

Briefing: Release schedule for the 2020 NCEA, University Entrance and New Zealand Scholarship Results and Attainment Statistics

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| Date: | 27 November 2020 | Priority: | Medium |
| Security Level: | In confidence | CR No: | CR21400 |
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Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with a schedule for the release of the 2020 NCEA, University Entrance (UE), and New Zealand Scholarship (NZ Scholarship) results, and attainment statistics.
2. It also includes some early analysis on how students undertaking NCEA are tracking towards achieving their qualification, based on internally assessed results submitted by schools to the end of October 2020 and a preliminary calculation of Learning Recognition Credits (LRCs). An early indication of the track towards attaining UE is included.
3. The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) has been consulted on this briefing.
4. NZQA proposes to proactively release this briefing in February 2021, after the 2020 NCEA and New Zealand Scholarship results are released.

Background

5. Approximately 185,000 students are engaged in NCEA-related assessment in 2020, with approximately 140,000 engaged in external assessment.
6. Each year NZQA provides you with a schedule of key dates associated with the release of results to students, and release of attainment statistics.

NCEA, UE and NZ Scholarship results releases

7. All 2020 NCEA and UE results will be made available online to students on Thursday 21 January 2021. This is approximately one week later than last year's release which was on 14 January 2020. This later release date reflects the additional processing time required to include the COVID-19 related modifications to NCEA (the LRCs, and certificate and course endorsement changes) and to the UE award, and the delay to the start of the 2020 examinations by ten days.
8. The 2020 NZ Scholarship results will be made available online to students on Thursday 4 February 2021. This is a similar date to last year's release of 5 February 2020.

9. NZQA will publicly announce these dates on Wednesday 9 December, the last day of examinations for 2020.

NCEA and UE attainment statistics releases

10. A joint NZQA / Ministry briefing on the provisional 2020 national NCEA and UE enrolment-based attainment statistics will be provided to you no later than 20 January 2021. This briefing will include an overview of the attainment statistics, with ethnicity, gender and school decile band breakdowns.
11. The briefing will also include early commentary on 2020 attainment statistics compared to previous years, with an early assessment of the effect on attainment of the COVID-19 related modifications to NCEA and UE.
12. It is expected that there will be significant media interest in 2020 NCEA and UE attainment on results release day. Because of this, NZQA is planning to provide media with early indications about provisional NCEA and UE attainment on results release day. NZQA has provided your office with initial draft communications for results release day and will provide updated communications to your office in January.
13. After results release (21 January 2021) but no later than 27 January 2021, NZQA will provide school principals and administrators with the provisional enrolment-based attainment statistics for their school, and the corresponding national and decile comparators. This will be via the 'Principal's Report' and other statistics reports accessible online via their school's secure login. School principals use this data to prepare reporting to their boards and the Ministry. Every effort will be made to release these provisional statistics as soon as possible after results release day (consistent with previous years); however, due to the complexity of the 2020 results and statistics release round, this may be slightly later than normal. Principals will be advised accordingly in December.
14. NZQA will publish the final 2020 NCEA and UE attainment statistics on the NZQA website on 28 April 2021¹. You will be provided with a briefing on the final statistics on 21 April 2021. NZQA will publish its Annual Report on NCEA, UE and NZ Scholarship Data and Statistics at the end of May 2021. This will include a section analysing the effect on attainment of the COVID-19 related modifications to NCEA and UE. You will be provided with a briefing and a draft copy of the Report by mid-May 2021.
15. A schedule of the 2020 NCEA, UE and NZ Scholarship release dates is attached as Appendix 1.

2020 students' progress towards NCEA attainment and the UE award

16. As at the end of October 2020, NZQA had received 15% fewer internally assessed results from schools, compared to the end of October 2019. This is not unexpected, and it is in line with NZQA advice provided to schools to reduce the size of their assessment programmes for learners.
17. Preliminary analysis as part of NZQA's ongoing monitoring of student achievement has shown that, with the addition of Learning Recognition credits gained to date - the average number of credits achieved per student is at similar levels to 2019. Figures 1 and 2 below illustrate this for Auckland, and for regions outside of Auckland.

¹ Attainment statistics change over the January to March period as schools continue to submit corrected and late reported internally assessed results and any summer school results, and because of successful review and reconsideration applications (remarks of examination papers).

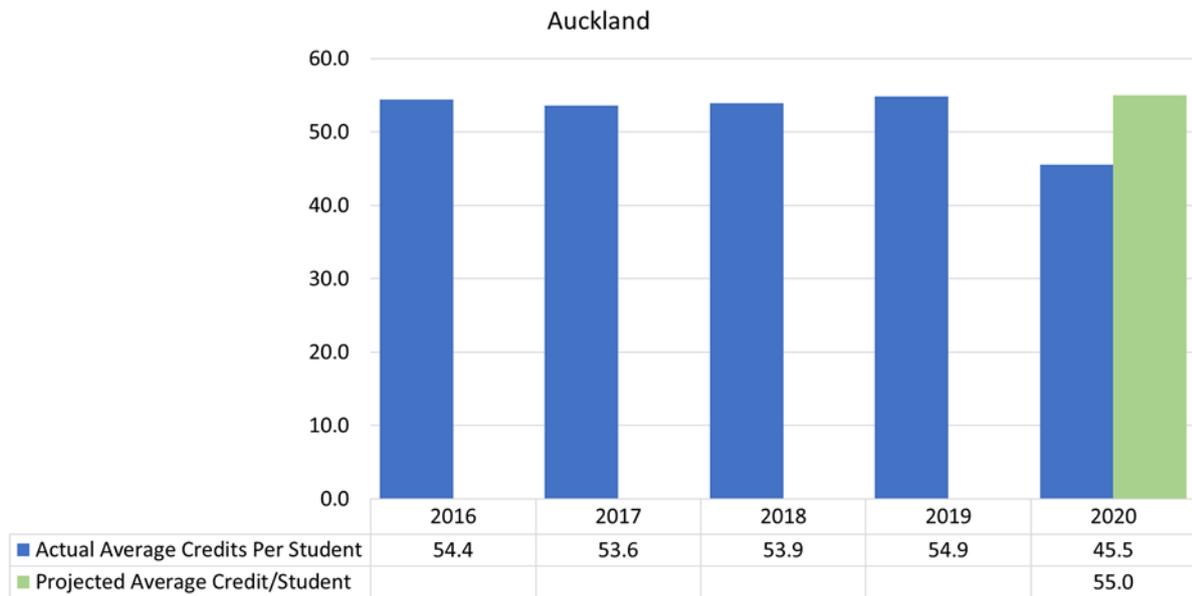


Figure 1: Average internally assessed credits per student as at end October each year (Auckland)

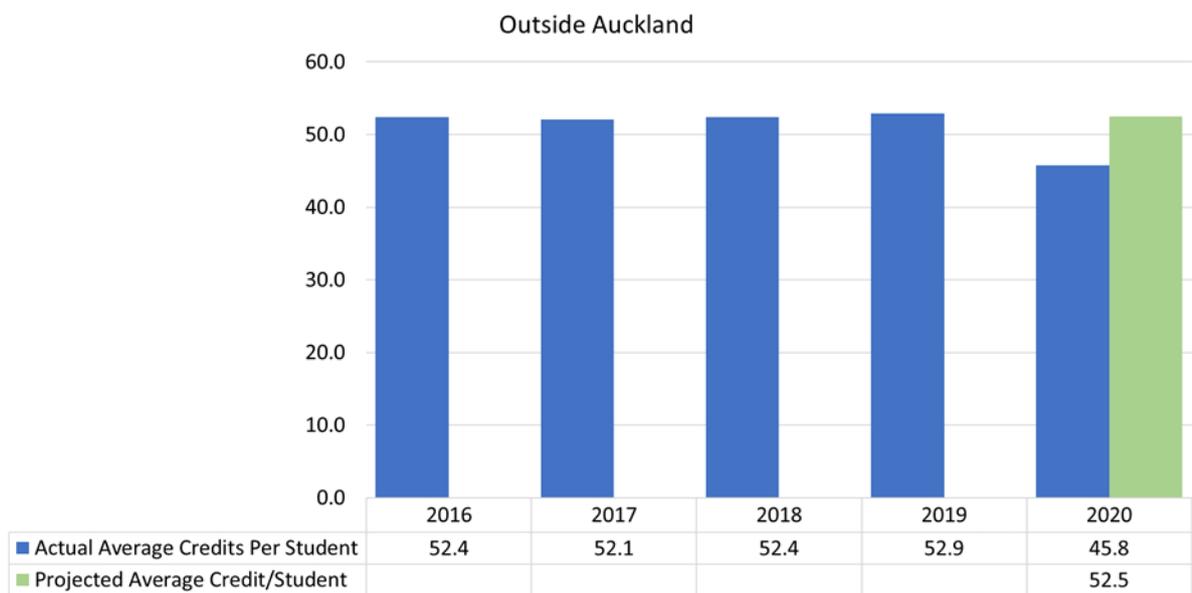


Figure 2: Average internally assessed credits per student as at end October each year (outside Auckland)

18. With the projected LRCs applied, students appear to be on track to achieve NCEA at similar rates to previous years.
19. NZQA has looked at this data by decile, decile band and ethnicity. The credit distributions look similar to previous years, which suggests that existing equity gaps with respect to internally assessed result credit distributions will not widen further in 2020.
20. NZQA has also calculated that 63.0% of Year 13 students have been entered for at least 12 credits² in three or more UE subjects in 2020. This proportion is 2.1 percentage points lower than in 2019 when 65.1% of students were entered for at least 14 credits in three or more UE subjects. This could be an early indication that 2020 UE attainment may be lower than in 2019.
21. These 2020 UE 'three or more' subject entry calculations have been disaggregated by ethnicity. The proportion of Pacific students entered for at least 12 credits in three or more UE subjects (51.8%) is 4.9 percentage points lower than in 2019, when 56.7% of Pacific students were entered for at least 14 credits in three or more UE subjects. For Māori students, the equivalent drop is 2.8 percentage points (from 49.0% in 2019 to 46.2% in 2020). By comparison, the drop for European students is 1.6 percentage points (from 70.3% to 68.7%), and 0.7 percentage points (from 70.2% to 69.5%) for Asian students. This lower proportion of Māori and Pacific students entered for sufficient credits to attain UE suggests that there may be a more marked UE attainment drop for these two groups of students.
22. It should be noted that universities have publicly stated that they will make wider use of their discretionary entry powers in 2021 due to COVID-19 impacts.
23. However, given concerns around UE attainment, the Ministry of Education is partnering with NZQA and Te Kura (The Correspondence School), to amplify existing messaging on the importance of participating in external assessments and the options available to students who miss out on UE. These include approaching schools for further learning opportunities in Term 1 2021, and enrolling in Te Kura's summer schooling option, which you recently expanded.

Communications

24. NZQA has a comprehensive communications plan in place that covers the NCEA, UE and NZ Scholarship results releases to students, and attainment statistics releases to schools.

² For 2020, the subject credit requirement for UE is 12 credits in each of three subjects. This is a reduction, for 2020, from the usual 14 credits in each of three subjects requirement.

This has been provided to your office, and updated communications will be provided to your office in January.



Dr Grant Klinkum

Pouwhakahaere/Chief Executive

27 November 2020



Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister of Education

01 / 12 / 2020

Schedule for the release of the 2020 NCEA, UE and NZ Scholarship results and attainment statistics

| Date | Recipients |
|----------------------------------|---|
| By no later than 20 January 2021 | Joint NZQA/Ministry report to you on the 2020 provisional enrolment-based NCEA and UE national attainment statistics, including breakdowns by gender, ethnicity and decile band. |
| 21 January 2021 | NCEA and UE results release to students. NZQA media release including high level provisional NCEA and UE attainment |
| By no later than 27 January 2021 | School principals and administrators receive 2021 provisional attainment statistics for their school and the corresponding national and decile comparators, via the 'Principal's Report' and other statistics reports accessible online via each school's secure login. |
| 4 February 2021 | NZ Scholarship results release to students. |
| 21 April 2021 | Joint NZQA/Ministry report to you on the final 2020 NCEA and UE attainment statistics |
| 28 April 2021 | NZQA will publish the final 2020 NCEA and UE attainment statistics on our website. |
| Mid-May 2021 | Briefing and draft copy of the <i>2020 Annual Report on NCEA, UE and New Zealand Scholarship Data and Statistics</i> provided to you. |
| End May 2021 | NZQA will publish the <i>2020 Annual Report on NCEA, UE and New Zealand Scholarship Data and Statistics</i> on our website. |