

Course Endorsement Guide

Course endorsement provides recognition for students who perform exceptionally well in individual courses.

Students will gain an endorsement for a course if, in a single school year, they achieve:

- 14 or more credits at Merit or Excellence, where
- at least 3 of these credits from externally assessed standards and 3 credits from internally assessed standards. Note, this does not apply to Physical Education, Religious Studies and level 3 Visual Arts.

A course endorsement can be gained independently of a qualification. For example, a student may gain a Merit endorsement for their Level 2 Mathematics course without achieving the NCEA Level 2 qualification.

Rules for calculating a course endorsement

- 1 A course will be endorsed with Excellence when the student achieves 14 or more credits with Excellence in the course.
- 2 A course will be endorsed with Merit when a student achieves 14 or more credits with Merit or Excellence in the course.
- 3 These 14 or more credits must include a minimum of 3 internally assessed credits and 3 externally assessed credits.
Exempted from this rule are courses that include 14 or more credits in Physical Education or Religious Studies or Level 3 Visual Arts. A course will be endorsed:
 - a if 14 or more credits are achieved with Merit or Excellence from internally assessed Physical Education or Religious Studies standards
 - b if 14 credits are achieved with Merit or Excellence from one of the externally assessed Level 3 Visual Arts standards **or** 14 or more credits are achieved with Merit or Excellence from internally assessed Level 3 Visual Arts standards.
- 4 The course must be completed within one school year.
- 5 All exclusions will apply. Where two or more standards assess the same learning outcome they are mutually exclusive for all NCEA qualifications and endorsements.
- 6 A course endorsement is gained at the level of the lowest-level standard making up the eligible credits.
- 7 Courses may include unit standards, but only unit standards with Merit and/or Excellence criteria will contribute to an endorsement.
- 8 The result for any standard can be used in only one course endorsement in the year it is reported.
- 9 Course endorsement does not include Scholarship.

Setting up courses

Schools set up courses in the usual way. The only additional requirement is to associate students' entries with a course. Whenever the school makes an entry, they need to enter the code for the course they want the standard to belong to. If the school uses a Student Management System, the vendor will advise

how to enter the course code in the system. For schools using NZQA's Web Entries system, NZQA will provide support for the changes.

Each course is identified by a course code and a course name. The course code, established by the school, can be made up of any letters or numbers to a maximum of 10 characters, including spaces eg, *MA1301*. The course name is also established by the school and can be made up of any letters or numbers to a maximum of 60 characters, eg *Mathematics with Calculus*.

Course names, such as those published in the school's curriculum handbooks and on reports to parents, will be included in students' result notices, so they should be clear and meaningful. They should not include proprietary or sponsorship names.

Some points to note:

- Course endorsements are gained at the level of the lowest level standard included in the eligible credits. Therefore care should be taken with a course name that contains a level number and which has assigned to it one or more standards from another level. A student's result notice could state, for example, *Level 3 Applied Mathematics Endorsed with Excellence at Level 2*, if the 14 eligible credits include one or more Level 2 standards.
- Courses can be tailored for individual students. They may be entered for different combinations of standards for the same course.
- It is not mandatory for all courses to be endorsable (that is, to contain more than 14 credits with a minimum of 3 internally assessed and 3 externally assessed credits).
- It is not mandatory for all entries to be assigned to a course, e.g. some Gateway or first aid standards.
- Standards assessed in a previous year and reported to NZQA in the current year do not count towards a current year's endorsement. For example, a Level 1 Mathematics standard assessed last year in Year 10 should not be added to the student's Level 1 Mathematics course in the current year. It must be reported unassigned to a course.

Reporting course information to NZQA

When schools send entries to NZQA two features are required for course endorsement:

- 1 A course list: the school needs to provide NZQA with a list of all their course codes and course names for the school year. An entry may not be assigned to a course if it is not on the course list.
- 2 The course code associated with an entry: the school needs to enter a course code against all entries to make them eligible for course endorsement.

Schools should send NZQA their course list and start assigning courses to entries in their first file for the year. NZQA will contact any schools that have not provided this information by their 1 July file.

Course codes assigned to existing entries cannot be changed after the cut-off date of 1 October.

Transfers

Students transferring from one school to another during an academic year should not be disadvantaged in terms of course endorsement. The current process for withdrawing a student from their old school and enrolling and entering them at their new school will not change. The new school will be responsible for setting up the student's new courses to accommodate standards already achieved, wherever possible.

Further clarification is available in the [Course Endorsement Scenarios](#).