

## Aide-Memoire: Derived Grade process

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<b>To:</b>	Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education
<b>From:</b>	Jann Marshall, Deputy Chief Executive
<b>Date:</b>	20 December 2023
<b>Reference:</b>	OC00580

### Purpose

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1. This aide memoire provides you with information about NZQA's Derived Grade processes.

### Background

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2. *Derived grades* are evidence-based grades that NZQA may award to students when they cannot attend an examination or external assessment, or their performance is impaired. Common reasons why students apply for derived grades:
  - a temporary acute illness or injury
  - a significantly disturbing or distressing experience
  - a sudden and significant change to a chronic illness that happens no more than four weeks before the student's first affected assessment
  - national representation in a sport, academic or cultural event.Students cannot use derived grades to make up for missed learning or preparation time.
4. Information about derived grades is available for students, whānau, schools and Principals' Nominees on the NZQA website (see <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/ncea-for-teachers-and-schools/managing-national-assessment-in-schools/derived-grades/information-for-principals-nominees/quality-assurance-processes/>). This includes information about what constitutes a reason for applying for a derived grade, how to apply, supporting documentation needed and questions about derived grades.
5. Schools are required to provide NZQA evidence-based grades in case a student requires a derived grade. These grades are based on authentic standard-specific evidence, i.e. evidence such as a student's performance in a formal practice assessment at school.
6. If a student believes they meet the criteria for a derived grade, they can obtain the application form from their school or access it from the NZQA website. Along with the application form, students must provide supporting documentation that shows why, for circumstances beyond their control, they could not attend the external examination, or their performance was significantly impaired, or they submitted an incomplete externally assessed portfolio.

Supporting documentation must apply to the date of the external assessment and come from an independent and qualified person, such as a doctor.

7. NZQA considers the application and determines whether the student meets the criteria for a derived grade to be awarded. Students have the right to appeal the decision.
8. If a derived grade application is successful, the student is notified, and the better of the two grades (from the external assessment itself, or school evidence-based grade), is awarded upon results release in January.
9. Schools can apply for *derived grades at scale*, when a group of students is affected by a common, single event that is beyond the students' control, such as a natural event, technical failure, or public health emergency. Principals' Nominees and schools are directed to contact their School Relationship Manager at NZQA to discuss the situation and how to apply.
10. NZQA's Chief Executive determines whether a *derived grade at scale* situation is declared. Affected schools are then prompted by NZQA to identify the students for whom the derived grade at scale will be applied.

## Next steps

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11. You will be provided with the number of students who received derived grades during the 2023 examination round in the 11 January 2024 briefing on the 2023 Provisional NCEA and UE statistics. The NCEA results will be released on 17 January.

**Jann Marshall**

Deputy Chief Executive Assessment

20 December 2023

**Hon Erica Stanford**

Minister of Education

20/12/23