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Version 3

Consultation for the refinement of Levels 1 and 2 and development of Level 3 Vocational Pathways

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Intent of Vocational Pathways, refinement and development process

The intent of Vocational Pathways is to improve the choice of programmes offered to all learners in senior secondary and tertiary by:

* **highlighting** the relevance of learning to future jobs or careers (line of sight from education to employment)
* **emphasising** the practical connections between learning and employment/industry sectors (contextualising learning within broad sectors)
* **supporting** learners to gain an Award/s to acknowledge learning in the six Vocational Pathways as part of NCEA Level 2 (through identifying assessment standards – unit standards and achievement standards - valued by each industry sector).

The Vocational Pathways framework was initially designed to improve options for all learners, especially those students with a vocational focus who were not adequately served by the existing system. The framework was developed at foundation level (Level 1 and 2), to enable learners to progress more successfully to further education and training. As the 6th pathway; Creative Industries, was launched it became necessary to refine all six Vocational Pathways pathways in order to improve coherence, consistency, structure and balance across them all. This includes:

* providing balanced assessment opportunities with managed progression
* providing better support for the development of high quality foundation learning programmes for all learners at National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 2, including accurate assessment information that supports NCEA level 2 achievement with a Vocational Pathways Award.
* providing Level 3-6 Qualification pathways, to help learners see the relevance of their learning and inform their choices of future direction by indicating how their learning and achievement is valued by broad industry sectors
* improving cohesion across the Vocational Pathways. For example, by showing how English, mathematics and science standards are represented across all the pathways to support a consistent approach to literacy and numeracy.

Process for the refinement of Levels 1 and 2 and development of Level 3 Vocational Pathways

Levels 1 and 2 refinement process

A number of working groups were established to carry out the refinement process. Six Sector Consortia Groups (SCGs) were re-convened in order to liaise with their specific sectors and recommend refinements based on agreed perspectives and objectives. Leaders were identified from the original SCGs, formed during the creation and development of the pathways. The SCGs drew their membership from across their sectors and included representatives from industry and the ITOs as well as secondary and tertiary educators who support industry related learning and training. All six groups met at different times between November 2014 and May 2015.

An Education Reference Group (ERG) was also established. Members of this group liaised with all their available networks and recommended changes for refinement through discussion with the SCGs. The membership included one subject matter expert representative from each of the eight learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum, and included one expert representative for each of Māori Medium and Pacific education

An Overarching Working Group (OWG[[1]](#footnote-1)) evaluated and moderated the outputs from the ERG and SCGs to finalise the selection of standards for each Pathway, in consultation with the Ministry. The OWG met a number of times to establish a framework for analysis across the pathways, moderate decisions across the pathway, and consider Level 3 pathway development. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the established groups.

Figure 1: Working groups in the Levels 1 and 2 refinement and Level 3 development process

Figure 2: The process of Levels 1 and 2 refinement

Process for evaluating, moderating, and consolidating information, developing and distributing consultation drafts, consolidating feedback and securing agreement on the refined Levels 1 and 2 assessment standards and the inclusion of a Level 3 qualifications map

A consistent approach was used across all six SCG meetings.

Guidelines for “ways of working” were developed for the first SCG meeting (Primary Industries), and these were refined and developed to provide focus and guidance for the planning of following SCG meetings.

These guidelines were:

* The SCG meetings were to be owned by the sector.
* SCG members were to include trade and industry representatives and a leader from a secondary school who was implementing vocational pathway programmes in the sector.
* A review of each SCG meeting was undertaken and this included an opportunity for anonymous feedback.

Each SCG meeting clarified the following criteria and information.

1. A learner working towards a Level 2 Vocational Pathways Award may be:

* + At school full-time.
  + At school on a Gateway programme.
  + On a blended course – at school and at a tertiary institution.
  + Working and at a tertiary institution.
  + At a tertiary institution full-time.
  + Working full-time.

2. The value of vocational pathways to learners:

* + Vocational pathways give guidance to students (and their influencers) for learning and career pathway planning.
  + Gaining an industry vocational pathway award demonstrates that students have knowledge and skills valued by that industry.

3. The criteria for retaining, removing, and adding to current standards outlined in the booklets.

Level 1:

* Give broad knowledge to
  + Provide for choices around learning and career pathways.
  + Raise awareness
* Limit credits from each domain to avoid falsely flagging pathway in only limited narrow areas.

Level 2:

* Closer connection to sector.
* Limit credits from each domain to avoid falsely flagging pathway in only limited narrow areas.

Level 2 sector-related standards:

If a standard is closely related to this sector, and is/can be assessed against at

* School.
* A trade academy.
* A Tertiary Education Organisation (TEO).
* The initial period of employment.

Should it be included to enable learners to receive credit towards this pathway?

4. The value of Vocational Pathways to employers.

Holders of a Vocational Pathways Award have foundation knowledge, skills, and potential relevant to employment a particular pathway.

5. Use of the Youth Guarantee Profile Builder.

<http://youthguarantee.net.nz/vocational-pathways/profile-builder/>

6. A guiding question was then used to guide the inclusion, removal, and/or addition of standards. “Are we happy for this to raise the x bar by x credits?”

Following the meeting, each SCG member was sent a summary of key outcomes and allocated follow-up. SCG members were tasked with undertaking wider-sector consultation. These recommendations were then collated into summary documents for each pathway. SCG leads were provided with regular updates for further review.

After the completion of all SCG meetings, the ERG and SCG leads were asked to undertake a thorough review of the summary of recommendations across the pathways. Where necessary, further clarification and advice were sought from experts within the sector.

The complete summary of these recommendations was presented to the OWG on 14 May 2015. The OWG approved the summary of recommendations for each of the six vocational pathways.

Process for Level 3 development

In September 2014, the Ministry also initiated the exploration of the development of Level 3 Vocational Pathways. This has involved (and is still involving):

1. Developing the parameters for mapping, with advice from stakeholders, to guide the mapping process. The parameters agreed to the mapping were:
   1. Achievement standards at Level 3 that naturally progress from the refined Levels 1 and 2 pathways.
   2. Current local, national and New Zealand Level 3-6 qualifications.

Level 3 unit standards are not currently being mapped and the Ministry will consider this further in the second phase of mapping.

1. In the second phase of mapping, post July, all degree programmes from Level 7 to 10 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.
2. Engaging the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) to provide the Ministry with a refined draft map of Level 3 -10 qualifications mapped to Vocational Pathways, to quality assure the links to job profiles and accuracy of data, and make recommendations to the Ministry for suitable actions to address anomalies in the data.
3. Quality assurance of the mapping of achievement standards by the Curriculum Teaching and Learning division, Youth Guarantee and Māori medium teams at the Ministry.
4. Reviewing the draft Levels 3-6 qualifications map by the OWG, in readiness for consultation.
5. ‘Sense checking’ the draft Level 3 achievement standards map by the SCG, in readiness for consultation.
6. Considering feedback from the consultation by the OWG.

This process is summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Process for developing the Level 3 achievement standards map and qualifications map

PAG, OWG and Ministry overview

Consultation process for Level 3 development

The Ministry led the consultation process with existing structures outlined in Figure 3.

Figure 4: Consultation process for Level 3 development

Levels 1 & 2

Change of Vocational Pathways for identified careers

During the process of refinement the SCGs identified particular careers that were incorrectly placed in pathways. The OWG then approved the following recommendations.

Figure 5: Approved recommendations of changes of Vocational Pathways for particular careers

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Domain/Career** | **Pathway** |
| Boat Building | Construction and Infrastructure to Manufacturing and Technology |
| Wood Manufacturing | Primary Industries to Manufacturing and Technology |
| Furniture Making and Operations | Construction and Infrastructure to Manufacturing and Technology |
| Journalism | Services Industries to Creative Industries |
| Baking | Manufacturing and Technology and Services Industries |
| Floristry | Primary Industries to Services Industries |

Confirmation of the position of employability, work readiness and specialist skills in the Vocational Pathways framework

The Levels 1 and 2 refinement process has considered the in/exclusion of the following skills in the Vocational Pathways:

* Employability (e.g. competencies)
* Work readiness (e.g. drivers licence)
* Specialist (e.g. occupational health and safety).

Through a process of consultation with the secondary, tertiary and industry sectors, the Pathways Advisory Group (PAG[[2]](#footnote-2)), the Overarching Working Group (OWG), and supported by the NCEA governance board, it has been determined that there are employability and work readiness skills for which an assessment approach would be inappropriate. These are best developed through effective integrated programme design and delivery. These skills include core driving knowledge and skills, personal financial management, generic computing, service sector core skills, social and co-operative skills, and work and study skills.

In some cases skills have been determined as a specialist requirement of an industry pathway; for example First Aid and some tikanga standards in the Social and Community Services Vocational Pathway.

Maintaining the integrity of the pathways and ensuring learners have access to broad foundation programmes relevant to their pathways has been the lens through which these decisions have been made.

Risk of removal

Removing the standards that are not specialist, yet are an inherent part of effective programme design and delivery, may send the unintended message that these skills are unimportant. Therefore, guidance and information material is currently under development that will include:

1. background to employability and work readiness skills and why they are valued by employers
2. information related to integrating the development of skills across a programme
3. key work readiness areas, such as drivers licensing and literacies (digital, literacy/numeracy and financial)
4. information providing clarification on the embedding of key, cultural and core competencies across programme design and delivery discussion related to competencies, such as cultural, key and core
5. messages post refinement regarding decisions made
6. links to work related to organisations already exploring recognition of skills
7. examples modelled off information utilised in the Canterbury Youth Futures information
8. practical ways in which to support learners to recognise and record their skills and areas of development.

The Ministry is also involved in a range of other initiatives as outlined in the May 2015 Pathways Advisory discussion paper.

Drivers Licensing

Whilst the acquisition of a drivers licence is viewed as a critical tool by industry sectors the unit standards do not currently equate directly to the drivers licence itself. 33 credits could potentially be gained through the core driving knowledge and skills domain and a focus on this could detract from the acquisition of foundational and industry specific knowledge and skills. Therefore, core driving knowledge and skills standards have generally been excluded from the pathways (with the exception of Unit Standard 3467 for the Primary Industries Vocational Pathway and Unit Standard 20969 for the Services Industries Vocational Pathway).

The Ministry appreciates the importance of the acquisition of a drivers licence and we are facilitating work being undertaken between the Motor Industry Training Organisation **(**MITO) and New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) to explore the adaptation or development of new unit standards that will directly align with the gaining of a licence.

Work is also being undertaken with NZTA, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), CareersNZ, Ministry of Social Development and Mayors Taskforce for Jobs to support regional and national initiatives.

Levels 1 and 2 refinement

The removal of Level 1 pathways was suggested by the OWG and considered by PAG and the NCEA governance board. This resulted in the preferred position to retain the Level 1 pathways at present and for the proposal to be re-considered in future maintenance of the Vocational Pathways.

The pathways at Level 1 and 2 have been considered and refined over the last 9 months and will be uploaded onto the Youth Guarantee website for public consultation post the Pathways Advisory Group (PAG) meeting on the 22 June 2015. The refinement process has included and addressed:

1. the widening of scope for some pathways to include sectors that were previously missing, e.g. The Services

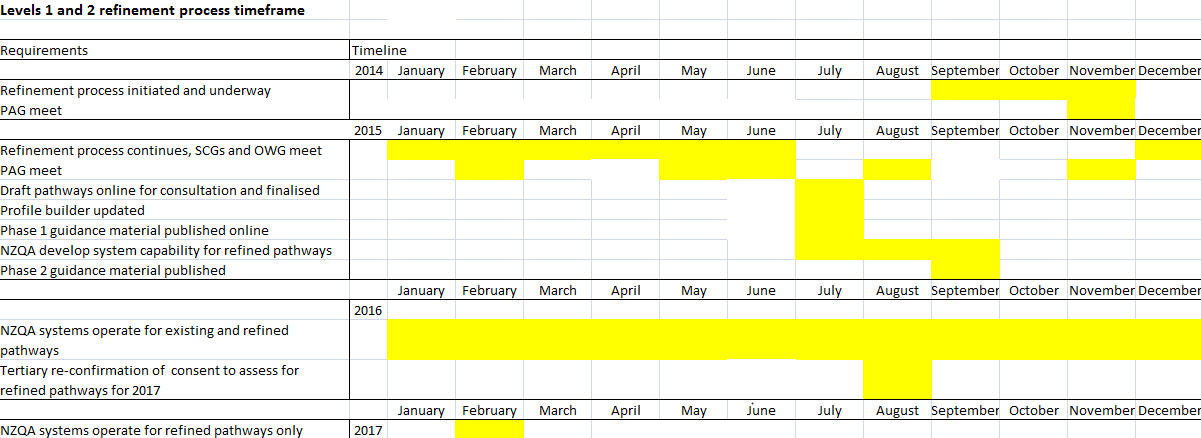
Industries Vocational Pathway has included some standards relating to outdoor education

1. the reallocation of jobs to more appropriate pathways
2. the variability in the number of standards and types of standards in the pathways recognising that the pathways are not of equal size, given the scope and nature of qualifications. There is recognition that learning in some pathways aligns more easily with the New Zealand Curriculum in secondary schools
3. variability between the numbers of sector related standards and recommended standards has been accepted. The Ministry will seek to undertake an impact analysis of the variability and messaging developed to explain the variability
4. the composition of pathways to ensure broader access to industry sectors in each Vocational Pathway
5. literacy and numeracy progression and development. Recognising international agreement that language, literacy and numeracy competencies are foundation competencies; analysis of the number of, and progression opportunities (including meeting University Entrance requirements) related to English, mathematics and science achievement standards and Level 1 literacy and numeracy unit standards that contribute towards gaining Level 2 was undertaken. This resulted in an increase in the number of Level 2 achievement standards in English, mathematics and science, enabling schools and tertiary to develop robust programmes that offer ‘packages’ of contextualised, relevant English, maths and science learning, that also enables and supports progression into further study and employment.

Timeframes for implementation of the refined pathways

The Ministry are working with NZQA to ensure timeframes best meet the needs of young people. These timeframes still require final confirmation.

Figure 6: Levels 1 and 2 refinement implementation



Level 3

Along with the refinement of the Vocational Pathways the framework is currently being extended to Levels 3-6, and is intended to go to Level 10. To progress the Vocational Pathways framework further, there is currently a specific focus on Level 3. This has led to the need for clarification of the purpose of Level 3 Vocational Pathways, study progression from Level 2, and purpose of Level 3.

Purpose of Level 3 Vocational Pathways

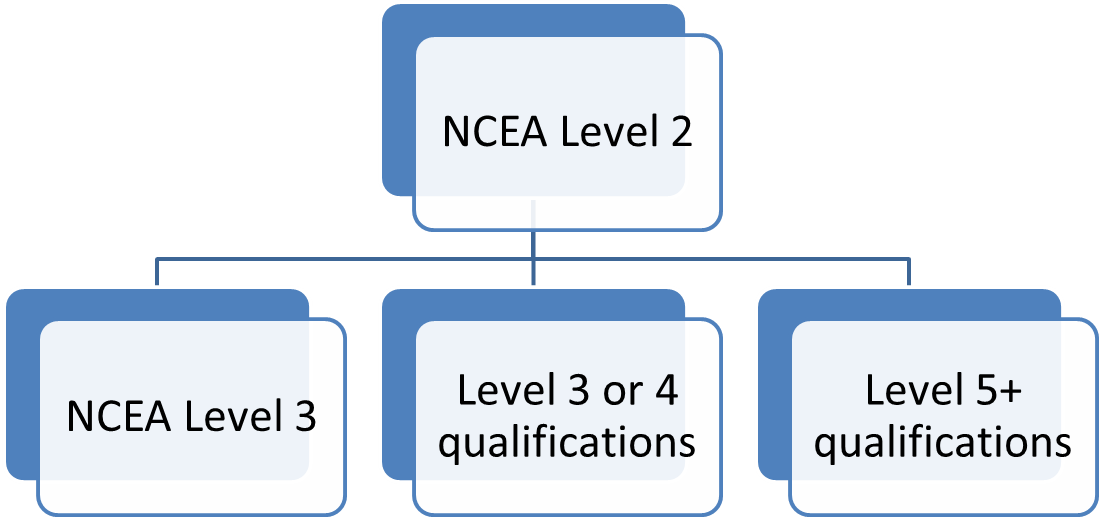
Level 3 is the first step on the rung of the ladder towards more specific study and employment choices. The key to Vocational Pathways is progression. Whilst Level 3 is the start of a more specialised pathway it is also the critical ‘bridging’ year, the transition between school/foundational learning and tertiary study or training.

The Level 3 framework and Levels 4-6 pathways are now intended to show all students how their learning relates to specific career opportunities at all levels of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

In order to provide learners with an ongoing signal for direction, Level 3 achievement standards and current qualifications will be mapped to Vocational Pathways. The New Zealand Record of Achievement will profile this learning in a similar way to the profile at Level 2.

Study progression from Level 2

Once learners have achieved NCEA Level 2, there is a range of study options available to them. The following diagram shows these options.



**Not mutually exclusive, delivered in multiple environments**

Figure 7: Study options from Level 2

Purpose of Level 3 and progression onto tertiary study

A certificate at Level 3 qualifies learners with knowledge and skills for a specific role(s) within fields/areas of work and/or preparation for further study.

A graduate with a level 3 certificate is able to:

* demonstrate some operational and theoretical knowledge in a field of work or study
* select from and apply a range of known solutions to familiar problems
* apply a range of standard processes relevant to the field of work or study
* apply a range of communication skills relevant to the role in the field of work or study
* apply literacy and numeracy skills relevant to the role in the field of work or study
* work under limited supervision
* demonstrate major responsibility for their own learning and performance
* adapt their own behaviour when interacting with others
* contribute to group performance.

Complexities surrounding entry requirements for progression

From Level 2, students can progress to workplace based learning, wānanga, private training establishments, polytechnics, institutes of technology and polytechnic, and university. However, entry requirements for work based learning differ by industry and by the type and level of study students want to engage in for courses at different tertiary organisations.

To add to the complexity of entry requirements some competitive diplomas or degrees have higher NCEA prerequisites, industry-specific prerequisites, and/ or require University Entrance.

To qualify for entrance to a New Zealand university and some institutes of technology and polytechnic courses using NCEA students need at least:

* NCEA Level 3
* Three subjects - at Level 3, made up of:
* 14 credits each, in three [approved subjects](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/awards/university-entrance/approved-subjects-for-university-entrance/)
* Literacy - [10 credits at Level 2 or above](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/awards/university-entrance/literacy-requirements/), made up of:
* 5 credits in reading
* 5 credits in writing
* Numeracy - [10 credits at Level 1 or above](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/literacy-and-numeracy/level-1-requirements/lit-num-subjects/), 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).[[3]](#footnote-3)

Ensuring students have access to progress to the next step is key to the Vocational Pathways approach, in whichever way this presents. Equipping learners with the foundation English, maths and science learning using relevant contexts will enable a smoother transition and progression to workplace based learning and study.

Vocational Pathways Mapping of Level 3

Through the refinement process we are currently mapping:

1. Level 3-6 current local, National and New Zealand qualifications. It is important to show learners current possibilities for progression. It has been determined and agreed across agencies and reference groups that all current qualifications will be mapped to Vocational Pathways and will be updated though a maintenance process as the outcomes of the Targeted Review of Qualifications (TRoQ) become known. TRoQ is well underway and over the next two years will have a significant impact on the qualifications that will be available. We have recognised this and will maintain the “Qualifications Map” accordingly.
2. NCEA Level 3. NZQA, Curriculum Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Education Reference Group (ERG) have developed and refined the Level 3 achievement standards map. Further development of the Level 3 achievement standards map is required. This includes:

* consideration of the progression from Levels 1 and 2 achievement standards in the refined pathways to Level 3
* further consideration of the map by the (industry) sector consortia groups (SCG) and the Overarching Working Group (OWG).

Vocational Pathways Mapping tool

The Ministry is also currently exploring a mapping tool to complement the Levels 3-6 pathways information, which will also help to address the complexities surrounding entry requirements outlined previously. Owing to cost consideration, TRoQ, and usability of qualifications across New Zealand, this mapping tool will include only New Zealand qualifications at this time. The prototype is currently under development and the Ministry is exploring broader applications of the prototype with other government agencies to ensure consistent and co-ordinated provision of information.

Acknowledgement of Vocational Achievement

As the Vocational Pathways framework continues to be developed, acknowledgement of vocational achievement needs to:

* strengthen parity of esteem (equal value and representation) between academic and vocational tracks
* encourage the provision of contextualised learning to all students in the education system
* meet the broad skill needs of industry
* help students identify future career opportunities that may be a good fit while providing broad foundational skills that enable progression to further study and employment

Level 2 Vocational Pathways Award

To receive a Vocational Pathways Award, students must first gain NCEA Level 2, which is 60 credits from Level 2 and 20 credits from any other level, including meeting the literacy and numeracy requirements. To achieve a Vocational Pathways Award, 60 of the Level 2 credits must be from the recommended standards in one or more pathways, including a *minimum* of 20 Level 2 credits from sector related standards.

At present the Level 2 NZQA Record of Achievement profile and Vocational Pathways Award provide learners with a signal of the pathway they may be heading along. Specifically the Award provides formal recognition of a learner’s achievement using the Vocational Pathways. Each learner is able to show how their achievement relates to the learning or skills training employers are seeking.

Learners can achieve an Award in more than one Vocational Pathway. The Award is displayed on a student’s NZQA record of achievement.

Acknowledgement of Vocational Achievement at Level 3 – Seeking Your Feedback

In order to assess the extent and type of acknowledgement for an ‘Award’ (recognition) for vocational achievement at Level 3 that is needed, the following questions could be considered:

1. Why should vocational achievement be acknowledged at Level 3?
2. What are the benefits or opportunities of recognition of vocational achievement?
3. What could be the unintended consequences of recognition of vocational achievement and do these outweigh the benefits?
4. What could an awarding (recognition) of vocational achievement look like at Level 3?
5. What could be the unintended consequences of *not* awarding vocational achievement at Level 3?

Feedback related to these questions will also be sought from the wider sector.

Timeframes for implementation of Level 3 Vocational Pathways

The Ministry is working with NZQA to explore how operational timeframes best meet the needs of young people. These timeframes still require final confirmation and are dependent on the outcomes from the consultation regarding acknowledgement of Level 3 vocational achievement.

Figure 8: Timeframes for Level 3 Vocational Pathways

Flowchart

**Solution**

**Heading**

**Heading**

**Heading**

Item one

Item two

Item 3

**Heading**

Item one

Item 3

Item two

Item one

Pattern and Images

Image Caption

Image Caption



1. The OWG was established in the hierarchal matrix to evaluate and moderate the outputs from the Education Reference Group (ERG) and the Sector Consortia Groups (SCG). They are specifically tasked to finalise the selection of standards for each Pathway, in consultation with the Ministry. There is one OWG with up to ten members in total. The membership includes one lead representative from each SCG, the Education Reference Group (ERG), NZQA, BusinessNZ and the secondary sector view across the pathways. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The PAG are convened by the Ministry of Education and provides advice and guidance with regard to the development and implementation of Vocational Pathways. The membership constitutes broad representation from the secondary, tertiary, industry and government sectors. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Recognition of prior learning can also be factored into the consideration of tertiary entry requirements. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)