



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS

AUTHORITY



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MAHA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

Introducing the New Zealand  
Qualifications Authority



*Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.*  
*With my basket, and your basket, together the*  
*people will grow.* MĀORI WHAKATAUKĪ/PROVERB

## What are our goals?

NZQA has three outcomes we are seeking to achieve over the next three years:

---

- 1 the pathways to employment and further education are clearer and promote recognition of learner achievement
- 2 New Zealanders have increased confidence in the quality of the tertiary education sector (non-university)
- 3 key education and immigration partner countries exhibit a greater recognition of New Zealand qualifications, and these qualifications are more portable across educational jurisdictions.

Our *Statement of Intent 2011–2014* details the key initiatives we are undertaking to achieve these outcomes. For more information see:

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz) > About us > Publications > Strategic documents

---



## Who are we?

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) ensures that New Zealand qualifications are valued as credible and robust, both nationally and internationally.

## What do we do?

Our roles span the secondary and tertiary education sectors. NZQA administers the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEAs) for **secondary school students**. NZQA is responsible for the quality assurance of non-university **tertiary education organisations** (including polytechnics, wānanga, government and private training establishments). Universities New Zealand—Te Pūkai Tara is responsible for quality assurance of universities.

Some of the things we are responsible for include:

- developing, registering and supporting the **New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF)**, a directory of all New Zealand qualifications
- maintaining the **Directory of Assessment Standards** – national standards used in qualifications
- maintaining students' **Record of Achievement**, a lifelong record of all standards and qualifications achieved from the NZQF
- standard-setting for specified unit standards and qualifications
- assessing overseas qualifications for immigrants and working with other governments to achieve international recognition of New Zealand's qualifications
- running secondary school examinations, including **National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)** and New Zealand Scholarship, and moderating internal assessment.

For more information see: [www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)  
 > about us > our role > what we do.

# How do New Zealand qualifications work?

## A ten-level system

There are ten levels of qualifications on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Levels are determined by the complexity of learning – level 1 is the least complex and level 10 the highest level of complexity.

The levels reflect the content and outcomes of the qualification, not the number of

years spent learning. Levels 1–3 are broadly comparable to senior secondary education and basic trades training, levels 4–6 to advanced trades, technical and business qualifications, and levels 7 and above are for advanced qualifications of graduate and postgraduate standard.

## Qualification Levels

Level	Qualifications type
10	Doctorate
9	Masters Degrees
8	Postgraduate diplomas and certificates, Bachelors degrees with Honours
7	Bachelors degrees, Graduate diplomas and certificates
6	Diplomas
5	
4	Certificates e.g.
3	<i>NCEA Level 3</i>
2	<i>NCEA Level 2</i>
1	<i>NCEA Level 1</i>

## Secondary school qualifications

The most widely-delivered national qualification is the secondary school qualification, the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) at Levels 1–3. NCEA is based on standards, which describe particular skills or knowledge. Each standard is worth a number of credits. Generally, a traditional school subject, like English, Science or Maths, is divided into five to seven standards. Qualifications are gained by building up credits, awarded for each standard achieved.

Assessments measure performance against the standards in a programme or course. Internal assessment occurs throughout the year in schools by teachers. In this case, NZQA moderates a selection of the assessments to ensure there is national consistency. NZQA also

regularly reviews the assessment practices of secondary schools and publishes reports about schools on the NZQA website.

External assessment is primarily through nationwide examinations which are sat at the end of the year by students in schools across the country. NZQA administers the entire examination and results process.

For more information see: [www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz) > **Qualifications and standards** > **Qualifications** > **National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)**.

## The New Zealand Qualifications Framework

The NZQF is an online directory of all nationally-approved quality assured qualifications in New Zealand.

It is the single, definitive source for accurate and current information on New Zealand qualifications. This includes the current status of each qualification – whether it is currently available, expiring and not taking new enrolments, or discontinued.

The NZQF contains a search tool to help you find all quality assured qualifications currently available for enrolment in New Zealand. You can search for a qualification or provider.

There are two ways to access the NZQF:

[www.nzqf.govt.nz](http://www.nzqf.govt.nz)

or

[www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf)

For Assessment Standards see:

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz) > **Qualifications and standards** > **Standards**

## Tertiary sector quality assurance

Quality assurance processes ensure government and individuals are investing time and money in quality education and training. All qualifications on the NZQF are quality assured. NZQA is responsible for the quality assurance of non-university tertiary education organisations in New Zealand. Quality assurance takes the form of entry processes (for organisations and qualifications) and then the ongoing maintenance of quality. NZQA's principal mechanism for testing quality is the process of External Evaluation and Review (EER) which is usually conducted on a four-year cycle.

EER reports are available at:

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz) > **Providers & Partners** > **Registration and accreditation** > **External evaluation and review.**

The Tertiary Education Commission publishes information on how tertiary education providers are performing against four indicators of educational performance: successful course completion, completion of qualifications, student progression to higher-level study and students continuing their studies. For more information see: [www.tec.govt.nz](http://www.tec.govt.nz)

## International work

We provide a **qualifications recognition service** to compare qualifications gained outside New Zealand with qualifications on the NZQF. We also work with other governments to establish the comparability of our qualifications and the recognition of New Zealand qualifications overseas.

Among our international agreements, we have acceded to the Lisbon Convention, which means that New Zealand qualifications are now recognised throughout Europe.

## Māori<sup>1</sup> education

*Te Rautaki Māori 2007–12* (our Māori Strategy) contributes to Māori succeeding as Māori in education and is consistent with the aims of *Ka Hikitia*, the Ministry of Education's Māori Education Strategy 2008–12. Our role in this area includes working with Māori clients, ensuring our processes reflect Māori world views and methodologies and developing and maintaining national standards and qualifications based on Māori knowledge and skills.

## Pasifika<sup>2</sup> education

We also support the delivery of the Ministry of Education's *Pasifika Education Plan 2008–12* with our own *Pasifika Strategy 2009–12*. The NZQA Pasifika Strategy aims to contribute to Pasifika learners becoming highly skilled and highly qualified by focusing on the qualifications and quality assurance systems for which NZQA has responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> New Zealand's indigenous people.

<sup>2</sup> New Zealanders who identify with one or more Pacific Island ethnicity.



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

**For more information contact:**

 New Zealand Qualifications Authority

125 The Terrace

PO Box 160

Wellington 6140

New Zealand

Telephone: +64 4 463 3000

Facsimile: +64 4 463 3112

[helpdesk@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:helpdesk@nzqa.govt.nz)

[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)

Published July 2011

New Zealand Government