

A who's who of NCEA

The people involved:

MoE: The Ministry of Education is the government department that sets the policy and curriculum for learning.

NZQA: The New Zealand Qualifications Authority is the government department that manages the assessment for qualifications.

Schools' Relationship Manager: One person in NZQA is assigned to each school to monitor their assessment activities.

Principal's Nominee: one person in each school is assigned to be the contact for all NZQA communications.

Exam Centre Manager: A person independent of the school is appointed by NZQA to run the external assessments.

The important documents involved:

Assessment Guidelines: this leaflet informs students about the expectations for assessment activities.

Course Information leaflets: give information about the assessment activities in each course.

NZQA web page: gives information about each standard as well as entries and results <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz>

Course Selection booklet: explains the options and the pathways for learning and assessment at each level.

NCEA – Information for Parents

The letters **NCEA** stand for the

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

During years 11 – 13 all students are working towards earning a Level Certificate; in most cases Level 1 is achieved in Year 11, Level 2 in Year 12 and Level 3 in Year 13. However, during these three years, NCEA will become far more than just a certificate on a piece of paper with a name and an official stamp. Three features stand out

1. Studying for NCEA involves working within a **QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE**. All assessment work contributes towards the same qualifications.
2. All achievement is recognised in the **RECORD of LEARNING**. Assessment success is recorded through the school and sent electronically to NZQA in Wellington. This can be accessed on the internet and printed by students at any time. The Record of Learning is possibly the most valuable document to use when preparing a CV (Curriculum Vitae).
3. Assessment for NCEA is judged against a set of criteria in a system that is called "**STANDARDS BASED ASSESSMENT**". This means students know from the start what is being assessed and how it will be assessed.

STANDARDS

.... are units of work that are assessed to give credits towards a certificate.

When a standard is successfully completed students are given credits or points towards their certificate. The outcome is determined by the results of an assessment activity.

Each standard is either completed and assessed in class during the school year (**internal**) or is assessed by an exam at the end of the year (**external**).

Standards have been designed with two different formats:

- **UNIT STANDARDS** – these are based on assessing a skill which can either be achieved or not achieved. The skills are identified by 'elements' within the standards which all have to be achieved to gain the credits.
- **ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS** – these are based on assessing broad concepts or processes which can be achieved at different levels; excellence, merit, achieved or not achieved. The concepts are identified by criteria for each level which need to be met. The credits are the same for all three achieved grades and the grade is recorded to be used for ranking.

Standards Based Assessment recognises achievement

COURSES

..... are groups of standards that make up a year's work in one subject.

→ A course is usually worth 20 credits from five or six standards. Each standard is completely independent of the other standards within a course so students who do not achieve one particular standard can still gain credits by achieving another standard in the same course.

→ Both types of standards count equally towards a certificate – so in a course that is made up of Unit Standards the credits that are earned contribute in the same way as those from a course made up of Achievement Standards. Many courses have a mixture of Unit and Achievement Standards. However, as you can gain the 'Merit' or 'Excellence' grades from Achievement Standards, these have a greater academic emphasis and commonly make up courses that lead on to University programmes.

At Lynfield College courses are designed to meet different learning needs within our student population. By offering more or less standards or adjusting the balance of Unit and Achievement Standards, a variety of courses can be offered in any subject area.

eg 11MAX, 11MAT, 11MAP, 11MXA in Maths.

(Refer to the Course Selection Booklet)

Differentiated courses meet varied learning needs

The Record of Learning shows all the achievements

QUALIFICATIONS

..... are earned when enough credits or specific standards have been achieved to meet the requirements that have been set by NZQA. Each certificate is a paper document only and does not determine if someone moves on to the next level or not.

→ An NCEA certificate is gained when 80 credits at that level (or higher) have been earned. For levels 2 and 3, any 20 credits from the previous level can be used to count towards the certificate. The most useful qualification is the one that students leave school with. The option structure at Lynfield College allows students to select a programme with multi level courses. This means a Yr 12 student may complete Level 1 courses while studying at Level 2 in others.

→ University Entrance is not an NZQA qualification but it is an award that uses the outcome of Level 3 standards to meet the requirements set by the University.

(Refer to the Course Selection Booklet)

The single most significant document a student gains from NZQA is a **Record of Learning**. This shows all the standards at all levels that have been achieved and therefore demonstrates both the achievement and the progression of learning.