

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) at Diocesan

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NCEA works to provide school leavers with the knowledge and skills to succeed in international settings. It is highly-regarded worldwide for challenging all students, including the most able and highly motivated.

NCEA standards are derived from the New Zealand Curriculum, which focuses on learning by inquiry, critical thinking, problem solving and processing information.

This complements our teaching and learning philosophy at Diocesan, which encourages learners who are open to challenge, willing to develop their abilities and achieve their personal best, take risks and accept mistakes, make ethical decisions and enjoy learning.

Who is the New Zealand Qualifications Authority?

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) ensures that New Zealand qualifications are regarded as credible and robust, nationally and internationally, in order to help learners succeed in their chosen endeavours and to contribute to New Zealand society.

How NCEA works

NCEA is a standards-based system. Assessment standards describe what students have to achieve to gain credits. Credits are awarded for each standard achieved per subject.

Assessment

Separate standards are used to assess different areas of knowledge and skills so students get a separate result for each aspect of each subject. Their results describe their strengths and weaknesses in detail.

There are two types of standards – unit standards and achievement standards.

Achievement standards are assessed in two ways. Internal assessments are tested in school and cover individual standards, while external assessments may come as an examination that covers a set of standards. Generally subjects will use a combination of these two approaches.

Grades for achievement standards are: Achieved (A) for a satisfactory performance, Merit (M) for a very good performance, Excellence (E) for excellent performance or Not Achieved (N) if the standard requirements are not met.

Unit standards are internally assessed and students can either achieve the required standard of performance (A) or not achieve it (N). Unit standards are offered for a limited number of subjects at Diocesan.

Gaining NCEA certificate

Level 3	60 credits at Level 3 or above	plus 20 credits at Level 2 or above
Level 2	60 credits at Level 2 or above	plus 20 credits at any level
Level 1	80 credits at Level 1 or above	

To gain a Level 1 certificate, 80 credits are required at Level 1 or above, including literacy and numeracy requirements.

A Level 2 certificate requires 80 credits – 60 credits at Level 2 or above and 20 credits at any level.

The Level 3 certificate requirement is 80 credits – 60 credits at Level 3 and 20 credits at Level 2 or above.

Endorsements

NCEA endorsements reflect high achievement. There are two types of endorsement: certificate endorsement and course endorsement.

Certificate endorsements are gained when more than 50 credits are achieved with Merit or Excellence within a level. A Year 11 student gaining more than Level 1 50 Excellence credits (regardless of the year they are gained) would gain Level 1 NCEA with Excellence.

Course endorsements are awarded for individual subjects if, in a single year, more than 14 credits are achieved with Merit or Excellence.

Multi-leveilling

At Diocesan, able students can take higher Level standards and subjects.

All students take some NCEA Level 1 standards in Year 10, with some taking entire subjects. This continues through Year 11 and 12, with students taking higher level standards and subjects where they are capable. In Year 13 some students complete university papers alongside their NCEA standards.

Multi-leveilling is flexible and caters to students' strengths. A student who is very good at mathematics but not so good at English could be in courses that offer Level 2 credits in mathematics and Level 1 credits in English.

Curriculum

Level 1 students take six subjects: the three core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science as well as any three other subjects.

Level 2 students take English as a compulsory subject and pick four or five other subjects, with Mathematics being strongly recommended.

Level 3 students choose any five subjects.