



Frequently Asked Questions

From May 2021 Teacher Only Days

Literacy and Numeracy - General

Q: Why is there not an oral language component to the literacy standards?

A: Based on the advice we received from our literacy, numeracy, te reo matatini and pāngarau experts, oracy is currently included in the Māori-medium standards but not in the English-medium standards. There were a few different reasons for this, the biggest being that there is currently no explicit Curriculum progression for oral language skills in English-medium. We will continue to review the inclusion of oral language as the New Zealand Curriculum is refreshed.

Q: How do we value oral and visual literacies when the literacy standard only includes reading and writing?

A: We agree that teaching and learning should come before assessment, but also know that it is not necessary or appropriate to assess everything that is taught (and learned). Accordingly, we have consulted with literacy experts to determine which competencies should be assessed at this level to ensure learners are equipped to go onto further learning, life and work. While oracy and visual literacy is not currently part of the standards for those being assessed in English, they remain important to embed in teaching and learning. It's important to note that the new co-requisite Literacy and Numeracy and Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau standards are designed to recognise important foundation skills as part of the qualification and will help to ensure that all learners leave school with those foundation skills.

Q: How will the standards and assessment for Literacy and Numeracy in English medium reflect Mana Ōrite mō te Mātauranga Māori ?

A: All standards documents for Literacy and Numeracy recognise that equipping learners with foundational literacy and numeracy skills in Aotearoa New Zealand means empowering them to navigate and participate a society with bicultural foundations. The Unpacking Literacy and Numeracy documents set out how the outcomes of the standards correspond to the Tātaiako and Tapasā frameworks and are a good starting point to support your teaching and learning.

Q: Can you do Te Reo Matatini and Pāngarau if you are not fluent in Te Reo Māori?

A: The Reo Matatini benchmark requires a learner to demonstrate Māori language competency at approximately Taumata 4/5 of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa. You can find more information on our website <https://ncea.education.govt.nz/te-reo-matatini>. The pāngarau standard requires a learner to demonstrate "te reo matatini o te pāngarau" - the language of pāngarau. This means that there will be some level of language proficiency required. The exact requirements are being defined as the assessment specifications are drafted this year and will be refined following the pilot and any feedback we hear.

Q: Is Te Reo Matatini and Pāngarau specifically for Māori-medium or can it be incorporated in English medium?

Learners are able to access either set or standards, or both, regardless of the setting they are in. Ultimately it is up to each school to determine how best to integrate Te Reo Matatini, Pāngarau, Literacy and Numeracy teaching and learning into their local curriculum, according to what is best for their context. We will be working with our pilot schools this year (which include two bilingual units in kura auraki) to find out how different schools are approaching it, and what insights we might be able to share with other schools.

Q: Can a student do both Literacy & Numeracy, and then also Te Reo Matatini & Pāngarau? Will all 4 be acknowledged on their Record of Achievement?

A: A learner can do both literacy and numeracy and te reo matatini me te pāngarau. All four will be acknowledged on their Record of Achievement. Learners can also choose to mix and match.

Q: What happens if a learner just passes the reading or just passes the writing?

A: They only have to re-sit the one they did not pass. Learners will have all standards completed on their record, but they will need to achieve all standards in the literacy and numeracy corequisite to receive an NCEA.

Q: Why does Literacy have 5 reading and 5 writing, while Numeracy and Te Reo Matatini are 10 credits each?

A: Māori-medium experts told us that for Te Reo Matatini, assessment must remain holistic. For Literacy, our experts advised us that while the reading and writing skills are interlinked (and teaching and learning should reflect this), reading and writing should be assessed separately in order to get an accurate picture of learners' abilities in each, and scaffold those skills appropriately.

Q: Will the current unit standards still exist as a way of meeting literacy and numeracy requirements?

A: The intention is for the new package of literacy and numeracy standards to replace all current methods of meeting the literacy and numeracy requirement from 2023. This includes the current suite of unit standards that are linked to the Learning Progression Frameworks for Adult Literacy and Numeracy. We are aware that external assessment in tertiary settings may require a longer change process so will monitor whether the current unit standards can still be used as an interim measure in tertiary settings.

Q: We're uncertain if these new standards are intended to be taught by all subjects or by English and Maths teachers?

A: Ultimately it is up to each school to decide their local curriculum, including how they will support their learners in strengthening their literacy and numeracy skills. However, we know that literacy and numeracy instruction works best when embedded across the curriculum and not just in the English and Maths class. In order to deepen learning in each subject, it is also important for learners to engage with the disciplinary literacies and numeracies of that learning area.

We therefore encourage all teachers to engage with resources, tools, and PLD so that they can upskill themselves and become more confident at recognising the literacy and numeracy learning that is found across subject areas, and actively develop learners' skills.

Q: Do students need to do English and Maths if they achieve literacy and numeracy?

A: Literacy and numeracy are the foundational skills that learners need in order to be able to fully engage in NCEA. They do not replace English and Maths as subjects. We expect learners to continue developing their literacy and numeracy skills during their time at school - not just in English and Maths, but across the whole curriculum and as they progress through NCEA Levels 1, 2, and 3.

Q: Do we know what the requirements for University Entrance literacy and numeracy will look like?

A: Universities set their own literacy and numeracy requirements. This means that the new NCEA literacy and numeracy standards will not by default impact or replace university entrance requirements. We will work with Universities New Zealand to understand the relationship between the new standards and university requirements and they work through this.

Q: With the introduction of the new literacy/numeracy standards, will literacy and numeracy be removed from all other subject standards at all levels?

A: The short answer is no. The new Literacy & Numeracy standards are at Level 4/5 of the Curriculum; a foundational level that prepares learners to engage in NCEA learning at higher curriculum levels where literacy and numeracy will progress in subject-specific contexts. Ultimately it is up to each school to decide their local curriculum, including how they will support their learners in strengthening their literacy and numeracy skills. However, we know that literacy and numeracy instruction works best when embedded across the curriculum (and not just in English and Maths class). In order to deepen learning in each subject, it is also important for learners to engage with the disciplinary literacies and numeracies of that learning area. We therefore encourage all teachers to engage with resources, tools, and PLD so that they can upskill themselves and become more confident at recognising the literacy and numeracy learning that is found across subject areas, and actively develop learners' skills.

Q: When do the standards become mandatory? What will happen to a student who is sitting level 1 in 2023? or level 2/3? will they need to also sit the numeracy/literacy standards?

A: The Level 1 subjects will go live in 2023, with a staggered roll-out after that (e.g. the Level 2 subjects are due to go live in 2024, and Level 3 in 2025). From 2023 onwards, the literacy and numeracy standards become a mandatory part of NCEA. This means that from 2023, a learner must achieve the literacy and

numeracy co-requisite in order to be formally awarded their NCEA qualification at Level 1. Learners must achieve the corequisite to receive an NCEA Level 2 from 2024, and an NCEA Level 3 from 2025.

Learners who are sitting level 1 in 2023 will need to sit the numeracy and literacy standards. Learners in Levels 2 and 3 in 2023 will be completing the current NCEA, and so will not need to complete the new standards. NCEA Level 2 will change in 2024 and Level 3 will change in 2025. To help to set you and your school up for this implementation year, you might be interested in piloting the standards in 2022 with your Year 9s and 10s. More information on this pilot will be available <https://ncea.education.govt.nz> later this year.

Q: Will support be provided at the primary end of the pathway to support literacy and numeracy?

A: Literacy and numeracy learning begins from early learning right across the learning pathway. There are currently a range of tools and resources that support the primary end of the pathway with literacy and numeracy, such as the Learning Progressions Framework and Reading Recovery. We also anticipate that the introduction of the new unit standards will allow for greater clarification on a shared understanding of foundational literacy and numeracy – something that will support the primary teachers and learners. The Ministry is also developing a whole of pathway strategy for literacy and numeracy that will strengthen support at all levels of the Curriculum in the years to come.

Q: Will there be spelling and grammar checks available for the assessment tasks, particularly if the tasks are digital?

A: The assessment tasks are under development, but it is unlikely that there will be spelling and grammar checks available for the digital assessment of literacy. It is important for learners that the paper assessments have the same demands and assessment conditions as digital assessments, so we are evaluating this in our process. Sample assessments will be available for you to view before Term 3.

Q: There seems to be to us an inconsistency between the ELLP and what is required

A: The Literacy standards have been aligned with the English Language Learning Progressions upper stage 3, lower stage 4. We have had experts in English Language Learners involved in the standards and assessment development process and we will continually be evaluating the inclusivity of the standards for our English Language Learners.

Q: How will schools collate numeracy and literacy data from year 9?

A: There is no requirement to collate data for the new literacy and numeracy standards, however this will likely be helpful for your school. We are encouraging schools to understand learners' readiness for the standards before they attempt the assessment tasks, so that they only sit the assessment when they are ready. There are digital tools that you can use to help collect data on this such as the Progress and Consistency Tool (PaCT) and e-asTTle. These can be used up until Year 10 at this point in time.

Q: If students choose to stop studying Maths at the end of Year 10 and have their Numeracy credits, can schools insist that they cannot enter other STEM subjects without studying Maths at Level 6?

A: It is ultimately up to each individual school to decide their local curriculum, including the subjects they offer, and how they determine learner readiness for those subjects. We encourage you to think about what

will be most equitable to your learners, noting that a big focus of the NCEA Change Programme is to ensure that learners are well supported to access a variety of future pathways. This is why we are reaffirming NCEA Level 1 as a broad, foundational level, that does not cause learners to specialise or be cut off from certain pathways too early.

Q: How will the transition between the current and new requirements work for learners?

A: If learners are participating in either of the 2021 or 2022 Literacy & Numeracy pilots, they can use the new literacy and numeracy standards to meet the requirements of their NCEA. If they do not achieve the new standards, they can still meet the requirements through the current avenues (e.g. the achievement standards).

From 2023, there will be a staggered roll-out. This means: Learners who are doing Level 1 in 2023 will need to sit the new standards to meet the co-requisite and be awarded their NCEA. The switch-over happens for Level 2 in 2024, and for Level 3 in 2025. We do note, however, that if a learner (for example) only achieves their Numeracy and not their Literacy, they would only have to re-sit the Literacy.

Literacy & Numeracy – The Standards

Q: Where can I access the literacy and numeracy standards?

A: The new Literacy and Numeracy unit standards can be accessed on <https://ncea.education.govt.nz> under the tab 'Literacy & Numeracy | Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau'

Q: How will you ensure that the external assessment is inclusive for all learners, particularly Māori learners?

A: The assessment method for each set of standards is currently being developed, based on the advice we have received from experts across the sector who considered a variety of factors, such as inclusivity, pedagogy, scalability and consistency of assessment, teacher resources and readiness. A key focus of the assessment (including the Common Assessment Activities) are for them to be inclusive, and for items and contexts to empower Māori and Pacific learners. This will be tested through our pilots (both the narrow pilot this year and the wider pilot in 2022) and we will continue to work to ensure that all learners are able to access the assessment methods that are most appropriate for them.

Q: What does Mana Ōrite mō te Mātauranga Maori look like in the literacy standard? What would an example look like?

A: Mana Ōrite mō te Mātauranga Māori for literacy and numeracy will look different across the curriculum and across settings. Ultimately, it is about empowering Māori learners and embedding mātauranga in the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy. A great starting point is the Tātaiako Framework. The 'Unpacking Literacy' document sets out how the Tātaiako Framework can be used to support literacy in your classroom.

Q: What level of literacy will students need to be able to succeed in the numeracy standards?

The new standards have been developed to reflect Curriculum Level 4/5. This means that learners have control of Level 4 and are ready to work at Level 5. Working through the Learning Matrices and Unpacking documents will help you to understand more about this level. The Learning Progressions Framework is also a useful tool that illustrates learning steps of literacy and numeracy.

Q: If, for example, a student achieves some of the Performance Criteria outcomes, but not all in a particular test session, do they only have to pass the ones they did not achieve in the next test? Or do they have to pass the test in its entirety each time?

A: Learners will be required to achieve the standard in its entirety each time they sit the assessment. This means that all Performance Criteria will need to be met when a learner sits the standards.

Q: When students access the external assessment for Literacy and/or Numeracy, they can take as much time as they like. What does this mean? How much time?

A: Each standard has been drafted to result in approximately 60 minutes of work for the average learner. However, this year we are piloting setting no time limit for the assessment. This will mean that learners will have unlimited time to complete the assessment, but it must be in one sitting and they must be supervised in assessment conditions. We will be monitoring equity of the assessments in this year's pilot and making any necessary adjustments in the following year.

Literacy & Numeracy - Common Assessment Activity

Q: Will the assessment be externally assessed and marked or internally assessed and externally marked?

A: The standards are external standards. This means that the assessment tasks will be externally set by NZQA and they will also be marked by NZQA. Schools will be responsible for the supervision of the assessment.

Q: How will I know when learners are ready?

A: Schools and kura will each have their own strategies for determining learners' readiness. There are a range of readiness tools that can be used to support this, including the Learning Progressions Framework (and PaCT), e-asTTLe, PATs, and LNAAT.

Q: How will the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy be incorporated into the classroom if learners are learning at differing paces?

A: Each school is responsible for how it implements its local curriculum, including how classes are composed and learners are supported. This is because you know your learners best, and we trust you to make good judgements based on best practice for your context.

However, we encourage literacy and numeracy skills that are embedded across the curriculum (i.e., not just in English and Maths class). We will also be releasing guidance on how to incorporate best practice teaching and learning strategies into the classroom and across a school. This will include how to use existing curriculum tools to do so (such as PaCT and e-asTTLe).

Q: Will the new assessment mean that teachers teach to the test?

A: While the standards assess particular skills through a Common Assessment Activity, the focus in the classroom should be on the teaching and learning. Our design process for the standards intentionally began by defining important literacy and numeracy skills. This is set out in the learning matrices. We encourage teachers to engage in the learning matrices and unpacking documents for an understanding of the learning that underpins the standards.

Q: Why do the te reo matatini and pāngarau standards include the option of portfolio assessment?

A: Our Māori-medium stakeholders advised that the te reo matatini and pāngarau standards should also have the option of portfolio assessment to be consistent with aromatawai. Our English-medium stakeholders advised that this option would create negative workload implications for students and teachers. We will be testing these decisions through our pilots (this year's narrow pilot and the wider 2022 pilot) to see what works best for different learners. This will help us to ensure that learners are given access to the most appropriate methods of assessment for them.

Q: Will Special Assessment Conditions be able to be accessed for the assessment?

A: We are currently working with NZQA to look at how specific SAC can be applied to these assessments while applying universal design principles to the assessments overall. It is important that learners are able to access the assessments while still being able to show what they know. Learners in pilot schools will be able to complete the first pilot common assessment activities this year, and we are looking at creative ways that these assessments can be more inclusive than external assessment has been in the past. For example, there will not be time limitations for the assessment.

Q: If the Common Assessment Activity is available three times a year, do we know when they will be?

A: Multiple assessment opportunities will be provided each year, although we haven't yet confirmed the exact timing of when each will be. The intention is that they will be spread across the year. Timing information will become available when the standards get closer to becoming fully implemented.

The intention of having multiple opportunities is to ensure that learners are able to sit the standards when they are ready, which may differ for different learners. We expect that learners will use tools and make judgement as to when a learner is ready. We discourage submitting students for the assessment repetitively without learning taking place in between and without an understanding that the learner is ready.

Q: Are the literacy and numeracy components being sat at the same time (i.e. 3 days total across the year) or separately (i.e. 6 days total across the year)?

A: Learners will need to complete a separate assessment for each standard and guidance around the timing of the assessment opportunities will be released as it becomes available. We are aiming for learners to have up to three opportunities a year to complete each assessment. If a learner achieves the standards on the first time, they will only need to complete one assessment for each standard. It would be possible to complete multiple assessments in one sitting, as most of them are estimated to take an hour, apart from te reo matatini which is estimated to take two hours (as it covers more learning). Learners may take longer than the estimated time if they need to.

Q: Will formative feedback be provided with results of the assessment?

A: We will have more information on how the results will be given back to you as we work through the pilot. The assessment writers are currently writing the first assessment for each standard, and we will have more information about pass levels once this is completed, estimated to be before Term 3.

Q: Will ākongā need to sit both Literacy and Numeracy simultaneously?

A: We are currently developing the assessment and will be releasing sample tasks later in the year. Learners will need to complete a separate assessment for each standard. Guidance around the timing of the assessment opportunities will also be released as it becomes available. In the meantime, we can confirm that ākongā will need to achieve both Literacy and Numeracy components to meet the new requirements, however, if they (for example) achieve Numeracy and not Literacy, they only need to re-sit Numeracy.

Q: I see that the assessment of the standards is taking a digital-first approach. Will answers be machine-marked? How will this work?

A: The assessments will be delivered through a digital-first approach. This means that there will be a preference for digital assessment, but schools will be able to opt into non-digital assessment. As the assessment tasks are designed, the potential for automated marking will be explored in very limited circumstances (for example, items with definitive answers/multi-choice only). If assessment items are automatically marked, the items will be designed by experts and undergo a quality assurance process. This process should ensure that valid answers are recognised. It is likely that not all types of questions will be able to be automatically marked.

Q: Will the Literacy and Numeracy CAAs be completed in open-book conditions?

A: The CAA will be completed in closed-book conditions. A ruler and calculator will be allowed for Numeracy. We are testing these requirements in this year pilot and consider if these conditions should change going forward.

Q: When will we see the literacy & Numeracy external papers? What will this look like?

A: The Literacy & Numeracy unit standards are available to view now on <https://ncea.education.govt.nz/>. The external assessment tasks for the 2021 pilot are currently being developed and will be released later this year. However, we will be releasing sample assessment items in June that will give an indication of the format of the questions.

Q: If a student is able to demonstrate competence in some but not all of the content ideas in numeracy during one assessment opportunity, do they need to be able to demonstrate competence in the same content ideas again when they attempt the assessment at another time?

Y: The short answer is yes, though it does depend on how much that "some" is. Competency in the seven Content Ideas for Numeracy will be assessed on balance within the same assessment opportunity. However, if they do not achieve the Numeracy standard overall, they will have to resit the whole standard at the next opportunity. We encourage teachers to understand and keep track of their learners' progress so that they only sit the assessment when they are ready. We will be compiling more resources and tools to help with readiness in the coming years.

Q: Will the assessment for the numeracy standard be one hour? Do we know this sort of detail yet?

A: Learners will have as much time as they need to complete the assessment, as long as they can be supervised in assessment conditions. NZQA will not be imposing a time limit on the assessment, so it will be at the school's discretion. You will have information on the estimated time it would take to complete the assessment, and we are encouraging generous time to be allowed for all learners. We will have this information available before Term 3.

Q: Will writing be done in authentic contexts or as a written test? If done in authentic contexts, will it be able to be produced within different learning areas?

A: The English-medium standards are being assessed through a Common Assessment Activity, meaning that it will be completed in assessment conditions. The assessments are in development, but we are exploring how learners can be encouraged to bring what they are interested in to the writing assessments so that they will be writing about a context that is relevant for them, including what they have learnt in different curriculum areas.

Literacy & Numeracy - Pilots

Q: If we opt into the 2022 pilot, can we choose to do this with only part of the appropriate level cohort or do all of our eligible students need to be part of the pilot? For example, could we trial it with some of our Y10 students but not our Y11 students, etc.?

A: We are currently in the process of planning what the 2022 pilot looks like. At this stage the pilot would be open to how it works best for your school. More information will be available on ncea.education.govt.nz later this year.

Literacy & Numeracy - “Credits”

Q: What Level are the Literacy and Numeracy credits at? I know they don't count towards any of the qualifications, but are rather a co-requisite, so are they then like "Level 0" credits?

A: The credits are nominally tied to Level 1 of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (noting that NZQF Level 1 is a "downwards open" level), but the curriculum level for the Literacy and Numeracy benchmark is Level 4/5 of the National Curriculum, where students have control of Level 4 and are ready to work at Level 5.

Q: Why do the credits for the standards not count towards the qualification? Why are they worth any credits at all?

A: Achieving the literacy and numeracy standards will be a co-requisite to the NCEA qualification, meaning that learners will need to achieve the standards in order to be awarded an NCEA.

They are worth credits that do not count towards a Level 1, 2, or 3 qualification because they reflect foundational skills that support learning at each of those levels. The standards are still worth credits for technical reasons. In order to credential learners for the learning and assessment they have completed, we need to give it a credit value and tie it a qualification on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. This also means that the standards could be used towards other qualifications.

We considered various options for credentialing the strengthened requirements, including creating a brand-new certificate, but have determined that this is the best option we currently have to credential learners for what they have achieved. (A certificate, for example, would be considered a separate qualification from NCEA, and we wanted to tie the new standards closely to NCEA.) Over the coming years, we will work with teachers, learners, whānau and communities to communicate the changes so that everyone can understand and get comfortable with the new changes.