

National Certificate of Educational Achievement (Level 3)

Level	3
Credits	80 credits (including the 20-credit NCEA Co-requisite)

Purpose

This is one of three National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEAs) designed to recognise the general achievement of 16 to 19 year old learners.

The NCEA (Level 3) is designed to:

- acknowledge achievement across a range of learning fields, particularly those identified in the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, and to attest to minimum levels of literacy and numeracy;
- motivate learners to achieve to their potential and help them market their achievements;
- attest to the ability to participate in, and benefit from, further study and training thereby promoting lifelong learning; and
- assist institutions to guide students and monitor achievement.

It also provides data to assist government and providers to monitor progress in relation to qualification-related education policies.

NCEA (Level 3) is designed to enable access to the skills required for employment. People certificated at Level 3 have typically shown themselves able to integrate knowledge and skills to solve unfamiliar problems; access, analyse and use available sources of information; and work independently in undirected activity. The qualification also provides a more advanced foundation for further study and knowledge and skills acquisition.

NCEA (Level 3) may lead to other specialised qualifications at higher levels.

A range of standards-based qualifications exists on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework to certify achievement in specialist areas, and credit towards those qualifications may also be used to meet NCEA requirements. Credit gained towards specified other qualifications (that are not based on assessment standards) may also be used to meet the requirements of the NCEAs, provided they have been quality assured and appear on the NZQA Approved List for NCEA Credit Inclusion.

Special Notes

- 1 This version of the qualification requires the prior or simultaneous achievement of the 20-credit NCEA Co-requisite. For more information about the NCEA Co-requisite, see <https://ncea.education.govt.nz/overview-NCEA-corequisite-standards> and <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/literacy-and-numeracy/level-1-requirements>.

2 Achievement standards, unit standards, and skill standards can contribute credit toward NCEA.

3 Credit Inclusion

The National Certificates of Educational Achievement have provision for recognition of credits from other qualifications that are on the approved list of qualifications recognised for credit inclusion. Details of the qualifications on the list are outlined in the *NZQA Rules and Procedures*, available at <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/rules-fees-policies/nzqa-rules/nzqa-assessment-rules-for-schools-teos/> (Schedule 1 7.4).

Credits from courses on the Approved List for NCEA Credit Inclusion are not awarded with grades and cannot count towards the award of the NCEA with endorsement.

4 Credit Exclusion

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement will not count credits twice for the same learning outcome. Where two registered standards assess substantially the same learning outcome they are considered mutually exclusive for this qualification. Details of mutually exclusive standards are provided in the *NZQA Rules and Procedures* publications available at <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/standards-exclusion-list-2/>.

Requirements for Award of Qualification

Award of NZQF National Qualifications

Credit gained for a standard may be used only once to meet the requirements of this qualification.

Unit standards, achievement standards, and skill standards that are equivalent in outcome are mutually exclusive for the purpose of award. The table of mutually exclusive standards is provided on the NZQA website: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/standards/standards-exclusion-list/>.

Reviewed standards that continue to recognise the same overall outcome are registered as new versions and retain their identification number (ID). Any version of a standard with the same ID may be used to meet qualification requirements that list the ID and/or that specify the past or current classification of the standard

NCEA (Level 3) will be awarded to people who have achieved a total of 80 credits which is comprised of:

- a minimum of 60 credits at Level 3; and
- the 20-credit NCEA Co-requisite.

NCEA (Level 3) *with merit* will be awarded to people who meet the above requirements and who achieve a minimum of 50 credits with merit, or merit and excellence at Level 3.

NCEA (Level 3) *with excellence* will be awarded to people who meet the above requirements and who achieve a minimum of 50 credits with excellence at Level 3.

NB The award of a Level 3 NCEA qualification is not equivalent to the award of University Entrance. The requirements for university entrance are available at <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/understanding-secondary-quals/university-entrance/>

NCEA Co-requisite

Te reo matatini or literacy requirement

Students can meet the co-requisite te reo matatini or literacy requirement of 10 credits by achieving the:

1. Te Reo Matatini standard US32414; OR
2. Literacy standards US32403 and US32405; OR
3. Additional assessment standards approved for use on or before 31 December 2025; OR
4. The Literacy Requirement in Version 5 of NCEA (Level 3) on or before 31 December 2023.

Achievement of the te reo matatini or literacy co-requisite requirement:

- using the third method described above will be recognised until 31 March 2029.
- using the fourth method described above will be recognised until 31 March 2027.

For more information about approved assessment standards for the NCEA Co-requisite, see: <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/literacy-and-numeracy/level-1-requirements> or <https://ncea.education.govt.nz/standards-approved-ncea-co-requisite-2024-and-2025>.

Pāngarau or numeracy requirement

Students can meet the co-requisite pāngarau or numeracy requirement of 10 credits by achieving the:

1. Pāngarau standard US32412; OR
2. Numeracy standard US32406; OR
3. Additional assessment standards approved for use on or before 31 December 2025; OR
4. Numeracy Requirement in Version 5 of NCEA (Level 3) on or before 31 December 2023.

Achievement of the pāngarau or numeracy co-requisite requirement:

- using the third method described above will be recognised until 31 March 2029
- using the fourth method described above will be recognised until 31 March 2027.

For more information about approved assessment standards for the NCEA Co-requisite, see: <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/literacy-and-numeracy/level-1-requirements> or <https://ncea.education.govt.nz/standards-approved-ncea-co-requisite-2024-and-2025>.

Transition Arrangements

Version 6 was published to recognise the introduction of the 20-credit NCEA Co-requisite, which replaces the Literacy and Numeracy requirements in version 5, and must be achieved in order to be awarded an NCEA qualification.
The planned review date was changed from 2018 to 2029.

Previous versions of the qualification

Version 5 was republished to remove the list of standards that meet the Literacy and Numeracy requirements and replace it in the qualification document with a reference to the list which is published on the NZQA website, see (<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/subjects/literacy-and-numeracy/level-1-requirements/>).
The planned review date was also changed from 2016 to 2018.

Version 5 was issued to include requirements for literacy and numeracy credits.

Version 4 was issued to include provisions for the award of the qualification with Merit and Excellence.

Version 3 was issued to amend the credit inclusion section of the purpose statement.

Version 2 was issued to update the purpose statement.

NZQF National Qualification Registration Information

Process	Version	Date	Last Date for Assessment
Registration	1	August 2003	December 2014
Revision	2	November 2005	December 2014
Revision	3	November 2006	December 2014
Revision	4	January 2008	December 2014
Revision	5	May 2014	31 March 2024
Republished	5	October 2015	31 March 2024
Revision	6	November 2023	

Standard Setting Body

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga | Ministry of Education
SSB Code 110501

Planned Review

Next Review	2029
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Other standard setting bodies whose standards are included in the qualification

NZQA. Workforce Development Councils.

Certification

The certificate will display only the NCEA logo, the Ministry of Education logo, and the NZQA logo.

Classification

This qualification is classified according to the classification system listed on the Directory of Assessment Standards (DAS) and the New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) system as specified below.

DASS Classification		NZSCED	
Code	Description	Code	Description
	Multi-Field	120101	Mixed Field Programmes > General Education Programmes > General Primary and Secondary Education

Quality Management Systems

Schools, kura and tertiary education providers must be granted consent to assess by a recognised Quality Assurance Body before they can register credits from assessment against standards.

All schools, kura and tertiary education providers with consent to assess against standards must meet the moderation requirements outlined in the Consent and Moderation Requirements (CMR) for each standard.