



NCEA and University Entrance



Who is this factsheet for?

Domestic students, parents and whānau, and schools.

The University Entrance requirements

NZQA is responsible for setting the University Entrance requirements. These are the minimum requirements that domestic students leaving school after Year 13 and who are not yet 20 must meet in order to study at degree level at a New Zealand university. The requirements are:

- NCEA Level 3
- three subjects – at Level 3, made up of 14 credits in each of three approved subjects on the list
- literacy – 10 credits from specified achievement standards at Level 2 or above, made up of 5 credits in reading and 5 credits in writing
- numeracy – 10 credits at Level 1 or above, made up of achievement standards – specified achievement standards available through a range of subjects, or unit standards – package of three numeracy unit standards (26623, 26626, 26627 – all three required).

University entry requirements for other domestic students

Special admission – students aged 20 or over can enrol at a New Zealand university without University Entrance, subject to each university's admission and individual programme requirements.

Discretionary Entrance – this provides a route for students who have not continued their education beyond Year 12 to enrol at degree level at a New Zealand university.

Admission ad eundem statum – this provides a route for students with non-NCEA secondary school qualifications to enrol at degree level at a New Zealand university.

You can find more information on Discretionary Entrance and Admission ad eundem statum from the **Universities New Zealand** website at www.universitiesnz.ac.nz.

Guaranteed Entry Scores (GES)

Some universities use a rank score system for guaranteed or preferential entry into some courses of study, especially for those with limited or competitive entry. The score is based on the number of Level 3 credits gained with Excellence, Merit or Achieved.

Students may still be accepted into a course of study if they don't meet the rank score but do meet the University Entrance standard

GES are derived from a student's best 80 credits at NCEA Level 3 in up to five subjects on the approved subjects list: Excellence = 4 points, Merit = 3 points and Achieved = 2 points. A maximum of 24 credits in each approved subject can be counted.

Entry to other tertiary education organisations' degree programmes

Many tertiary education organisations (the Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics, the wānanga and Private Training Establishments) also base their entry requirements for some degree programmes on the University Entrance requirements. Students should check programme entry requirements carefully.

Entrance to Australian universities

NZQA can support students seeking entrance to Australian universities by converting a student's NCEA Level 3 results into a percentile scale, called the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). Higher level of performance (Merits and Excellence) lead to higher ATAR scores.

ATAR scores can be provided to the Tertiary Admissions Centres. This allows NCEA students to be treated equitably with Australian students for tertiary entry and selection purposes.



More about NCEA

Find out more about how NCEA works on our website at www.nzqa.govt.nz/how-ncea-works, where you can also watch a short animated video on how NCEA works or download our brochure 'Understanding NCEA'. NCEA is well-recognised overseas - see www.nzqa.govt.nz/international-recognition-of-ncea for more information.

International students can also download the 'Study in New Zealand' brochure. The brochure is available in English and translated into six languages.

Contact us:

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