

Frequently Asked Questions

2021 Final NCEA Subject Lists

We invited feedback on the NCEA subject proposals for *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Levels 2 and 3) and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* (Levels 1 to 3) between 16 June – 13 August.

The final NCEA subject lists are now available. This sheet contains answers to the questions we hear most with regards to the subject changes.

Glossary

- The *New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)*- the curriculum for schools that use English as the primary language for instruction.
- *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (TMOA)* - the curriculum for schools that use te reo Māori as the primary language for instruction.

These are the confirmed subjects for NCEA:

- [The New Zealand Curriculum NCEA subjects Level 2 & 3 \[PDF\]](#)
- [Te Marautanga o Aotearoa NCEA subjects Level 1, 2 & 3 \[PDF\]](#)

Background information

- [About NCEA | NCEA \(education.govt.nz\)](#)
- [About NCEA subjects](#)
- Link here to [Frequently asked questions](#)
- Link here to [June 2021 press release: NCEA subjects](#)
- Link here to learn more [about NCEA | NCEA \(education.govt.nz\)](#)

NCEA Final Subject Lists - Questions and Answers

1	Why are there changes to NCEA subjects?	<p>The final NCEA subject lists are designed to support high quality and relevant learning.</p> <p>Through the final subject lists, we aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• support clearer pathways into further education and employment• allow ākonga to specialise in their final years of school• help ensure mātauranga Māori has equal status in NCEA.
2	Was there much public interest in the subject proposals?	<p>During the eight-week period of public engagement on the subject proposals, the Ministry received 2024 online survey responses, 20 written submissions, and feedback from 15 special interest group face-to-face engagements.</p> <p>The NZC Arts and Technology Learning Areas attracted the most discussion during public engagement.</p> <p>Visit here for more information about NCEA subjects.</p>
3	How were the final subject lists decided?	<p>Extensive feedback was received during public engagement on the NCEA subject proposals which took place between 16 June and 13 August 2021.</p> <p>When confirming which subjects to recommend to the Minister we considered this feedback, the objectives and principles of the NCEA changes, and factors such as workload and resourcing.</p> <p>The final subject list was developed based on both public engagement feedback and a consideration of how subjects aligned with the policy intent of increasing specialisation at</p>

		NCEA Levels 2 and 3. For example, reintroducing Painting as a standalone subject and developing only two of the proposed new <i>TMoA</i> subjects (Te Reo Pākehā and Toi Whakairo).
4	The Ministry proposed 78 subjects in total. Why are there only 67 subjects on the final combined list?	<p>The Ministry has confirmed 56 subjects derived from <i>The New Zealand Curriculum</i> and 11 subjects derived from <i>Te Marautanga o Aotearoa</i>.</p> <p>We are developing the subjects that support high quality and relevant learning, have the strongest support, and will be the most straightforward to develop and implement.</p> <p>These subjects reflect policy objectives for increasing specialisation at NCEA Levels 2 and 3, Mana ōrite mo te mātauranga Māori, ensuring clear pathways into further education and employment, and consideration of sector concerns about resourcing and capability, particularly with regards to new and refocused subjects.</p> <p>The final subjects reflect a balance of meeting the policy objectives of increasing specialisation at NCEA Levels 2 and 3, Mana ōrite mō te mātauranga Māori, and ensuring clear pathways into education and employment. Also taken into consideration were sector concerns about resourcing and capability – particularly with regards to new and refocused subjects – and in the case of <i>TMoA</i> subjects, the appropriate reflection of te ao Māori approaches to teaching, learning, and assessment.</p> <p>For <i>NZC</i>, for instance, there was strong support to redevelop existing unit standard courses (Tourism, Outdoor Education) as achievement standard subjects to provide better pathways for ākonga.</p> <p>As part of our engagements with the Māori-medium peak bodies, we heard that kura have had limited capacity to engage with and support the development of new subjects and will require a longer timeframe for considering the development of additional subjects derived from Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.</p> <p>For <i>TMoA</i>, the above meant developing only two of the proposed new <i>TMoA</i> subjects (Te Reo Pākehā and Toi Whakairo). Four proposed new subjects – Hangarau Matihiko, Hākinakina, Mau Rākau and Raranga – are deferred and outside the scope of the planned Review of Achievement Standards, subject to future decisions, and Tauhokohoko and Te Hītori o Aotearoa are not recommended for development at this time, reflecting sector feedback.</p> <p>By taking a phased approach, we will ensure that resourcing is sufficient to support high-quality delivery within classrooms, and that mātauranga Māori bodies of knowledge are being identified and assessed appropriately within an NCEA framework. Kura are playing a central role in determining which subjects are of greatest priority to ākonga Māori, their whānau, hapū, iwi and hapori.</p>
5	When will the subject changes be in schools and kura?	We are working towards most of the subject changes being implemented in schools by 2023 (Level 1), 2024 (Level 2) and 2025 (Level 3).
6	Will all the subjects on the list be available at my school?	No. Schools will select achievement standards from the final subjects and build courses that will work best for their communities.
7	Can ākonga earn credits for subjects that aren't on the final subject list?	This is the list of NCEA subjects that will have achievement standards developed by the Ministry. A wide range of unit standards will still be available for learning in disciplines and areas that are not on the list. All learning assessed with standards at the appropriate level can count towards NCEA.

		<p>Ākonga do not have to participate in all the achievement standards in the subject to gain credits, but we anticipate that credit thresholds for course endorsements will remain in place.</p> <p>You can talk to your local school to understand the credits that are available for ākonga in the courses they plan to take.</p>
8	<p>Why offer a small number of new mātauranga Māori subjects when there was strong support for more?</p>	<p>We are confirming a relatively small number of new subjects for immediate development that are grounded in te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mau Rākau and Whaiora as new <i>NZC</i> subjects • Te Reo Pākehā and Toi Whakairo as new <i>TMoA</i> subjects. <p>By taking a phased approach, we will ensure that resourcing is sufficient to support high-quality delivery within classrooms, and that mātauranga Māori bodies of knowledge are being identified and assessed appropriately within an NCEA framework. Kura are playing a central role in determining which subjects are of greatest priority to ākonga Māori, their whānau, hapū, iwi and hapori.</p>
9	<p>How will the changes to Level 3 subjects impact on University Entrance?</p>	<p>We will work with NZQA and Universities New Zealand on the new Level 3 subjects, and how they relate to University Entrance.</p> <p>The Ministry will develop all NCEA Level 3 subjects with the intention that all are suitable for UE accreditation.</p>
10	<p>How will these subject changes affect New Zealand Scholarship?</p>	<p>We will work with NZQA to confirm the New Zealand Scholarship subjects.</p> <p>The Ministry generally expects all NCEA Level 3 subjects to be offered as Scholarship subjects if a valid assessment can be designed. For new subjects, this may follow a year or so later.</p>
11	<p>Will these subjects give ākonga clearer pathways to further education or work?</p>	<p>We have worked to ensure that the subjects provide clear pathways to further education and employment. Some subjects have greater emphasis on applied learning.</p> <p>As we get the subjects ready, we will work with employers, industry, tertiary, ākonga, whānau and community groups to make sure learning is relevant and clear for ākonga and the people around them.</p>
12	<p>What support will be available or is planned to help schools implement the subject changes?</p>	<p>The Ministry will continue to work closely with subject matter experts and others in the sector to develop NCEA subjects, associated tools, and other resources for schools and kura.</p> <p>We are also increasing our on-the-ground support in the regions. This includes, for example, region-based Learning Area Leads and Advisors who will offer advice, guidance and tools to kaiako in their specialist learning areas.</p>
13	<p>Teachers are busy. How will the proposed subject changes impact on workloads?</p>	<p>We acknowledge that some adaptation will be required, and we are increasing on-the-ground support in the regions to help. In the long term, assessment workload will reduce.</p> <p>We are taking a phased approach to implementation and providing opportunities for feedback, so we can learn from the experiences of pilot schools, and others engaged in the development process. This will ensure a well-managed change process for all school communities.</p>