



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

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Guidelines for applying for approval of a training scheme or a micro-credential

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Contents

Introduction	4
What is a training scheme?.....	4
What is a micro-credential?.....	4
1. Quality Assurance	5
1.1 Te Hono o Te Kahurangi.....	5
2. Applying for approval of a training scheme or micro-credential.....	6
2.1 How do I submit my approval?.....	6
2.2 The self-assessment report	6
2.3 Information to be included in the application.....	7
2.4 Guidance	7
3. Using the evaluative approach	9
3.1 Decision to approve a training scheme or a micro-credential	9
4. Agreements between organisations	11
4.1 Sub-contracting	11
4.2 Collaborative or commercial relationships	12
5. Making changes to training schemes	13
5.1 Making a change application	13

Introduction

These guidelines are for education organisations that are applying for approval of either a training scheme or a micro-credential under the *Training Scheme Rules 2021* or approval of an industry training micro-credential under the *Consent to Assessment Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2021*.

A training scheme or a micro-credential can be listed at any New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) level. It can provide a variety of academic or vocational learning opportunities.

For example:

- general English
- professional executive training
- health and safety
- information technology.

What is a training scheme?

A training scheme is a coherent arrangement of learning or training. It is based on clearly linked aims, outcomes, content and assessment practices.

A training scheme leads to an award, but does not, of itself, lead to an award of a qualification on the NZQF.

A training scheme can be up to 40 credits (although there are some exceptions) and has no minimum value.

What is a micro-credential?

A micro-credential certifies achievement of a set of skills and knowledge. It must meet the requirements of a training scheme as well as these additional requirements:

- have demonstrable evidence of need from employers, industry and/or community
- not duplicate current quality-assured learning approved by NZQA
- be reviewed annually to confirm the micro-credential continues to meet its intended purpose
- be 5–40 credits in size.

An industry training micro-credential consists of one or more assessment standards listed on the Directory of Assessment Standards which certifies the achievement of a specific set of skills and knowledge in workplace training. It must also meet the additional requirements above.

I. Quality Assurance

NZQA's quality assurance integrates 'front-end' quality assurance with ongoing self-assessment. A tertiary education organisation undertakes self-assessment activities to assure itself of the quality of the educational outcomes it achieves for its learners and stakeholders.

NZQA's quality assurance activities include training scheme and micro-credential approval. NZQA uses an evaluative approach to reach judgements on a transparent, robust and credible basis.

TEOs with an approved training scheme and/or micro-credential must participate and cooperate in monitoring of the training scheme(s) and/or micro-credential(s) when required by NZQA.

1.1 Te Hono o Te Kahurangi

Te Hono o Te Kahurangi is the quality assurance approach used for training schemes and micro-credentials that are distinctively based on kaupapa Māori principles.

The following kaupapa underpin Māori training schemes and micro-credentials quality assured using Te Hono o Te Kahurangi:

- Rangatiratanga
- Manaakitanga
- Whanaungatanga
- Kaitiakitanga
- Pūkengatanga
- Te reo Māori

2. Applying for approval of a training scheme or micro-credential

Requirements for category 1 applicants

A category 1 educational organisation is required to provide information that will allow NZQA to evaluate the application against the Training Scheme Rules 2021 or the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Standards Rules 2021.

Requirements for category 2 and 3 applicants

A category 2 or 3 TEO is required to provide:

- a self-assessment report that answers relevant evaluation questions; and
- information that will allow NZQA to evaluate the application against the Training Scheme Rules 2021 or the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Standards Rules 2021.

It is important the application is complete and includes all necessary information as NZQA will not request further information when quality assuring a micro-credential.

2.1 How do I submit my application?

Applicants must log into the secure TEO login and create an application using the NZQA online application form. Ensure that the application is clearly named:

- name of training scheme followed by training scheme
- name of micro-credential followed by micro-credential

Submit the following information with the application form:

- education organisation name
- a title for the training scheme or micro-credential

Note: An approved training scheme or micro-credential can lead to the award of a 'certificate'.

However, the title of a training scheme or micro-credential cannot contain a protected qualification term such as 'New Zealand Certificate', 'diploma' or 'degree'

- credit value and level
- the assigned six-digit code from the New Zealand Standard of Classification of Education (NZSCED) system
- the purpose and how it reflects and meets the needs of intended students, industry, community and employers
- a description of how the learning will meet each of the approval criteria.

Additional requirements for a micro-credential application:

- has demonstrable support from relevant industries, employers or communities
- will add to current learning and meet an unmet need.

2.2 The self-assessment report

The self-assessment report should illustrate how the education organisation is confident it has included sufficient information and evidence to answer the evaluation questions.

The self-assessment report should describe:

- capability and resources required (i.e. human, physical, and teaching and learning)
- the overall structure, as delivered, including the assessment schedule
- if relevant, evidence of the formal arrangements made with the developer (where this is not the applicant) to deliver the training scheme or the micro-credential
- evidence of approval by the education organisation (i.e. through the Academic Board or similar facility).

Where the training scheme or the micro-credential is jointly owned, the lead education organisation will submit the report.

Exemptions

Under section 528 of the Education and Training Act 2020, NZQA can exempt training schemes that are less than three months and meet NZQA criteria.

The NZQA Exempt Training Schemes Gazette Notice Number 7522 is published on page 3866 of the New Zealand Gazette 8 November 2012, available for download at New Zealand Gazette online at <http://www.dia.govt.nz/Services-New-Zealand-Gazette-Index>.

2.3 Information to be included in the application

The applicant must submit documentation that shows the training scheme or the micro-credential:

- meets the definition and all mandatory requirements
- has been developed to match the identified needs of a target learner group
- is structured in a coherent way to achieve the intended outcomes
- has components that are mapped to the training scheme or micro credential outcomes.

Additional requirements for a micro-credential application

For a micro-credential application also submit:

- evidence that the micro-credential has demonstrable support from relevant industries, employers or communities.
- evidence that the micro-credential will add to current learning and meet an unmet need.

Applications under the Consent to Assess Against Standards Rules

If an application is made under the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Stands Rules 2021 then the following must be included:

- Identification of the standards to be assessed in the micro-credential
- An explanation of the coherence of those standards as an individual learning package
- Evidence of consultation and the response of the standard setting bodies whose standards will be assessed in the micro-credential
- Evidence the applicant has been granted consent to assess for the standards referred to in the micro-credential.

2.4 Guidance on the information to be included in the application

Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes describe the specific knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes a learner will achieve through each component of the training scheme or micro-credential.

Assessment

Assessment methods should be appropriate for the modes of delivery, the level of learning, and the outcomes.

Assessment needs to be fair, valid, consistent and appropriate. It must accurately assess whether the learner has met the required skills, knowledge and attitudes.

The internal and external moderation processes should be appropriate to the delivery of the training scheme or the micro-credential.

Capability and resources

Provide a statement that shows how the TEO will supply sufficient physical, teaching and learning resources that are appropriate to the methods of delivery.

Where relevant, the arrangements for workplace training need to enable the learner to achieve the outcomes.

Teaching and learning approach

Provide a brief description of the teaching and learning approaches.

Practical and workplace requirements

A description of how the education organisation intends to meet any practical and workplace requirements.

Also submit evidence of formal arrangements made with employers and other organisations to meet these practical and workplace requirements.

Other specific requirements

The report may also include specific requirements that relate to providing the training scheme or micro-credential.

3. Using the evaluative approach

The decision to approve a training scheme or a micro-credential is based on the quality and sufficiency of the information and evidence in the application.

The evaluative approach enables NZQA to reach decisions about quality, value and importance on a consistent and reliable basis.

3.1 Decision to approve a training scheme or a micro-credential

The decision to approve a training scheme or a micro-credential is made by answering the evaluation questions:

How well does the development match the intended outcomes and purpose?

To what extent does the education provider have the ongoing capability and resources to support sustained delivery of the approved training scheme or micro-credential?

NZQA reviews the information and evidence provided in the self-assessment report (where applicable) and other information provided to determine if it is sufficient to show how the TEO's learners will meet the outcomes.

Rubric one (below) sets out the expected levels of performance in relation to the evaluation question for the training scheme or micro-credential. NZQA uses the rubric to reach a decision about approval.

Rubric one: *Criteria for rating answers to the evaluation questions to approve a training scheme*

	Criteria
Training scheme or micro-credential approved	<p>ALL of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good evidence that the training scheme or micro-credential enables learners to achieve the intended outcomes and purpose. • Good evidence that the training scheme or micro-credential is made up of components structured in a coherent way to achieve the outcomes and addresses the relevant needs of learners (if applicable). • Good evidence the education organisation has the capability and resources to provide the training scheme or micro-credential. • Good evidence that the education organisation can manage the impacts of any specific training scheme or micro-credential requirements. • No significant gaps or weaknesses in the training scheme or micro-credential. • No significant gaps or weaknesses in the self-assessment report, and/or the underlying capability and resources of the organisation.
<p>Training scheme or micro-credential not approved</p> <p>When ANY of the above are not evident, the self-assessment or supporting evidence is not sufficient to demonstrate the approval of a training scheme or micro-credential</p>	
Micro-credential only approved	<p>In addition, for a micro-credential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable evidence that the micro-credential development matches the micro-credential purpose. • Must show clear evidence of support from the relevant industries, employers, or communities. • Evidence that the micro-credential is in addition to current learning and meets an unmet need.

Micro-credential only not approved

When ANY of the above are not evident, the self-assessment or supporting evidence is not sufficient to demonstrate the approval of a micro-credential.

4. Agreements between organisations

4.1 Sub-contracting

Sub-contracting arrangements as described in this section, do not apply to industry training organisation.

An education organisation can arrange for another organisation or individual to provide an approved training scheme or micro-credential on their behalf. NZQA considers this a sub-contracting arrangement.

There are different requirements when an education organisation engages a sub-contractor. These requirements depend on whether or not the sub-contractor involved has approval to provide the approved training scheme or micro-credential.

If ...	Then ...
the education organisation proposes to use a sub-contractor, and <i>both have approval for the training scheme or micro-credential</i>	the education organisation should notify NZQA of the arrangement
the education organisation has approval for the training scheme or micro-credential, but <i>the sub-contractor does not have approval for the training scheme or micro-credential</i>	the education organisation must apply to NZQA for approval to engage the sub-contractor and provide the required information

Applying for a sub-contracting arrangement

If the education organisation must apply to NZQA for approval, provide the following information:

- the name of the sub-contractor
- identification of the training scheme(s) or micro-credential to be provided under the arrangement such as title, level and credit value
- the reason for the proposed sub-contracting arrangement
- a copy of the sub-contracting arrangement between the education organisation and the sub-contractor
- evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the education organisation, through an Academic Board or similar.

What is in a sub-contracting arrangement?

The sub-contracting arrangement must specify:

- the names of the parties to the arrangement
- the term of the arrangement
- procedures for resolving any differences which might arise between the parties to the arrangement
- compliance with the arrangement and NZQA rules
- the ongoing monitoring of the arrangement and delivery
- assessment and moderation arrangements
- provision of resources, both physical and human
- maintaining and reporting student academic records
- a clear process for reviewing and/or terminating the arrangement, and
- procedures for protecting learners if the arrangement is terminated.

Criteria for approving sub-contracting arrangements

The education organisation remains responsible for the sub-contractor meeting all of the obligations that are relevant for the accreditation, including all relevant obligations in the Education and Training Act 2020 and rules made under section 452 of the Act.

There is a formal documented arrangement between the education organisation and the sub-contractor. This arrangement must include provisions to ensure that NZQA is able to exercise its quality assurance and enforcement powers and functions in relation to the sub-contract provision of the training scheme or micro-credential.

The information and advertising for the training must clearly state that it is provided through a sub-contracting arrangement.

All student enrolments are through the education organisation, which must also maintain academic information.

4.2 Collaborative or commercial relationships

The agreement must specify:

- the names of the parties to the agreement - a lead organisation must be identified
- responsibility for the quality of the training scheme or micro-credential and the management of quality systems
- procedures for resolving any differences which might arise between the parties to the agreement
- responsibility for seeking training scheme or micro-credential approval
- procedures and responsibilities for managing the training scheme or micro-credential and its ongoing monitoring, and implementing changes to the training scheme
- assessment and moderation arrangements
- responsibility for communicating all necessary reports and other information to NZQA
- responsibility for all administrative arrangements (i.e. decisions relating to progress through the training scheme, assessment, appeals, remuneration of monitors and moderators) (if applicable)
- a clear process for reviewing and/or terminating the agreement.

5. Making changes to training schemes

Changes to a training schemes may result from:

- changes in the industry or sector
- education organisation making improvements to the training scheme.

5.1 *Making a change application*

When applying for a change to a training scheme, submit the following information:

- A summary that details the changes to the training scheme, demonstrating that the training scheme continues to meet the definition of a training scheme and all relevant requirements
- Evidence of the education organisation's internal review and approval of the training scheme.

NZQA must approve the changes before the TEO implements them.