

The number of credits assessed

Facts

- Students need a total of 80 credits for each NCEA qualification.
- Assessment programmes can be personalised to meet individual student needs. Some students may undertake less assessment, whilst others undertake more.
- The National Curriculum details what may be taught, but not everything needs to be assessed. Too much assessment can get in the way of learning.
- The school decides on the overall number of credits assessed in a year, by a student or group of students.
- The teaching programme should allow students to be assessed when they are ready.

Myths

- 'All students within a course must be assessed against the same standards.'
- 'All students should be assessed against every standard offered in a course.'
- 'A course must contain no more than 24 credits and no less than 18 credits.'

Some other things to think about

- A teaching programme should meet the requirements of the *New Zealand Curriculum* or *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*.
- An assessment programme should give students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning.
- Factors that might determine the amount of assessment undertaken include:
 - your school's assessment policy
 - the way in which evidence of achievement can be gathered
 - the number of credits needed to gain a qualification, course endorsement, University Entrance, or other tertiary entrance requirements
 - the number and type of credits required for Vocational Pathways.

Assessment practice and gathering evidence

Facts

- Students should be assessed when they are ready, where this is practical and manageable for the school.
- Assessment should enable students to have a fair opportunity to achieve.
- Assessment methods should not disadvantage particular learners, such as those entitled to special assessment conditions.
- Students in a class:
 - can complete different standards
 - do not need to be assessed for all the standards offered in the assessment programme.
- Different tasks and/or contexts can be used to assess individual students, as the teacher's judgement is against the standard.
- Evidence of achievement can be gathered in different ways, provided it meets the requirements of the standard, is authentic and can be verified. For example, evidence can be:
 - oral, digital, by a performance or practical
 - gathered over time as a portfolio
 - ongoing and integrated with learning
 - naturally occurring
 - gathered through observations and checklists
 - written.
- As each standard assesses a different learning outcome, authentic evidence generated during teaching and learning may be used for more than one standard. This can be within a subject or across subjects.
- Teachers can also:
 - use a single context to assess students against more than one standard
 - provide guidance on sufficiency of evidence
 - provide exemplars to show "what levels of achievement may look like"
 - review the number of credits in a programme of learning.

Some other things to think about

- Not all learning needs to be assessed. Assessment should not drive a learning programme.
- By assessing fewer standards students can "do less, better".
- The sufficiency of evidence needs to be appropriate to the standard.

Myths

- 'All students in a class must be assessed at the same time'
- 'Offering different standards, tasks or contexts to students in the same class:
 - is not permitted
 - provides an advantage to some
 - is not fair'
- 'Student assessment evidence:
 - can only be used for one standard; no 'double dipping' is allowed
 - must all be presented in the same way using the same context
 - must be in writing.'
- 'Portfolio evidence means that students have multiple assessment opportunities.'
- 'The more evidence produced, the better the grade.'
- 'Students can resubmit evidence for the same standard multiple times.'

Managing authenticity

Facts

- Publicly sourced assessment material must be changed. Changes can include:
 - specific figures or text
 - data sets or sources
 - contexts, topics or performance opportunities.
- Students do not need to complete the same assessment task and they do not need to be assessed at the same time. Some students may require a separate task or context to ensure authentic work is submitted.
- Tasks can be broken into group and individual components to identify individual evidence.
- Assessors can monitor the authenticity of student work as it is developed and during the marking process through:
 - regular check points
 - submission of plans and drafts
 - oral questioning to confirm understanding
 - requiring a repeat performance, if in doubt
 - being familiar with or controlling resources available
 - referencing and bibliographies
 - monitoring revision changes
 - using plagiarism software or internet searches of suspicious phrases.
- A 'Not Achieved' must be reported for proven breaches of authenticity that compromise a student's result.
- School policy will determine whether a proven breach of authenticity for internally assessed standards is an acceptable reason for a further assessment opportunity (Assessment Rules).

Myths

- 'Publicly available tasks can be used unmodified.'
- 'All students need to complete their assessment at the same time to ensure authenticity.'
- 'Group work cannot be assessed.'
- 'Authenticity checks are not necessary if an authenticity declaration is signed.'
- 'Digital assessment allows more opportunity for authenticity breaches.'
- 'You can withdraw a student's entry for a proven breach of authenticity.'

Some other things to think about

- Authenticity checks provide assurance that evidence produced is a student's own work.
- Inauthentic work may be a result of:
 - a lack of understanding of the assessment task or what constitutes inauthentic work and plagiarism
 - copying from another person or public source, or plagiarism
 - too much guidance from a teacher, assessor, parent or tutor
 - willingly sharing work with other students.

Resubmission

Facts

- A resubmission:
 - can only be offered to individual students to identify or correct a minor error preventing the award of a higher grade
 - must take place as soon as possible after the assessment has been completed
 - can only be offered where the teacher judges the student should be capable of discovering and correcting the minor errors themselves in a short period of time
 - can be offered after either the first or the one further assessment opportunity.
- If there are a lot of changes to be made, or they are significant, it is not a resubmission.
- Teachers must only give general feedback and must take care not to over-direct the students. They must ensure that students' work is authentic.
- Only one resubmission can be provided per assessment event.
- Further teaching and specific feedback cannot occur between the final submission date and the resubmission.
- A student must have access to any grade after a resubmission (Not achieved, Achieved, Merit and Excellence).
- The amount of time provided for a resubmission depends on the nature of the assessment and how authenticity can be assured.
- Resubmission rules for Industry Training Organisation owned unit standards may differ. You must follow the rules of the standard setting body.

Myths

- 'A resubmission must be offered to all students.'
- 'I can show students what they should fix up.'
- 'I can offer multiple resubmission opportunities.'
- 'A student cannot be awarded anything higher than Achieved for a resubmission.'
- 'All students should be given 30 minutes to complete their resubmission.'

Some other things to think about

- In managing resubmissions, all students need to be treated equitably.
- Teachers should use professional judgement to decide on a reasonable timeframe, bearing in mind that no further teaching or learning can take place prior to a submission.
- If the evidence is gathered by portfolio, or over an extended period, the use of checkpoints and feedback/feedforward will usually remove the need for a resubmission.

Further assessment opportunity

Facts

- Only one further assessment opportunity for each standard can be offered in a year.
- Schools can decide whether a further assessment opportunity is offered for any standard. It must be a manageable and practical decision for the school and it can be on a standard by standard basis. Students must be told upfront whether a further assessment opportunity is available for a standard.
- The further assessment opportunity can only be offered after further learning has taken place.
- A different activity or task must be offered for the further assessment opportunity.
- The further assessment opportunity must be offered to all students entered for that standard in that course, regardless of the grade that they achieved. Students do not need to take up the opportunity.
- A student must have access to all grades – Not Achieved, Achieved, Merit or Excellence – whether it is their first or subsequent attempt at the standard.
- The highest grade from either assessment opportunity is reported.
- Students can have one resubmission opportunity for each assessment – see Myth Buster #4.

Some other things to think about

- When determining whether or not to offer one further assessment opportunity, you should consider:
 - validity and fairness
 - student and teacher workload
 - whether the student has provided other authentic evidence elsewhere
 - your school's assessment policy.

Myths

- 'NZQA requires that a further assessment opportunity be offered for all standards that are assessed.'
- 'If you offer a further assessment opportunity for a standard, you must offer it for all standards.'
- 'A student cannot be awarded anything higher than Achieved for a further assessment opportunity.'
- 'You can offer more than one further assessment opportunity for the assessment of a standard.'
- 'A further assessment opportunity can only be offered when the student has received a 'Not achieved' grade.'
- 'If a further assessment opportunity is offered to one student, all students must undertake the assessment.'

Internal moderation

Facts

- Schools must undertake internal moderation each year to ensure that assessment materials meet the standard and that teacher judgements are consistent across tasks, classes, and years.
- A sample of student work from each standard assessed must be internally moderated every year.
- Schools must report only those internal assessment results which have been subject to an internal moderation process.
- Schools must have a documented internal moderation process to ensure reported results are consistent with the national standard.
- Evidence of grade verification can include:
 - annotated student work
 - records of discussions between teachers
 - the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.
- Schools can document their internal process in any way, including adopting or adapting the *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet*.
- Benchmark samples should be identified during the marking process and kept for future reference and decision making.
- Stored samples should be regularly updated.
- The subject leader is responsible for making sure that internal moderation occurs. Senior management is responsible for ensuring that all assessed standards are subject to internal moderation before results are reported.

Myths

- 'Every piece of student work needs to be verified.'
- 'Not all standards need to be internally moderated.'
- 'The *Internal Moderation Cover Sheet* must be used to document internal moderation.'

You can get a better understanding of the national standard through:

- Using standard-specific subject experts and colleagues in other schools to verify your grades.
- Active membership of professional associations.
- Using material on the Subject Resources pages on NZQA's website, such as clarification documents and annotated exemplars.
- Participating in Best Practice Workshops.
- Use of Te Kete Ipurangi or commercial material you can critique yourself.
- Referring to benchmark samples from previous years to maintain consistency.
- Use of trade marked Quality Assured Assessment Materials (QAAM) and other NZQA-approved materials.

Selection of work for external moderation

Facts

- The external moderation random sample is selected once internal moderation is complete.
- NZQA requires a random sample for external moderation comprising:
 - eight pieces of student work for standards for which more than one passing grade is available (i.e. Achieved, Merit or Excellence)
 - four pieces of student work for standards for which the only grade is Achieved.
- For external moderation, schools need to store only the randomly selected samples for each standard assessed. These should be kept until the standard is next assessed, or for two years.
- A standard will not be selected for external moderation if it has not been assessed in the last two years.
- Digitally generated or stored student evidence can be submitted online for external moderation.

Myths

- 'The samples randomly selected for external moderation must be verified as part of the internal moderation process.'
- 'NZQA requires all internally assessed work to be stored for three years.'
- 'All work from the previous year must be kept in case it is required for external moderation.'
- 'NZQA requires hard copies of student evidence.'

Suggestions for managing workload

- You should follow your school's
 - random selection process soon after verification of assessment decisions for each standard assessed
 - procedure for filing or storing the random selection of student work.
- Clearly label work generated digitally and store it in an accessible place in case it is selected for external moderation.
- Clearly date all evidence so that it can be replaced by new work and discarded as necessary.

Profiles of Expected Performance (PEPs)

Facts

- PEPs are ranges for each Not achieved, Achieved, Merit and Excellence grade that indicate the expected distributions of results for a standard. They are indicators, not targets. They are developed annually for each standard.
- PEPs are monitoring tools used during marking. Overall result distributions may fall outside of PEP ranges when there is a legitimate reason (e.g. teacher professional development, or new or revised standards).
- Scaling is a mathematical process that is used to adjust students' results. PEPs are not used to scale results. Each student's result for an achievement standard depends on their performance, not the group performance.
- The expected performance is interpreted relative to the standards, not relative to other students. PEPs are not norm-referenced.
- PEPs were initially developed in response to the State Services Commission Report (2005), which recommended that NZQA produce a tool to identify possible unacceptable variability in results from year to year, and allow this to be addressed during marking.
- PEPs are used to ensure consistency in nationally run external assessment over time, to make assessments fair to students.

Myths

- 'PEPs are scaling.'
- 'PEPs are norm-referenced.'
- 'PEPs determine the results that students get.'
- 'PEPs are not fair to students.'

Some things to think about

- In a national examination, the characteristics of the cohort does not usually change significantly from year to year. Therefore, the performance of students should not change significantly. Their performance may change as a result of the alignment of standards to the curriculum and other changes in standards. This is considered when setting and interpreting the PEPs.

Derived grades

Facts

- Derived grades can only be used for external assessments.
- Sufficiently modified past NZQA assessments and keeping commercially produced practice assessments secure will help ensure students can present authentic evidence.
- Derived grades submitted must be based upon:
 - an authentic pre-existing grade
 - standard-specific evidence covering the entire standard
 - a justifiable process (either because they have been quality assured or because evidence exists that the teacher's judgements are consistent with the national standard)
 - the specified conditions of assessment.
- It is a student's decision to apply for a derived grade.
- Students are encouraged to sit the examinations, where possible. The higher grade will be reported.
- Supporting evidence may include medical evidence, a death notice or health specialist letter.
- NZQA makes the decision to approve a derived grade. A school does not have to support an application, but must still process it.
- Declined derived grade applications can be appealed.

Myths

- 'Derived grades can be used for internal assessment.'
- 'Previous unmodified NZQA papers can be used for practice assessment for generating a derived grade.'
- 'Grades from internally assessed standards can be used to provide a derived grade.'
- 'Practice assessments used for a derived grade do not have to cover the whole standard or be quality assured.'
- 'I can submit a Merit grade even if the evidence or practice assessment is only Achieved.'
- 'A student cannot apply for a derived grade if he/she sat the examination.'
- 'Only a doctor's certificate is acceptable for a medical application.'
- 'The Principal's Nominee makes the decision.'

Some other things to think about

- A school must have quality assurance processes that give it confidence that the derived grade submitted is valid and authentic (Assessment Matters A2015/0360).
- Students suffering from long-term or recurring conditions:
 - may be entitled to Special Assessment Conditions
 - may be eligible for a derived grade if there is an exacerbation of the condition just prior to the examinations
 - may have to accept that their results from practice assessments may be affected by their condition and that a derived grade would not be appropriate.
- A student may choose not to apply for a derived grade when the grade to be reported would be 'Not Achieved'.
- The derived grade process is not available for New Zealand Scholarship, as it is a competitive process.