



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**AUCKLAND**  
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau  
NEW ZEALAND

**EDUCATION AND  
SOCIAL WORK**  
STARPATH | TE ARA WHETŪ



**Dargaville High School  
Year 11  
Understanding NCEA  
February 2017**

## Station 1: What is NCEA?

1. What does NCEA stand for?  
National Certificate of Educational Achievement
2. What do I need to do to pass NCEA Level 1?  
80 credits at Level 1  
Level 1 Literacy (10 credits)  
Level 1 Numeracy (10 credits)
3. What is an achievement standard?  
A set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria, related to a subject. There are both internal and external achievement standards. An achievement standard will measure a set of skills related to a subject that is part of the New Zealand Curriculum.
4. What's the difference between internal and external achievement standards?  
Internals are completed in class during the school year and marked by teachers.  
Externals are completed in examinations in November and December and marked by contractors for NZQA.
5. What is a unit standard?  
Small bits of learning and if you get enough of them you can get a national qualification. They count towards your NCEA results. Some subjects offer unit standards. Usually they are only assessed at Not Achieved or Achieved.
6. What is an endorsement?  
You can get a subject endorsement if you can 14 credits at Merit or Excellence (must include both one internal and one external)  
You can gain a certificate endorsement if you gain 50 credits or more at Merit or Excellence
7. What is a 'portfolio' subject?  
Subjects like Visual Art where external standards are worth a large number of credits (14 each, say for Art boards)
8. Is passing NCEA important if I am thinking about going to university?  
Yes because you need Level 3, Level 1 Literacy and Level 1 Numeracy to gain the University Entrance qualification which you need to go to university in NZ.
9. What are Special Assessment Conditions?  
These are for students who might need extra time to complete exams, or use a computer, or need breaks for medical reasons.

## Station 2: Literacy and Numeracy

1. What is Level 1 Numeracy and how can I get it?  
Achieving a minimum of 10 credits through either:
  - Achievement standards - [specified assessment standards](#) available through a range of subjects - (minimum total of 10 credits), or
  - Unit standards - package of three [numeracy unit standards](#) (total of 10 credits - **all** three required).
2. Do I need to pass Level 1 Numeracy to get NCEA Level 1 overall?  
YES
3. How can I get Level 1 Literacy?  
Achieving a minimum of 10 credits through either:
  - Specified assessment standards - [specified assessment standards](#) available through a range of subjects and [English for Academic Purposes unit standards 22750 and 22751](#) (minimum total of 10 credits), or
  - Unit standards - package of three [literacy unit standards](#) (total of 10 credits - **all** three required).
4. Do I need to pass Level 1 Literacy to get NCEA Level 1 overall?  
YES
5. What is UE Literacy?  
This is part of the University Entrance qualification, x10 credits (x5 in reading and x5 in writing)
6. Why is it important?  
You must have UE Literacy to get the University Entrance qualification in Year 13. You need it if you want to study at university.
7. How can I get UE Literacy?  
You need x5 credits in writing and x5 credits in reading at Level 2 or 3 from certain achievement standards, in a range of subjects (not only English). The list of subjects and standards is on the NZQA website:  
<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/awards/university-entrance/literacy-requirements/>
8. Who can help me or my parents with information about literacy or numeracy?  
Your academic counsellor, Ms Leach – Literacy Co-ordinator, your Dean, the Principal's Nominee

## Station 3: Marking of NCEA

1. How is NCEA marked?  
A number of credits (points) are allocated to each achievement standard (or unit standard). Grades are also awarded – Not Achieved, Achieved, Merit or Excellence, depending on the quality of the student's work.
2. Who marks internal assessments that I hand in during the year?  
Teachers at our school. It might be your subject teacher or it might be another teacher in that department.
3. What is the difference between Achieved, Merit and Excellence?  
The difference in a student's level of understanding. There are different criteria for each grade, which go with the achievement standard. Your teachers should make it clear to you what you need to do to gain Achieved, Merit and Excellence.
4. Who marks my external exams?  
People (teachers from all around NZ) employed by NZQA. They won't be marked by teachers from your school.
5. Are they marked differently from internals?  
YES. Every question in external exams is marked using this 9 point scale:  
N = 0-2  
A = 3-4  
M = 5-6  
E = 7-8
6. What happens if I am absent from an external exam?  
You can apply to NZQA for a 'derived' grade. This means that they will use the grades you've been awarded for the standard/s from practice exams at school. You can only apply for a derived grade if you have attempted the standard in school exams. This is one reason why school exams are very important!
7. What does 'moderation' mean?  
This means that internal assessments are checked by another marker. Not all assessments are moderated – only a sample from each class. This helps teachers to mark accurately to the marking criteria.
8. What should I do if I am unhappy with a grade I've been given for an internal standard?  
Firstly – speak to your teacher about your work. You are entitled to appeal the grade if you wish to – you will need to complete a form giving clear reasons why you are appealing the grade you were given.
9. Is there anything I can do if I am disappointed with the grade I get for an external exam? If so, what?  
Yes, once exam papers have been sent back to you in February you can apply for a 'reconsideration'. You should show your paper/s to your teacher and discuss it with them first. NZQA charge a fee for exam reconsideration. You will have to apply quickly – within a week of receiving your papers back.

10. Can I keep my assessments once they have been marked?

NO. They must be kept at school. A sample of assessments in every subject will be sent to NZQA every year for moderation (see question 6).

11. Can I resubmit my assessment if my teacher tells me it still needs more work to meet the criteria for Achieved, Merit or Excellence?

MAYBE. This depends on what the policy is in the subject area and school policy about NCEA. You should know before you submit your assessments if you will have this opportunity. If you don't know – ask your teacher or Head of Department.

12. What does 'reassessment opportunity' mean?

Schools have the choice of offering students who have failed to achieve an internal standard another opportunity to pass. This must be offered to ALL students who are entered for the standard. It is sometimes called a "resit".

## Station 4: NZQA Website Treasure Hunt

Access the website at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/>

1. What is an NSN number and how do I get one?  
A unique identification number called a National Student Number (NSN). It will be assigned to you by NZQA.
2. What is a Record of Achievement?  
A Record of Achievement (ROA) is an official transcript of all the national qualifications and standards that a person has ever achieved.
3. How do I access my Record of Achievement?  
You need to login to the NZQA website with your User Name/NSN and password.
4. Are there exam papers for externals that I can look at on the website? How do I find these?  
YES. Search by subject and level, click on the external achievement standard number and click on View All Documents.
5. What are exemplar answers on the NZQA website?  
In each subject, for every external achievement standard there will be exemplars of Not Achieved, Achieved, Merit and Excellence grades, with some comments from the examiner, for you can to use in revision time.
6. How could I set myself goals for NCEA and track my progress?  
You could use the NZQA App to do this:  
<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/audience-pages/students/ncea-app/>
7. How will I know the timetable for my external exams?  
The external exam timetable will be published on the NZQA website. School is also likely to give you a copy (probably your Academic Counsellor).  
It's very important to follow the timetable – if you turn up in the afternoon for an exam that was timetabled for the morning, you will not be allowed to sit the exam.
8. How will I get my results from my external exams?  
You should look online on the website from mid-January. You will need your username and password to access your results:  
<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/login/>
9. What is a Principal's Nominee (PN)? Who is this person at Dargaville High School (ask a teacher)?  
This is a person nominated by the Principal, to liaise with NZQA and complete tasks like reporting results from internal assessments and supporting the students and staff with NCEA matters.  
The Principal's Nominee at Dargaville High School is Mrs Troath.

10. Where could your parents, whanau or employers find more information about NCEA?

By using the NZQA website and/or the NCEA App:

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/audience-pages/students/ncea-app/>

It could be helpful for your parents to look at this:

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/publications/nzqa-brochures/>