

Briefing Note: NCEA Change Programme - implementation plan for Level 1 changes in Term 1, 2024

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education (Māori)		
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Purpose of Briefing

As requested, this paper is intended to provide you an overview of the high-level implementation plan for the introduction of the new NCEA Level 1 achievement standards in Term 1 of the 2024 school year. This rollout is based on the experience we have gained through two years of successful piloting that has been done in the sector, and the experience we have gained from that in terms of the information that teachers require in working with the updated level 1 NCEA. Based on the mechanisms and information provided pilot teachers were able to successful use level 1 NCEA with students. This approach is for level 1 only.

With the the changes in timing of NCEA Level 2 and 3 rollout the implementation for these are being integrated into a wider plan including Curriculum refresh and the rollout of the redesign of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa so that these are implemented in a consistent manner and reduce sector pressure.

Summary


- Due to the expiry of the existing Level 1 achievement standards in Term 4, 2023, schools and kura will be required to use the new Level 1 achievement standards from Term 1, 2024. Implementing these changes will require that all key stakeholders have a clear understanding of the changes, their role in supporting the successful implementation, and what it means for their audiences (learners, whānau, community).
- Our strategic implementation approach involves a three-tiered support model, which directs our focus, effort and resources to where they are needed most, and in a manner that caters for our diverse stakeholders – particularly their differing levels of need and support, locations, approach, beliefs, and capabilities.

- We have dedicated teams supporting implementation. These have been in place for 9 months now focused on becoming familiar with the material and in preparation for implementation.
- We are working to an implementation plan as laid out in this briefing. In line with this approach, preparation for the implementation of Level 1 achievement standards in Term 1, 2024 is well underway, with a range of in-flight and planned implementation activities. This includes 'self-directed' online resources, 'guided' workshops and teacher-only days, and 'supported' facilitation sessions for schools and kura.
- Clear, continual and unambiguous messaging is also critical to the effective implementation of Level 1. This is not only to that the sector is aware of what is changing, and when, but also to address pockets of confusion and reluctance (which is understandable with any change of this size) in the sector. We are continual updating our engagement and communications plan to focus on sector communications and are now bringing in additional resource to support this space. We have outlined a high-level summary of a shared communications and engagement approach between NZQA and the Ministry for implementation of NCEA Level 1 in Term 1, 2024.

Proactive Release

Agree that the Ministry of Education release this paper, with appropriate redactions, once you have considered its contents and any resulting announcements have been made.

☒ **Agree** ☐ **Disagree**


Ellen MacGregor-Reid
Hautū | Deputy Secretary
Te Poutāhū | Curriculum Centre

9/08/2023


Hon Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education

13/08/2023

Background

1. The National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) were introduced in New Zealand between 2002 and 2004 as New Zealand's principal school-leaving qualifications. Approved by Cabinet in May 2019, the NCEA Programme was designed so that NCEA would remain credible, while improving equity and access and promoting balanced, meaningful, and coherent, personalised pathways through the qualification for every young New Zealander [SWC-19-MIN-0045 refers].
2. The NCEA Programme is closely aligned to work underway to refresh *The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (TMOA)*, as well as *the Literacy & Communication and Maths Strategy* and *Hei Raukura Mō Te Mokopuna*. Given this alignment and associated interdependencies, it is critical that our implementation approach is appropriately integrated and cognisant of the overall impact on the education sector, especially the capacity of education professionals to absorb change.
3. In April 2023, following appropriate delegations from Cabinet, you and the Prime Minister jointly agreed to extend the timeline for the NCEA Programme “by adding a year to the implementation timeframe for Levels 2 and 3,” whilst maintaining that Level 1 achievement standards would be fully implemented in 2024 [METIS 1308525 refers]. Given the timing changes in NCEA rollout for level 1 of NCEA, we are treating it as a standalone plan whereas the future plans will be fully integrated with curriculum plans.
4. Due to the expiry of the existing Level 1 achievement standards in Term 4, 2023, schools and kura will be required to use the new Level 1 achievement standards from Term 1, 2024. Draft Level 1 achievement standards are already available online and more than 160 schools are already using these new standards as part of our ongoing piloting processes (including full-scale pilots of all NZC Level 1 subjects, and all TMOA Level 1 Wāhanga Ako). Final standards will be published at the start of Term 4, 2023 as we complete the final updates based on pilot feedback.
5. As part of the broad NCEA Change Package, Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau | Literacy and Numeracy corequisite (‘the co-requisite’) has also been created. The co-requisite will similarly become a mandatory part of NCEA from Term 1, 2024. In 2024 and 2025, learners will need to achieve a 20-credit co-requisite using either the new literacy and numeracy, te reo matatini and pāngarau standards or an approved list of literacy and numeracy-rich assessment standards to be awarded an NCEA. From 2026, only the five new unit standards that directly assess foundational Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau | Literacy and Numeracy will be able to be used to gain the co-requisite.

Implementation scope

6. The Ministry is responsible for supporting the successful adoption and uptake of the NCEA Level 1 standards for:
 - 600 secondary schools, kura and area schools;
 - 11 Realm schools located in the Pacific which deliver the NCEA; which includes:
 - 26,000 kaiako;

- 150,000 ākonga and their whanau.¹
7. This will require that all key stakeholders supporting the implementation have a clear understanding of the changes, their role in supporting the successful implementation, and what it means for their audiences (learners, whānau, community). Key stakeholder communications and engagement will need to be delivered which:
- raise the awareness and understanding of the key NCEA changes for Level 1.
 - builds the knowledge, support and training required for teachers and leaders to support and use Level 1 effectively.
 - provide support for school's leaders to lead successful implementation.

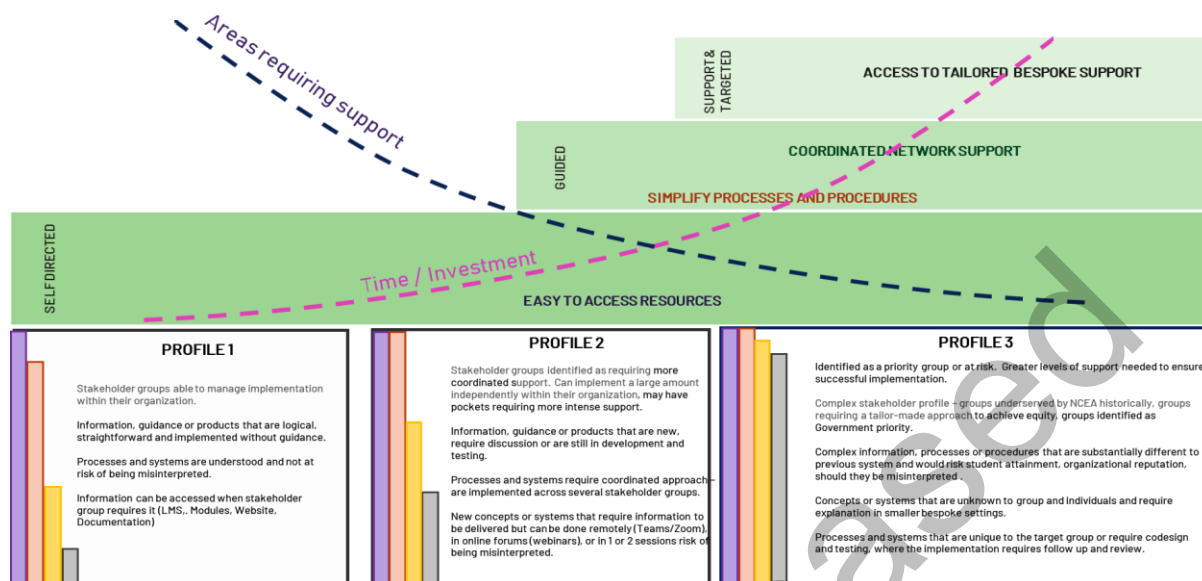
Note that embedding and driving major sector shifts in the view and use of NCEA will be implemented as part of Level 2 and 3 change and implementation and linked to Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa updates. The plan in this paper is focused exclusively on Level 1 of NCEA.

Implementation approach and plan

8. The NCEA, Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa Programme Governance Board approved a change and implementation strategy in 2022. This focused on:
- a. The use of the ADKAR² change methodology (as used in other agencies and wider business community).
 - b. Recognition of the need for a joined up and consistent approach across the Programme and various changes.
 - c. Alignment to the Ministry Te Mahau, with Takiwē staff available to work with schools and kura.
 - d. Recognition of the three-tiered support model:

¹ Note that NCEA Level 1 is an optional qualification and whether or not it is used is left to the individual kura or school's discretion. Some schools currently do not offer Level 1, while others may choose to not offer it from 2024. This means we cannot provide exact numbers of how many schools and kura will be implementing this change. However, NZQA is intending to survey all students at the end of Term 3 to aid their assessment planning. Note also that schools and kura not offering Level 1 will still need to ensure their ākonga achieve the corequisite requirements.

² ADKAR stands for Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Refinement.



9. Given the volume of schools and kura, kaiako, ākonga and their whānau and the dispersed management model they operate under this is a complex undertaking. Tradition training approaches for example cannot be implemented given the volume of impacted people.

10. Our high-level objectives for the effective implementation of Level 1 are that it is:

- Tailored, offering differing executions for kura Māori and kura auraki, based on their context, needs and how they operate.
- Fit for purpose and able to be scaled to meet changes in demand.
- Avoids unnecessary overhead for the sector, recognising the amount of change the sector is facing.
- Integrated with wider education changes and leverages existing Ministry resources and channels.

11. In late 2022 we started to recruit 30 regional support NCEA Implementation Facilitators to support the rollout of NCEA over the next 4 years. These are employed in the regions but funded through the Programme and are complemented by 11 Learning Area Leads staff within Te Poutāhū.

12. The Programme Governance Board approved the planning approach June this year. This has been used to drive the attached implantation plan overview at Appendix 1.

Key supports and resources as part of the implantation plan

13. The following outlines our key supports and resources which are aimed at building the capabilities and confidence of education professionals to effectively embed these changes.

'Self-directed' supports and resources

14. The principal, sector-oriented channel for information about Level 1 is the NCEA website. This website contains:

- all (currently draft) achievement standards;
- learning matrices;
- supporting resources and guides for implementing NCEA Level 1; and
- Corequisite unit standards and supporting information including transition details.

15. All the subject materials are still being piloted but can be confidently used by schools for planning purposes as it is unlikely these materials will change significantly ahead of 'go-live' in Term 1, 2024. The learning matrices and course outlines describe the most important learning for each subject to support a coherent programme of learning. The NCEA education website is seeing a significant increase in the amount of web traffic as schools and kura turn their attention towards planning for 2024.³

'Guided' supports and resources

16. This means supporting schools and kura 'on the ground' to implement the changes. The first phase of support Principals to engage in the changes has already begun with facilitation of 20 Principal/Deputy Principal workshops across the motū. These three-hour workshops aim to empower school leaders to lead the changes to NCEA in their school/kura. This includes supporting school leaders by answering queries, dispelling misconceptions, and building awareness of the implementation supports available to them. Over time further support will assist leaders enact the changes and then move to supporting the changes to be embedded.
17. The first of these workshops were held on Friday, 28 July in Nelson. There was a high level of attendance and engagement (all but two secondary schools from the region attended) and the feedback was very positive. At the end of the workshop, 20% reported that they feel much more prepared (to lead the implementation in their school) and 80% reported that they feel more prepared (to lead the implementation in their school).
18. On the ground support to prepare for the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy and Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau standards is continuing to be provided through the Regional Support Initiative. Through this initiative, schools and kura (and other providers) have access to specialists who are supporting them to make pedagogical shifts to improve their literacy and numeracy teaching.⁴ 33% of Regional Support Providers have identified schools that no longer require their support and are ready to implement the co-requisite. To capture these pockets of good practice, we are creating case studies that promote a cross school approach to teaching literacy, numeracy, te reo matatini, and pāngarau. These case studies will be published on NCEA education website ahead of the 2024 school year.
19. There are two teacher-only days in 2023 and two days in 2024 that are available for schools and kura to use to support implementation across curriculum and NCEA changes. A range of subject specific events, led regionally by NIFs, are offered to support these days. We have developed a suite of resources on the NCEA website to be used by school leaders on the day to facilitate sessions with their staff (with more to come). The resources

³ For the period 1 April – 31 July 2023 there were 90,000 users accessing the site with a total of 1.2 million views. This represents a 70% growth in the number of users and 111% growth in the number of views.

⁴ Over 233 visits have been made across the motū by Regional Support Providers since January 2023.

for the teacher-only day for kura auraki in November (Monday 13 November – Friday 24 November 2023) will focus on course design for Level 1 and the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy.

‘Supported’ supports and resources

20. Between August-December 2023, our NCEA Implementation Facilitators (NIFs) will be running online subject workshops across all education regions for heads of department and subject teachers. The aim of these workshops is to support the understanding of the curriculum connections and the learning that all learners should access in each subject (Learning Matrix) and how this could translate into a coherent learning programme. In addition, the NIFs will be providing individualised support to school leaders who may be struggling with, or anxious about, the NCEA changes they need to implement.
21. More targeted support will begin from late Term 3 and into Term 4 (and 2024) focussing on identified schools and those with concentrations of Māori, Pacific and Disabled learners.

Additional supports for kura Māori

22. We are utilising bespoke approaches to support Kura Kaupapa Māori and Māori medium education across the NCEA changes. By growing relationships and leveraging partnerships with peak bodies, such as Te Rūnanga Nui and Ngā Kura Ā Iwi, we aim to address and respond to their unique needs. Together we are building an aligned implementation strategy and resource base, which is relevant and focused on priority areas we have identified with kaiako to support implementation. This includes working collaboratively to deliver both online and kano ki te kano wānanga across regions.

Additional supports for Realm nations

23. We also continue to support Realm nations to build their resource-base, in addition to assisting their respective Ministries of Education to procure relevant resources for schools to support the NCEA changes. In August, we are sending subject representatives to Niue and the Cook Islands.⁵

Key NCEA Level 1 implementation messages

Key messages are attached as Appendix 2. These supplement key messages already developed around movement from new Level 1 to old Level 2 and linked curriculum.

Proactive Release

24. It is recommended that this briefing note is proactively released, once you have considered its contents and any resulting announcements have been made, with any information needing to be withheld done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.

⁵ The Niuean workshop, completed last week, has been very well received noting their limited resources, including internet access which has implications for accessing our online resources.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Level 1 Implementation Change Plan - Withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act

Proactively Released

Appendix 2 - Key NCEA Level 1 implementation messages

Key Level 1 implementation messages – overview

New NCEA Level 1 achievement standards will be implemented in 2024 for all subjects and wahanga ako to create more meaningful learning experiences for young people.

The new standards are part of a change package for NCEA being rolled out between 2020 and 2027. Changes include introducing strengthened requirements for literacy, numeracy, te reo matatini and pāngarau to support people make choices about their future pathways.

Changes are starting at Level 1 to help make sure all learners have a strong foundation for more specialised learning at Level 2 and Level 3.

There is a broad range of implementation support available now for schools and kura to plan courses for 2024. Implementation resources and information is available through our primary online channel the NCEA website.

Schools can confidently use each subject's Learning Matrix, including the Big Ideas and Significant Learning for each subject to plan Level 1 courses for next year.

From January 2024, existing Level 1 achievement standards will no longer be available.

New NCEA Level 1 standards will be published to the NZQA Directory of Assessment and Skills Standards in December.

Pilot ready achievement standards and assessment resources are also available to guide planning.

Updated Level 1 achievement standards, assessment resources and exemplars will be available in Term 4, 2023.

NCEA Change – benefits for learners and teaching

Work of the Ministry's Curriculum and Assessment Change Programme is supporting secondary school teachers and school leaders to make a shift from teaching to assessment standards or achievement outcomes.

Feedback from schools and kura using the new NCEA Level 1 tells us they're happy with outcomes for their students – learning is deeper and richer.

Changes to NCEA aim to remove unnecessary workload for teachers – creating more time for teaching and learning and less focus on assessment.

A strength of the new NCEA materials is the flexibility provided to schools and kura to tailor courses of learning.

Changes to NCEA directly supports development of meaningful and relevant learning and assessment programmes that reflect Aotearoa New Zealand

New assessment and subject materials for Level 1 were developed with specific attention to the cultural, linguistic and neurodiversity of learners so teachers can give all young people the education they deserve.

A school-wide and curriculum-wide focus on teaching and learning for literacy, numeracy, te reo matatini, and pāngarau will strengthen skills of New Zealand's young people and reduce the levels of people leaving school without the foundational skills they need.

Support available now

In late July 2023, workshops with school leaders began to support a smooth implementation of the new NCEA Level 1 next year.

Our regional and national teams are using these sessions to meet and collaborate with leaders on the challenges and opportunities that the changes bring for kaiako and ākonga.

Specific workshops for kura using Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, as well as subject-focused sessions for Kaiako are also planned.

We want leaders to be able to support their teachers build understanding of the changes to Level 1, and confidence in implementing them into teaching practice.

NCEA co-requisite

How NCEA recognises skills and competency in te reo matatini, pāngarau, literacy, and numeracy is changing. In 2024, the literacy and numeracy requirements of the NCEA are separated out from the certificate at Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 and the 20-credit co-requisite becomes mandatory.

This change is supported by the introduction of the Common Practice Model that will be ready for use in 2024. The CPM goes up to Year 10 to ensure senior secondary teachers are guided to continue building literacy and maths skills across the curriculum that will help students do well with the co-requisite and all their NCEA subjects and assessments.

The introduction to core teaching approaches for literacy and maths and the progress outcomes in the refreshed curriculum will support teachers to understand learner's progress to successfully achieving the NCEA co-requisite.

There are a range of supports available, including the NCEA regional support initiative available through our Te Mahau offices to support schools and kura to prepare for implementation and make changes to improve their literacy and numeracy teaching and learning)

A two-year transitional period in 2024 and 2025 provides schools, kura, and all NCEA providers with time to adjust. School-wide and curriculum-wide approaches to foundational te reo matatini, pāngarau, literacy and numeracy skills can be strengthened during the transitional period.

All NCEA providers can 'opt-in' to use the five dedicated standards and new assessment approaches from 2023.