



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

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# Processes and criteria guidelines for maintaining the approved subjects list for University Entrance

## January 2018

## Introduction

NZQA has developed these processes and criteria for:

- a) a *modification* to the list of approved subjects for University Entrance (i.e. the **addition and/or removal** of subjects and standards), and
- b) a regular *periodic review* of the list of approved subjects for University Entrance (i.e. the list remains relevant and meets its intended purpose).

The purpose of the approved subjects list for University Entrance is to ensure that students have the appropriate skills and knowledge in a subject to prepare them for degree level study at university.

## Key features – outline of processes

### A. Modification to the approved subjects list



#### 1. Modification request to NZQA

A formal request is made to the NZQA by the Ministry of Education (as the standard setting body for achievement standards), a specialist teacher, school, or other stakeholder group, relevant national specialist teachers' association, or as appropriate, other nationally-recognised organisations.

The request must:

- a. include the rationale for the proposed change
- b. define the subject(s) in terms of the range of listed standards that will be available
- c. demonstrate how the subject(s) will equip students with the skills and knowledge that would:
  - i. *contribute substantially to a student's general ability to undertake a programme of degree-level study at a university; and/or*
  - ii. *provide a foundation for study in a specific degree-level subject or discipline<sup>1</sup> at a university.*
- d. include evidence of stakeholder support.

#### 2. NZQA considers the request

NZQA considers the evidence and decides whether to proceed to consultation and, if so, the extent and nature of the consultation. As part of this process, NZQA may seek the views of Universities New Zealand (UNZ).

#### 3. Consultation

Following an initial assessment of the request, and based on the quality of evidence provided, NZQA consults with the universities, UNZ and other stakeholders about the change requested.

#### 4. Decision

The decision to modify the approved subjects list for University Entrance is based on good evidence and support (as indicated from consultation) for the modification(s) based on the criteria.

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<sup>1</sup> The overall purpose of the common entrance standard.

## B. Periodic review of the approved subjects list



### 1. Consult and gather information

Every four years NZQA will consult with the education sector and other interested groups about the approved subjects list to ensure that the list is relevant and meets the sector's expectations.

Modifications may be made to whole subjects, or to the standards within a subject.

The sector will be asked to consider the following:

- a. how the subject will continue to equip students with the skills and knowledge that would:
  - i. *contribute substantially to a student's general ability to undertake a programme of degree-level study at a university; and/or*
  - ii. *provide a foundation for study in specific a degree-level subject or discipline<sup>2</sup> at a university.*
- b. whether the subject is still relevant for university entrance purposes.

### 2. Evaluation of information

NZQA will consider the evidence and decides whether to proceed to consultation, and, if so, the extent and nature of the consultation. As part of this process, NZQA may seek the views of UNZ.

### 3. Consultation

Following an initial assessment of the request, and based on the quality of evidence provided, NZQA will consult with the universities, UNZ and other stakeholders on proposed changes.

### 4. Decision

The decision to modify the approved subjects list for University Entrance is based on good evidence and support (as indicated from consultation) for the modification(s) based on the criteria.

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<sup>2</sup> The overall purpose of the common entrance standard.

## Application, consultation, and decision timelines

### A. Modification to approved subject(s)

#### i. Addition of standards to a current subject/subjects on the list

<b>Year 1</b>	By 28 February	Step 1: Modification request to NZQA
	March	Step 2: NZQA considers request
<b>IF UNZ and universities consultation only</b>		
	April	Step 3: Consultation
	End of May	Step 4: Decision
<b>AND Wider engagement required</b>		
	April-May	Step 3: Consultation
	August	Step 4: Decision

Only standards listed on the Directory of Assessment Standards (DAS) will be considered for modification(s) to the approved subjects list. This is to provide certainty for schools and students in course selection and planning, and to ensure sufficient time for full consultation.

#### ii. Addition of a new subject to the list

<b>Year 1</b>	By 31 May	Step 1: Modification request to NZQA
	June-September	Step 2: NZQA considers request
	October - February	Step 3: Consultation
<b>Year 2</b>	Mid May	Step 4: Decision

### B. Periodic review

<b>Year 1</b>	February-August	Step 1: Consult and gather information
	September - January	Step 2: Evaluation of information
<b>Year 2</b>	April - May	Step 3: Consultation
	September	Step 4: Decision

# CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR A MODIFICATION TO THE APPROVED SUBJECTS LIST FOR UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE



## 1. MODIFICATION REQUEST

A request should be made to NZQA by the Ministry of Education (as the standard setting body for achievement standards), a specialist teacher, school, or other stakeholder group, relevant national specialist teachers' association or, as appropriate, other nationally-recognised organisations.

### MODIFICATION CRITERIA

The modification request must address the following Modification Criteria:

MODIFICATION CRITERIA	EVIDENCE MAY INCLUDE
1. Outline the rationale for the proposed change.	i. The rationale for the proposed inclusion of the subject(s) on the list of approved subjects.
2. Define the subject(s) in terms of the range of standards that will be available.	i. <b>Level 3 achievement standards</b> derived from Level 8 of the New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa. Standards must be listed on the Directory of Assessment Standards (DAS). ii. A standards matrix which shows the levels, credits, and standards titles. iii. Data trends regarding students achieving against the standards. iv. References to the New Zealand Curriculum, or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, and their associated Teaching and Learning Guides.
3. Demonstrate how the subject(s) will equip students with the skills and knowledge that would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>contribute substantially to a student's general ability to undertake a programme of degree-level study; and/or</i></li> <li>ii. <i>provide a foundation for study in a specific degree-level subject or discipline.</i><sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	i. A description outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how the subject has the capacity to permit students to exhibit the high-level cognitive abilities for the credibility of the university entrance award</li> <li>• data trends of candidates that have shown the ability to perform at merit/excellence at Level 3.</li> </ul> Other useful information might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• highlighting an appropriate tertiary path for students in this subject</li> <li>• impacts of list inclusion or non-inclusion</li> <li>• the impact of the addition of a new subject on the existing range and uptake of approved subjects</li> <li>• the accessibility of the subject for all students</li> <li>• the nature of programmes or likely programmes in schools</li> <li>• the capability, capacity, and sufficiency of qualified teachers to support the delivery of courses in the proposed subject</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> The overall purpose of the common entrance standard.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general teacher expertise and support networks</li> <li>• any trends (e.g. in programmes, in student uptake etc.)</li> <li>• any issues the panel should be aware of (e.g. the impact of standard reviews etc).</li> </ul>
4. Consult with key stakeholders	i. Consultation with, and support from, members of the national association or organisation and/or similar bodies; and other relevant tertiary, professional and/or community groups.

## 2. CONSIDERATION OF THE MODIFICATION REQUEST

NZQA will consider the evidence and decide whether to proceed to consultation and, if so, the extent and nature of the consultation. As part of this process, NZQA may seek views of UNZ.

DECISION MAKING CRITERIA	
<p><b>Sufficient evidence</b></p> <p><b>NZQA proceeds to consultation</b></p>	<p><b>All</b> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good evidence that the request effectively addresses the Modification Criteria</li> <li>• good evidence that the subject(s) will equip students with the skills and knowledge that would <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>contribute substantially to a student's general ability to undertake a programme of degree-level study, and if appropriate;</i></li> <li>- <i>provide a foundation for study in a specific degree-level subject or discipline.</i><sup>4</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>• no significant gaps or weaknesses in the request and/or evidence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Insufficient evidence</b></p> <p><b>NZQA does not proceed to consultation</b></p>	<p><b>Any</b> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the nature, quality and/or integrity of the request does not sufficiently address the Modification Criteria</li> <li>• the nature, quality and/or integrity of the request insufficiently addresses the relevant needs of students to achieve academic success at degree-level study</li> <li>• the request and/or evidence has some significant gaps or weaknesses.</li> </ul>

## 3. NZQA CONSULTS ON THE REQUESTED MODIFICATIONS

Following an initial assessment of the request, and based on the quality of evidence provided, NZQA will consult with the universities, UNZ and other stakeholders about the modification requested.

## 4. NZQA MAKES A DECISION

The decision to modify the approved subjects list for University Entrance is based on good evidence and support (as indicated from consultation) for the modification(s) based on the criteria.

Decisions may be appealed through an appeal process.

<sup>4</sup> The overall purpose of the common entrance standard.

# CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE APPROVED SUBJECTS LIST FOR UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE

## 1. CONSULT AND GATHER INFORMATION

Every four years NZQA consults with the education sector and other interested groups about the approved subjects list to ensure that the list is relevant and meets the sector expectations.

Changes may be made to whole subjects, or to the standards within a subject.

NZQA requests feedback at the beginning of the scheduled review year, to be received by 31 August of that year.

## CONSIDER INFORMATION - PERIODIC REVIEW CHANGE CRITERIA

The sector will consider the following Periodic Review Change Criteria in the maintenance of the approved subjects list for University Entrance:

PERIODIC REVIEW CHANGE CRITERIA	EVIDENCE MAY INCLUDE
1. The subject will <b>continue to</b> equip students with the skills and knowledge that would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>contribute substantially to a student's general ability to undertake a programme of degree-level study; and/or</i></li> <li>ii. <i>provide a foundation for study in a degree-level subject or discipline.</i><sup>5</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The subject continues to permit students to exhibit the high-level cognitive abilities for the credibility of the university entrance award.</li> <li>ii. Data trends of candidates have shown the ability to perform at merit/excellence at Level 3</li> <li>iii. There continues to be an appropriate tertiary path for students in this subject.</li> <li>iv. The subject continues to be accessible for all students.</li> </ul>
2. The subject is still relevant for university entrance purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Level 3 achievement standards derived from Level 8 of the New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa are available and maintained.</li> <li>ii. Data trends regarding students being assessed and/or achieving against the standards indicates the subject is still relevant.</li> <li>iii. The subject shows positive trends (e.g. in course/programmes, in student uptake etc).</li> <li>iv. There is continued support for programmes in schools.</li> <li>v. There is continued capability and capacity for teachers to support the delivery of courses in the proposed subject.</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> The overall purpose of the common entrance standard.

## 2. EVALUATION OF WHETHER TO MODIFY OR REMOVE SUBJECTS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA

NZQA will consider the evidence and decide whether to proceed to consultation, and, if so, the extent and nature of the consultation. As part of this process, NZQA may seek the views of UNZ.

DECISION MAKING CRITERIA	
<b>Sufficient evidence to maintain a subject on the 'approved subjects' list for University Entrance</b>	<b>All</b> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the subject and/or standards will continue to equip students with the skills and knowledge that would<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>contribute substantially to a student's general ability to undertake a programme of degree-level study, and if appropriate;</i></li><li><i>provide a foundation for study in a specific degree-level subject or discipline.</i><sup>6</sup></li></ul></li><li>good evidence that the subject and/or standards continues to be relevant and meet the needs of students/university</li><li>continued uptake of the subject and/or standards is consistent with course/programme data/trends.</li></ul>
<b>Insufficient evidence Changes to be made to the subject/standard(s)</b>	<b>Any</b> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the nature, quality and/or integrity of the subject and/or standards does not sufficiently address the relevant criteria</li><li>the subject and/or standards no longer addresses the relevant needs of students to achieve academic success at degree-level study</li><li>the continued uptake of the subject and/or standards is not supported by data/trends.</li></ul>

## 3. NZQA CONSULTS ON PROPOSED OUTCOME

Following an initial assessment of the request, and based on the quality of evidence provided, NZQA will consult with the universities, UNZ and other stakeholders on proposed changes.

## 4. NZQA MAKES A DECISION

The decision to make a change/changes to the approved subjects list for University Entrance is based on good evidence and support (as indicated from consultation) for the change(s) based on the criteria.

Decisions may be appealed through an appeal process.

<sup>6</sup> The overall purpose of the common entrance standard.