



Groups and organisations: Questions for submitters on a proposal to replace NCEA.

English language

This document contains a list of questions for groups and organisations that are submitting on the Ministry of Education’s discussion document: Proposal to replace NCEA.

If you are submitting as an individual (not a group or organisation), refer to the Ministry’s website for the list of questions that are right for you.

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.

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 ‘about you’ section that are relevant to your group’s 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 or posted to:

Education Consultation

Ministry of Education
PO Box 1666
Wellington 6140
New Zealand

Public consultation closes at **5pm on Monday 15th 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Your personal details will remain confidential, will not be published or made publicly available, and will be used only for analysis purposes.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 or contact Dr Bo Ning at 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>

About your group or organisation

Improved coherence and consistency.

Fill in all the 'about you' questions before answering questions about the proposals.
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Your details will remain confidential and will be used only for analysis purposes. Any personal details you share will not be published or made publicly available.

Describe your group or organisation's interests in the NCEA changes

This submission is made by the New Zealand Forest Owners Association and Forest Industry Contractors Association Forestry Training Committee. One of the committee's key aims is to provide clear guidance from Forest owners and employers to government on the training needs of the forestry sector. Our committee is also made up of representatives from Nga Pou a Tane - The National Maori Forestry Association, and the New Zealand Farm Forest Association.

What is the name of your group or organisation?

Name: New Zealand Forest Owners and Forest Industries Contractors Association Forestry Training Committee

Where is your group or organisation located? Include the town, city, or area and the postcode.

If you do not have a registered address, write N/A.

Location: We operate nationwide. Our office is located at 93 The Terrace, Wellington, 6143.

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

Provide contact information.

Name: Joseph Brolly, Chief Operating Officer, New Zealand Forestry Owners Association

Email: joseph.brolly@nzfoa.org.nz

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:

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neutral

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

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.

What elements, if any, of NCEA's flexibility do you think should be retained in a future design of the qualifications?

- Retain dual enrolment. Make it a default option for all learners.
- Retain Trades Academies, Gateway and other Secondary to Tertiary Programmes.
- Retain flexibility to develop bespoke and relevant work-integrated and pre-employment subjects.

This question relates to the issues with the current system.

Do you agree that the current NCEA requirements do NOT consistently measure student knowledge, skills and readiness for future study, training or employment?

Choose one of the following:

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

- Which aspects of the current NCEA requirements do you think provide for a consistent measure of student knowledge, skills, and readiness?

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

- Which aspects of the current NCEA requirements do you think lead to an inconsistent measure of student knowledge, skills, and readiness?

Too much flexibility and choice with programs. Employers dont understand the qualifications.

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

Choose one of the following:

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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?

Stronger links between school subjects and employability skills. We suggest starting apprenticeships and work based learning at school.

Work on raising the status of vocational pathways. Many of these careers are highly paid and do not require a student loan.

The Government wants the senior secondary qualification 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:

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Clearer pathways from school the workplace. Qualifications more useful to learners and employers.
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.

- Seamless school to work interface with clear credentialing and pathways.

- All Year 12+ students need structured workplace learning linked to pathways.
- Include micro-credentials in VET subjects.

- Use vocational pathways as a curriculum design tool.

- Support driver licensing as a key enabler.

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? This proposal is that the government will work with industry to create Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects.

Choose one of the following:

Do not support it	Somewhat do not support it	Neutral	Support it	Strongly support it	Unsure
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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?
-
- Clearer pathways from school the workplace. Qualifications more useful to learners and employers.
-
- General and VET subjects must be equally valued.
-
- Ensure skills relevance .
-
- VET achievement should count toward secondary and tertiary qualifications.
-
- All Year 12+ students need structured workplace learning linked to pathways.

The government understands that investment is needed to make sure VET learning is a success. Aside from funding, are there practical or operational implications you think need to be considered for schools to successfully deliver VET subjects?

- Resource ISBs adequately for both development and ongoing roles.
- Engage industry as long-term partners. Use industry associations to help organise feedback.
- Provide specialist staff/facilities and engage employers.
- Ensure access to VET subjects for small/remote schools.

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?

Please choose one of the following:

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neutral | Somewhat agree | Strongly agree | Unsure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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

- Describe any concerns you have about the Foundational Award being able to prepare students 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 will have in supporting students to prepare for learning in Years 12 and 13.

Any improvement in literacy or numeracy performance is welcome by employers.

Improved coherence and consistency.

Type text here

Do you think 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.

Minimum attendance levels should be required.

Students should remain at school until the end of Year 12.

Employability skills and emerging future-focused skills should also be in the Foundational Award.

Year 11 subject mix should include taster VET subject options.

Most students will complete the New Zealand Certificate of Education in Year 12. Do you agree 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:

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neutral

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

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?

It's important for students to stay at school until the end of Year 12 to have a meaningful pathway to work and a better chance at developing a successful career.

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:

Do not support it

Somewhat do not support it

Neutral

Support it

Strongly support it

Unsure

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 to assessments at Years 12 and 13?

Potential employers and students will benefit from increased clarity around knowledge, skills, and capabilities. Current qualifications are too complex and confusing for employers to understand.

A subject based approach will equip students with a stronger understanding of the subject matter.

We welcome the change to letter grades and marks out of 100.

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:

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neutral

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Unsure

*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 think it is important to engage with the full curriculum for vocational and general subjects?

Its important to have flexibiliity for VET subjects to consist of the relevant mix of unit standards and/or microcredentials that connect with employment.

Year 11 subject mix should also include a taster of VET options.

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:

Do not support it

Somewhat do not support it

Neutral

Support it

Strongly support it

Unsure

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

- What are your concerns with 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?

A structured subject approach to Year 12 and 13 assesments will help improve coherence and consistency in both courses and qualifications and improve the credibility and usefulness of qualifications to employers.

Aside from additional funding, what practical resources and supports do you think will be important for learners and schools when shifting to a subject approach?

-
-
-
-
-
- Clearer pathways from school the workplace. Qualifications more useful to learners and employers.
 - All Year 12+ students need structured workplace learning linked to pathways.

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 agree that the proposed achievement requirements for the new qualifications are 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:

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neutral

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Unsure

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

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

Do you agree the four subject requirements should be achievable for most students?

Choose one of the following:

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neutral

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Unsure

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

- Describe your concerns about a four subject requirement not being achievable for most students.

Aside from additional funding, what other changes, supports, or mitigations do you think are needed to support strengthened achievement requirements?

Support the change back to letter grades and marks of out 100. This will be a cultural shift compared to the current model of either Achieved or Excellence.

The real world ranks and compares people, more robust and transparent grading will help equip learners better for the workplace.

Part 3: Implications and next steps

Improved coherence and consistency.

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 proposals will create better alignment between the curriculum and assessments when compared to NCEA?

Choose one of the following:

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neutral

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Unsure

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

- What concerns do you have about the proposals creating better alignment between the curriculum and assessments when compared to NCEA?

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

Choose one of the following:

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neutral

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Unsure

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

- What concerns do you have about the proposals improving credibility and coherence of the national senior secondary qualifications?

Aside from additional funding, what further changes or resources do you think would be helpful to make sure students can successfully complete the new qualifications?

With appropriate resources, do you agree that the proposed timeline is achievable? The proposed timeline includes introducing the Foundational Award in 2028 and the two new senior secondary qualifications in 2029 and 2030 for Years 12 and 13 respectively.

Choose one of the following:

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neutral

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Unsure

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

- What concerns do you have about the proposed timeline being achievable and what do you think is a reasonable timeline?

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



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



**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government