

25 August 2021

E te rangatira, tēnā koe & warm Pacific greetings to all

Over the last week, community cases of COVID-19's Delta variant have caused disruption to thousands of secondary school students around New Zealand.

Because of this, we have agreed to change dates and processes around some assessments - including end of year exams and portfolio submissions.

As the whole country is in Alert Level 4, these date changes will apply across New Zealand.

End of year exams and portfolios

The dates for end of year NCEA and NZ Scholarship exams will be delayed by two weeks, to run from Monday 22 November until Tuesday 14 December. Due dates for portfolio submissions will also be pushed back by 2 weeks.

These two changes will give students and schools more time to prepare for the end of the year.

Schools will also not have to provide Level 1 or Level 2 Visual Arts portfolios for NZQA Verification. This also means there will be more time for students to finish their work, and for teachers to mark it.

Mathematics Common Assessment Task (MCAT) and Digital Technologies & Hangarau Matihiko Common Assessment Tasks (DigiCATs)

We are delaying the NCEA Level 1 Mathematics Common Assessment Task (MCAT) from 14 or 16 September for two weeks – to 28 or 30 September. This will give students who were due to sit the MCAT more time to prepare.

At this stage, the dates for DigiCATs remain 20 Sept – 1 Oct and 18 – 27 October.

Other changes

As the length of time we are likely to remain in lockdown becomes clearer, there are extra steps the Government may take, such as reintroducing Learning Recognition Credits, or making changes to the thresholds for Endorsements and University Entrance. We are working with the Minister's Professional Advisory Group and schools so that we would be in a position to implement them, depending on the duration of Alert Levels 3 and 4.

NCEA Change Programme Pilots

We are communicating separately with Pilot schools on changes to specific Pilot activities.

Existing flexibility and processes

Schools already have a lot of control over how they teach and assess students working towards NCEA. The Ministry of Education and NZQA are talking with schools about how teaching and learning can continue under Alert Levels 3 and 4, and how learning can be assessed while students are at home, or when they return to class.

As usual, if COVID-19 – or something else beyond their control – means a student is not able to sit their end of year exams, we have the well-established Derived Grade and unexpected event grade processes. Please make sure that, where possible, you are gathering evidence for Derived Grades and unexpected event grades.

Finally, we would both like to acknowledge the work you and your teams are doing to support your staff, students and wider school communities through this challenging time.

Ngā manaakitanga ki a tātou katoa. Kia haumaruru te noho.



Grant Klinkum
Chief Executive
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