

Information for Educators

NCEA Level 2

Achievement, Retention, Transitions



Supporting young people to achieve NCEA Level 2

General Information

In 2012 the New Zealand Government set 10 results areas to improve the quality of public service for all New Zealanders. The Better Public Services (BPS) result five aims to raise NCEA Level 2 achievement to 85% of 18 year olds by 2017. This is a significant improvement from the 74% of 18 year olds with NCEA Level 2 in 2011 and a particularly big shift for Māori and Pasifika. In 2011, only 57% of Māori and 65% of Pasifika 18 year olds obtained NCEA Level 2.

Achievement 2013-17

The Ministry of Education's Achievement 2013-17 initiative aims to work with secondary schools to identify students who are at risk of not achieving NCEA Level 2 without additional support. In particular, Achievement 2013-17 focuses on schools with significant numbers of Māori and Pasifika students and those with groups of students achieving below the national average.

How it works

Schools are approached and offered assistance to provide more targeted support to individual students. Achievement 2013-17 is made up of experienced secondary school principals, deputy principals, and practitioners based in regional Ministry offices who work with other Ministry and agency staff. Together, they will provide support to track and monitor students, identify students 'at risk' of not achieving NCEA Level 2, and develop individual learning plans. This support will involve the school, the students and their parents, family and whānau.

Who will be involved?

In 2014, 258 secondary schools will be invited to participate in the first full year of implementing Achievement 2013-17. This will include all 129 schools that participated in 2013.

In the first half of the school year, it's important schools have the necessary tracking and monitoring systems, tools and the capability in place before beginning to identify students who may be at risk of not gaining NCEA Level 2.

To achieve this, participating schools will be divided into two cohorts:

1. The initial 129 schools who participated in the programme last year; and
2. New schools involved in the initiative in 2014.

All schools will receive a face-to-face introduction meeting and a set up phase once they agree to be involved. The set up phase, undertaken in the first two terms, will focus on a school's capability to track, monitor and analyse quality data. Schools can then identify the numbers, names, needs and implement plans.

NCEA and the Whānau and NCEA ma le Pasifika

It's important that communities are involved alongside schools and students. These programmes, led by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Careers NZ, aim to empower consumers and communities about education. The programmes explain how NCEA works and look to empower whānau to have meaningful discussions with schools about NCEA, what they value for their children, and how they can work with the school to support their child to achieve NCEA.

In the 2014/15 financial year, NCEA and the Whānau is striving to reach 4,800 whānau and NCEA ma le Pasifika aims to reach 1,000 families year on year.

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Support from Ministry Advisors

Achievement 2013-17 is all about helping schools to do the best by their students. They will be expected to track and monitor all students during terms one and two and identify as early as possible, those students who are beginning to show signs of drifting off track from achieving NCEA Level 2. This early targeting will help students to remain 'on-track'.

Ministry Advisors will work with schools to provide advice on effective curriculum design such as:

- Developing Individual Education Plans – co-constructed with students and their whānau.
- Aligning learning programmes – with the desired student/whānau outcomes articulated in the individual education plan.
- Aligning learning programmes with a relevant Vocational Pathway.
- Supporting schools to develop contextualised learning programmes or provide access to other learning using the Vocational Pathways.

Support for schools

For students to be successful, they require focussed, personalised support in learning. There are a range of support initiatives that help schools to deliver tailored support such as:

- Regional and national workshops will provide opportunities to share good practice and help change practice within schools.
- The Education Review Office's review and report on the current practices of the programme and implementation of the initiative in schools outlines good and innovative practice. It is a guiding document to support the Achievement 2013-17 methodology. This year, the Education Review Office (ERO) will conduct an evaluation of the Achievement 2013-17 methodology and the effectiveness of the programme using 30 randomly selected schools.
- 'Adopt a learner' – academic counselling where individuals/small groups receive intensive support and mentors are provided to boost morale, engagement, motivation.

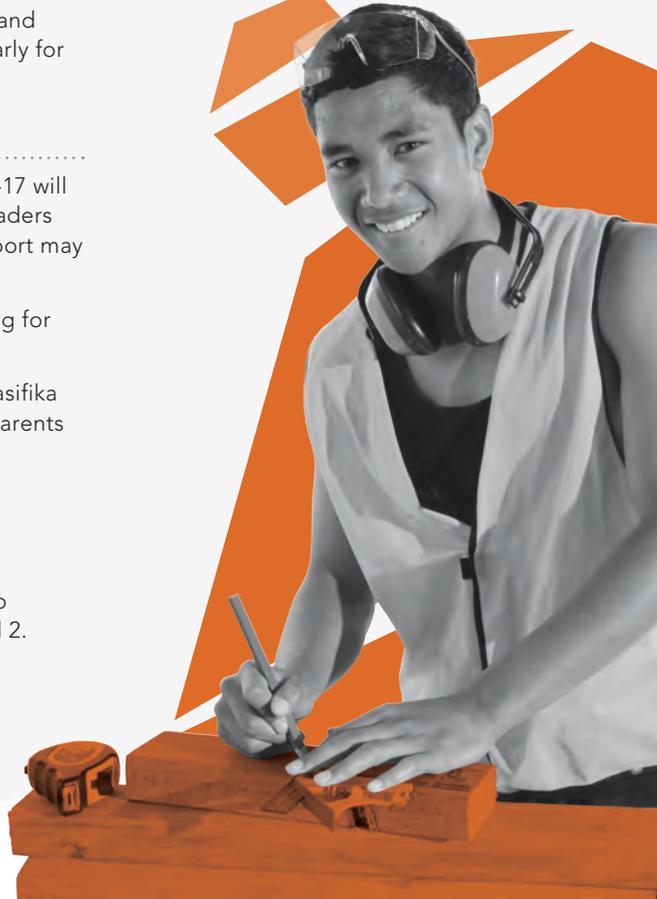
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- Summer School programmes where learners are given opportunities to gain NCEA Level 2.
 - Individual Education Plans for identified year 11 and year 12 learners.
 - Intensive study skills/exam technique support programme during school hours to assist individual learners and groups of learners. This could include relevant and appropriate literacy support particularly for Māori boys.

School-wide involvement

Being involved with Achievement 2013-17 will require the commitment of staff and leaders throughout the school. Additional support may be available:

- Student Management System: training for staff where required.
- Training appropriate Māori and/or Pasifika teachers to facilitate workshops for parents and whānau.
- Mentoring for leaders, Heads of Departments and cluster sharing of effective practices.
- Implementing Vocational Pathways to support students to gain NCEA Level 2.

My mentor helped me see how my study linked to my career options.



How Achievement 2013-17 impacts positively on raising Pasifika student achievement

A scenario

Nila is a Year 12 student who attends her local high school in Auckland. She struggled through NCEA Level 1 but, with additional support and hard work, managed to gain 82 credits and receive her Level 1 certificate.

This year though has proven even more difficult for Nila. She has been placed into courses that have a large number of unit standards that the school believes will enable her to get the 60 credits she needs to achieve NCEA Level 2. However, Nila often has to help get her younger siblings to school, which means that she is sometimes late to her morning classes. Her teachers have identified this is why Nila is struggling to keep up and why she is drifting off the required credits she needs to gain NCEA Level 2.

Recently Nila has shown an interest in health sciences after participating in a Careers day. She asked her dean if she could change some of her courses to align with the requirements if she were to go on to a tertiary course in health sciences. Nila's dean recommended she continue with the course that has been

developed for her. She knows she won't be able to get into a health sciences programme next year if she hasn't done particular achievement standards. Nila talks to her favourite teacher about this and together they raise it with one of the deputy principals.

The school's response

Recently the deputy principal has been looking at NCEA achievement data across the school, with a focus on students who are not on track to achieve NCEA Level 2. She has noticed there are many Pasifika students represented in this group. The data also shows that many of these same learners are in courses that do not have clear pathways into further study, training or employment.

The deputy principal believes more is required to meet the needs of these students. She takes her concerns to the leadership team. At the meeting the principal agrees and announces they have been invited to join a new Ministry initiative called Achievement 2013-17, which is designed to support schools to target students at risk of not gaining NCEA Level 2. He asks the deputy principal to join him at the first meeting.

Nila's teachers have reported an improvement in her motivation and engagement.

Achievement 2013-17 support response

Chris, an experienced and knowledgeable principal seconded from his successful school to become part of Achievement 2013-17, has a very positive first meeting with Nila's principal and deputy principal. The school has already completed some initial work and is now ready to participate in the programme. After that, Chris visits the school regularly and, because they already have a good tracking and monitoring process in place, asks that they record their students' progress towards NCEA Level 2 in a tracking sheet.

Chris also introduces the school to the Vocational Pathways. The pathways help develop learning programmes that are relevant to learners and help students to understand how their learning and achievement relates to the Vocational Pathway Industries. For many students, NCEA and a Vocational Pathway will provide them with the skills and qualifications that will better prepare them for tertiary study or employment.

The school has identified there is strong interest in health, and building and construction from a number of their students. As a result, they have decided to introduce a health programme using recommended and sector related standards from the Social and Community Services Vocational Pathway. Chris is available to guide and support the school to make changes and adjustments to meet the needs of their identified students.

Nila makes real progress

Nila's year soon picks up. Not long after her conversation with her favourite teacher, the deputy principal came to Nila and explained that the school had identified her as a student with real potential, but not on track to achieve her NCEA Level 2 qualification. She said the school was going to make some adjustments to the timetable, and a Health Services programme would be created. The deputy principal asked Nila if she would be interested in participating. Nila immediately said yes.

The school contacted her parents and explained the option. Her dean also talked to her parents about the problems Nila had getting to school on time. Since then, the school has engaged a Ministry support person who connected the family to a church support group. This group are helping Nila's parents to organise her younger siblings in the morning, so Nila can get to school on time, more often.

Nila's teachers have reported an improvement in her motivation and engagement and she has recently achieved an achievement standard.

Find out more

To find out more about the Achievement 2013-17 initiative, visit: youthguarantee.net.nz/achievement-retention-transitions/

To contact a member of the Achievement 2013-17 programme, look for contact details at: youthguarantee.net.nz/home-/contact/

Privacy is protected

As part of delivering effective outcomes for students, the **Achievement 2013-17** initiative obtains relevant information about students. This information helps the Ministry to support schools to deliver the most appropriate type of support and services to the students and their parents, family and whānau.

The Ministry is responsible for the management and storage of all information collected and handles any information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1993. Information collected will only be used for research and statistical purposes.