

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)

a. How Does NCEA Work?

NCEA recognises achievement in a wide range of studies. It means schools can offer a broader range of subjects and students can gain credits from standards developed by industry.

To gain an NCEA certificate students must earn credits, by meeting standards in their chosen subject areas. Some standards will be assessed by the external examinations, others will be assessed by internal assessment.

Achievement/Unit standards make clear to teachers, students and parents the standard of work, skills and knowledge necessary to achieve. Students earn credit by fulfilling the requirements of the standard. These standards encourage high expectations. Achievement standards have been designed so that satisfactory work, good work, and truly excellent achievement can be recognised with “Achieved”, “Merit” and “Excellence” grades.

Students will be told how well they have performed in each part of each subject with marks for both externally examined components and internally assessed work.

b. Requirements for Achieving NCEA

NCEA Level 1

Students need to gain 80 credits at Level 1 and of those 80 credits, students will need to have gained 10 credits in English or Te Reo (literacy) **and** 10 credits in Mathematics (numeracy).

NCEA Level 2

Students need to gain 80 credits. Of those 80 credits, 60 must be at Level 2 or above (20 credits from their Level 1 Certificate to fulfil the requirement for Level 2). Students must also meet the requirements of Level 1 literacy and numeracy.

NCEA Level 3

Students need to gain 80 credits. Of those 80 credits, 60 must be at Level 3 or above (20 credits from their Level 2 certificate to fulfil the requirement for Level 3). Students must also meet the requirements of Level 1 literacy and numeracy.

Endorsements

Students may gain Certificates with either a Merit or Excellence endorsement or a course endorsement.

- Merit: at least 50 Merit or Excellence credits
- Excellence: at least 50 Excellence credits

Course Endorsement - when a student gains 14 credits or more in one subject (at least 3 credits must be external and 3 credits must be internal) they will gain a Merit or Excellence course endorsement.

Gaining credits at the Merit and Excellence level of achievement is now an advantage when applying for most New Zealand universities and some are offering monetary rewards for endorsements.

Scholarship

Scholarship is externally assessed. It is designed to extend the very best students and to financially reward very able students who are going on to tertiary study. It is not a qualification. Students sitting Scholarship will be assessed on their ability to think laterally and in the abstract. The exams cover the same knowledge and skills as NCEA Level 3 achievement standards, but the standard of performance required is much higher.

(See www.nzqa.nz/scholarship/index.html)