



# Parents, family, and students: Questions for submitters on a proposal to replace NCEA.

English language

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**This document contains the full list of questions for parents, family, and students who are submitting on the Ministry of Education's discussion document: Proposal to replace NCEA.**

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For most people, the easiest way to provide feedback on the proposals is through the online submissions portal. However, this document includes **the full list of questions** for parents, family, and students who prefer to submit their responses by post or email.

If you are not submitting as a parent, family, or student, refer to the Ministry's website for the list of questions that are right for you.

Online submissions can be made here: <https://www.education.govt.nz/consultation-ncea>

The survey is being conducted in partnership with Allen + Clarke, an independent public policy consultancy engaged by the Ministry to support the analysis of responses. Only individuals involved in the analysis of submissions will have access to responses and personal information.

## How to use this document

If you have not done so already, we encourage you to read about the Government's proposals before submitting your feedback. Read about the proposals here:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/consultation-ncea>

Once you are ready to answer questions about the proposals:

- Answer **all** questions in the demographic section that are relevant to your situation.
- You may choose to answer some or all of the questions in parts 1-3. These questions are generally presented in the same order as the content in the discussion document.

Answering as many questions as possible will help the Ministry provide informed advice to the Minister on each proposal before Cabinet makes further decisions.

Your answers can be emailed to [nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz](mailto:nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz) or posted to:

### **Education Consultation**

Ministry of Education  
PO Box 1666  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand

Public consultation closes at **5pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025** (NZST).

### **Information on privacy**

Your personal details will remain confidential, will not be published or made publicly available, and will be used only for analysis purposes.

The Ministry may quote directly from responses, however these quotes will not be attributed to individuals or groups and the Ministry will not use any responses containing personal information.

At any stage, you can contact the Ministry of Education or Allen + Clarke for more information about how your personal details will be used in the analysis, or to request the withdrawal of your submission or deletion of submission data. Please email [nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz](mailto:nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz) or contact Dr Bo Ning at [bning@allenandclarke.com](mailto:bning@allenandclarke.com) to do this.

You can read more about why we collect personal information and how we use it on our website: <https://www.education.govt.nz/legal-and-privacy>

### **For children and young people**

We encourage you to ask a parent, caregiver, or someone you trust to read and help you fully understand the above information on privacy and what it means for you. If it helps, you can also complete the survey with their assistance or guidance.

# Demographic questions

Fill in all demographic questions before answering questions about the proposals.

Your personal details will remain confidential and will be used only for analysis purposes.  
Your personal details will not be published or made publicly available.

**You may choose only one option from the following:**

Teacher or principal  
(‘educators’)

☐

Parent/caregiver,  
family, or student

☐

Employer  
(or someone from an industry)

☐

Continue answering the remaining questions **ONLY** if you selected the ‘parent, family, or student’ option. If you selected any other category, refer to the Ministry’s website for a set of questions that are right for you.

The remaining questions will help us understand how feedback may vary across different backgrounds and contexts.

Which of the following best describe(s) your interest in the NCEA changes?  
**Tick all that apply.**

Parent or  
caregiver

☐

Extended family  
member

☐

Secondary  
school student

☐

Former  
secondary  
school student

☐

Other  
(specify)

☐

This question is for **PARENTS, CAREGIVERS**, and **FAMILY MEMBERS** only:  
What level does/do your child/children or family member(s) belong to? **Tick all that apply.**

Years 0-8

☐

Years 9-10

☐

Years 11-13

☐

Not currently  
at school

☐

Other  
(specify)

☐

This question is for **STUDENTS** only: What year level are you currently in? Choose one of the following:

Years 0-8	Years 9-10	Years 11-13	Not currently enrolled in school	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Which ethnic group(s) do you identify with? Tick all that apply.

**Choose one of the following:**

Māori	Pacific (specify)	NZ European / pākehā	Asian (specify)	MELAA	Prefer not to say	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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The following question is needed to verify your submission.  
This information will NOT be shared with others and will be used only to verify your submission and/or contact you for clarification if needed.  
If you would like more information about how your personal details will be used in the analysis, contact us at [nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz](mailto:nceaconsultation@education.govt.nz)

Provide your contact information.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Answering as many of the remaining questions as possible will help the Ministry to better understand your thoughts on the proposals and inform further work and advice to Government.

# Part 1: Case for change

NCEA was introduced as a flexible, inclusive, and standards-based senior secondary national qualification. It offers a wide range of assessment opportunities, including those leading to vocational pathways like trades, hospitality, and tourism.

Under NCEA, students are assessed against standards that reflect groupings of key skills and knowledge in related areas. These standards are worth a certain number of credits, which students accumulate throughout the year. To achieve NCEA, students must gain 80 credits across their standards, including 20 credits from the co-requisite standards.

However, the flexibility of NCEA has led to some unintended consequences. There are few rules about which standards must be achieved within a subject or across NCEA Levels 1, 2, and 3. As a result, standards have begun to drive what is being taught in classrooms, rather than the curriculum driving the teaching. This has contributed to issues such as 'credit counting', where some students disengage from learning once they have enough credits to achieve NCEA.

Changes are needed to address the issues with NCEA and make sure the system is working for **all** students, family, educators, and employers. A strong curriculum should drive teaching and learning, and our national qualifications should clearly reflect student achievement.

**This question relates to whether the curriculum should be driving assessments.**

Do you agree that our national qualifications should assess against a national curriculum?

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

*Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:*

- Describe any concerns you have about the proposed new qualifications assessing against a national curriculum.

**This question relates to good things about NCEA that should remain.**

Are there aspects of NCEA that have supported you or your family member's learning and achievement? What are these aspects and benefits?

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**These questions relate to issues with the current system.**

Do you agree that NCEA is difficult for parents and students to understand?  
For example, the credit requirements for Levels 1, 2, and 3, how standards are graded,  
and what internal and external assessments are required.

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly  
disagree  
☐

I somewhat  
disagree  
☐

I am  
neutral  
☐

I somewhat  
agree  
☐

I strongly  
agree  
☐

I am  
unsure  
☐

*Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:*

- Which aspects of NCEA do you think are simple and easy to understand, and why?

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- Which aspects of NCEA are most difficult to understand?

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Do you agree that the senior secondary qualifications system needs to improve?

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly  
disagree  
☐

I somewhat  
disagree  
☐

I am  
neutral  
☐

I somewhat  
agree  
☐

I strongly  
agree  
☐

I am  
unsure  
☐

*Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:*

- The discussion document identifies some problems with the current system. Which of those do you disagree with, and why?

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- Which parts of the senior secondary qualification system do you think should be prioritised for improvement?

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The Government wants the senior secondary qualifications to be coherent, consistent, and credible, including with access to enhanced Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects. Do you think there are other opportunities for positive change with the new qualifications, outside of what has been raised in the discussion document?

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly  
disagree  
☐

I somewhat  
disagree  
☐

I am  
neutral  
☐

I somewhat  
agree  
☐

I strongly  
agree  
☐

I am  
unsure  
☐

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- Describe other opportunities for positive change that are not covered in the discussion document.

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## Part 2: Proposals

### Proposal 1: Working with industry to better integrate VET learning into the senior secondary qualification system

Under proposal 1, Industry Skills Boards (ISBs) will develop clear and consistent Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects – made up of skill standards – that will be delivered to students in partnership with tertiary providers and employers. ISBs will have the flexibility to draw on existing content and standards or develop entirely new content for VET subjects, based on industry needs and real post-school opportunities.

Aligning VET subjects with industry qualifications will allow students to work towards achieving the new senior secondary qualifications while potentially also making a meaningful start on a tertiary qualification.

The proposed new senior secondary qualification changes will be phased in from 2028 through to 2030.

Overall, do you support proposal 1: Working with industry to better integrate VET learning into the senior secondary qualification system?

**Choose one of the following:**

I do not support it	I somewhat do not support it	I am neutral	I support it	I strongly support it	I am unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer the following question only if you **do not support it** or **somewhat do not support it**:

- Which aspects of proposal 1 do you have concerns about, and why? For example, do you have concerns about a particular aspect of proposal 1 or the entire proposal?

Answer the following question only if you **support it** or **strongly support it**:

- What benefits do you think proposal 1 will have for student learning and achievement?

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Do you agree that access to enhanced Vocational Educations and Training (VET) subjects would be a positive change in the design of the new qualifications?

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

*Answer the following question only if you strongly disagree or somewhat disagree:*

- Which aspects of proposal 1 do you have concerns about, and why? For example, do you have concerns about a particular aspect of proposal 1 or the entire proposal?

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- What benefits do you think proposal 1 will have for student learning and achievement?

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## **Proposal 2: Foundational Award and new senior secondary qualifications**

Under proposal 2, a new Foundational Award will be introduced to replace the current NCEA co-requisite and NCEA Level 1. The Award will accredit literacy and maths or te reo matatini and pāngarau, helping students to build and demonstrate strong foundational skills.

NCEA Levels 2 and 3 will be replaced with the New Zealand Certificate of Education (for Year 12) and the New Zealand Advanced Certificate of Education (for Year 13).

These changes reduce the number of high-stakes assessment years from three to two, allowing Year 11 students to focus on deeper learning of foundational skills and knowledge, and creating more time in the classroom for students.

The proposed new senior secondary qualification changes will be phased in between 2028 and 2030.

Do you agree that replacing NCEA Level 1 with a Foundational Award in numeracy and literacy is a good way to prepare students with the basic skills needed to successfully engage with learning in Years 12 and 13?

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

*Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:*

- Describe any concerns you would have about the Foundational Award being able to prepare you or your family member for learning in Years 12 and 13. For example, if you consider there are better ways to do this.

*Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:*

- Describe the benefits you think a Foundational Award would have for supporting you or your family member to prepare for learning in Years 12 and 13.

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Do you think any other areas of learning or achievement should be considered as part of the Foundational Award? For example, should a certain level of student attendance be required? Describe these areas of learning or achievement.

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Most students will complete the New Zealand Certificate of Education in Year 12. Do you agree that it is important for the Government to consider ways to ensure more students stay at school until the end of Year 12?

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- What are your concerns about the Government considering ways to ensure more students stay in school until the end of Year 12?

Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:

- How can we make sure students stay in school until the end of Year 12 and have a better chance of achieving a meaningful qualification?

### Proposal 3: Shifting focus to a structured and subject approach

Under proposal 3, students will focus on learning and achievement across a whole subject, rather than individual standards. Students will also generally be required to take five subjects, including either English and Mathematics or Te Reo Rangatira and Pāngarau at Year 11.

Within each subject, internal and external assessments will be marked consistently and aggregated into an overall grade and score out of 100.

This change will reduce the risk that students are unintentionally limiting their post-school options, for example, by not taking the subjects needed for University Entrance (UE). It also provides potential employers and tertiary educators with a clearer sense of students' knowledge and skills.

The proposed new senior secondary qualification changes will be phased in between 2028 and 2030.

Overall, do you support a subject approach to assessments at Years 12 and 13?

**Choose one of the following:**

I do not support it	I somewhat do not support it	I am neutral	I support it	I strongly support it	I am unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer the following question only if you **do not support it** or **somewhat do not support it**:

- What are your concerns about a subject approach to assessments at Years 12 and 13?

Answer the following question only if you **support it** or **strongly support it**:

- What do you think are the main benefits to a subject approach with assessments at Years 12 and 13?

Do you agree that it is important for students to engage with the full curriculum (rather than segments) for vocational and general subjects?

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly disagree	I somewhat disagree	I am neutral	I somewhat agree	I strongly agree	I am unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- What do you think are the benefits of being able to engage with parts of the curriculum (segments) of vocational and general subjects?

Answer the following question only if you **somewhat agree** or **strongly agree**:

- Why do you agree that it is important to engage with the full curriculum for vocational and general subjects?

Do you support some subjects being required as part of the Year 11 curriculum?  
For example, English and Mathematics or, in Māori-medium settings, Te Reo Rangatira and Pāngarau.

**Choose one of the following:**

I do not support it	I somewhat do not support it	I am neutral	I support it	I strongly support it	I am unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer the following question only if you **do not support it** or **somewhat do not support it**:

- What are your concerns about some subjects being required as part of the curriculum at Year 11?

Answer the following question only if you **support it** or **strongly support it**:

- Would you support other subjects being required as part of the curriculum at Year 11, aside from English and Mathematics or Te Reo Rangatira and Pāngarau?

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## Proposal 4: Strengthening achievement requirements

Under proposal 4, achievement will be more consistent and straightforward:

- There will be greater consistency in the way subjects are assessed. For example, internal and external assessments will contribute more fairly to students' grades.
- Terms like 'Excellence' and 'Achieved' will be replaced with marks out of 100 and letter grades such as A, B, and C.
- Students will need to achieve at least four subjects, along with the new Foundational Award, to gain the new qualifications.

These changes incentivise students to study and participate throughout the school year and in all their subjects. For example, students will be strongly incentivised to participate in external assessments where these are offered, because their final subject grades will be based on the combined score from all assessments.

The new grading approach will also align more closely with other marking systems, giving educators and employers a clearer understanding of students' levels of skill and knowledge.

The proposed new senior secondary qualification changes will be phased in between 2028 and 2030.

Do you find the proposed achievement requirements for the new qualifications easy to understand? This includes that students must achieve a passing grade in at least four subjects and achieve the Foundational Award.

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree** or **somewhat agree**:

- What parts of the proposed achievement requirements do you find confusing to understand?

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Do you agree that four subjects would be a reasonable requirement to gain a secondary qualification?

**Choose one of the following:**

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

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I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- Why do you have concerns about a four subject requirement being reasonable to achieve?

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## Part 3: Implications and next steps

Proposals 1 - 4 are designed to address key challenges with the current NCEA system and ensure that the proposed New Zealand Certificate of Education and New Zealand Advanced Certificate of Education are credible, coherent, and supporting students to develop important skills and knowledge.

However, a lot will need to happen between now and 2028 to prepare for these changes. The Ministry of Education is inviting feedback to help shape the final design and implementation. Once consultation closes, the Ministry will carefully consider feedback before reporting back to Cabinet.

Before the qualifications are introduced, there will be a strong focus on quality implementation, ensuring that teachers have the right resources and supports to confidently deliver the new qualifications.

The changes will be phased in between 2028 and 2030, ensuring that students and educators are well-prepared.

Do you agree that the proposed changes will improve the credibility and coherence of the national senior secondary qualifications?

Choose one of the following:

I strongly disagree

☐

I somewhat disagree

☐

I am neutral

☐

I somewhat agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

I am unsure

☐

Answer the following question only if you **strongly disagree** or **somewhat disagree**:

- Describe any concerns you would have about the proposed changes improving the credibility and coherence of the national senior secondary qualifications.

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What other changes or supports (if any) do you think would be helpful to make sure you or your family member could successfully complete the new qualifications?

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Is there anything else you would like to say about the proposals?

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**Te Tāhuhu o  
te Mātauranga**  
Ministry of Education



**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government