA website. For further information you can visit www.nzqa.govt.nz