



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

21 January 2022

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your request of 6 December 2021, under the Official Information Act 1982, for the following information:

According to your recent internal letter, <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/publications/newsletters-and-circulars/assessment-matters/onscreen-marking-of-external-exam-answers-in-2021/>

you have said that all NCEA External exams booklets (except Scholarship exams) will be scanned and digitally marked.

- 1) How are exam booklets scanned?
If booklets are scanned by a third party:
 - a) What company(ies) do you use for the process?
 - b) What is the average cost of scanning one booklet? and if possible, provide the total cost. ; AND/OR If the booklets are scanned by your organization:
 - a) What machine(s) do you use? please list all, including maker/brand, model number.
 - b) What is the cost of those machine(s), if those machine(s) are rented, what is the cost of renting for the duration of the marking process?
 - c) What method do you use to scan those booklets? (eg: are the booklets cut, then scanned, or are the booklet scanned as a whole)
- 2) Where are those booklets being scanned?
- 3) After the scanning of those booklets, do you keep and retain those booklets? If so, for how long.
- 4) If there is an issue with scanned booklets, for example, the writing of the student aren't correctly scanned, what will happen, and are the student notified of such issue?

Response:

In response to the first set of questions you have outlined in the Official Information Act request on the marking of examination booklets, we provide the following responses:

- a) NZQA outsources the scanning of NCEA examination papers to Blue Star Group (New Zealand) Limited. For further information about Blue Star Group (New Zealand) Limited, please refer to their website <https://www.bluestar.co.nz/>
- b) NZQA does not hold information on the average cost of scanning one booklet.

The overall annual cost for all processes required to manage NCEA assessments, including both internal and external is \$32.5 million dollars.

- c) All information about the types of machines used and the cost of running such machines is withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) as it would likely unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of Blue Star Group (New Zealand) Limited.
 - d) The process of scanning the booklets is a booklet is cut down the spine and pages are individually scanned.
- 2) Examination booklets are scanned at Blue Star Group (New Zealand) Limited locations across New Zealand.
 - 3) Upon completion of examinations and marking, NZQA holds examination papers for six (6) months whilst a reconciliation process and grade reconsiderations are conducted.
 - 4) In the instance of a paper not being scanned properly, or an issue arising with the quality of the scan, we return the original copy of the examination paper back to the examination marker who conducts the marking of the paper.

As part of the commitment to open and transparent government, NZQA is proactively releasing responses to Official Information Act requests which are of public interest. NZQA intends to publish its response to this request on its website as part of its next quarterly release of documents. Your name and contact details will be removed before publication.

If you require further assistance or believe we have misinterpreted your request, please contact ministerials@nzqa.govt.nz.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you have the right, under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982, to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz. You can also telephone 0800 802 502 or write to the Ombudsman at PO Box 10152, Wellington, 6143.

Nāku nā



Dr Grant Klinkum
Pouwhakahaere/Chief Executive