

13 October 2025

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request – Academic Dishonesty

Thank you for your request, partially transferred to NZQA from the Ministry of Education on 16 September 2025 under section 14(b)(i) of the Official Information Act 1982, for the following information:

I am writing to submit a Freedom of Information request for detailed data and statistics on the instances of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating, within New Zealand educational institutions over the past five years. Specifically, I am requesting:

- The annual number of reported cases of academic dishonesty broken down by type (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on exams, use of unauthorized materials).*
- The annual number of reported cases of academic dishonesty categorized by educational level (e.g., primary, secondary, tertiary institutions).*
- The outcomes of these cases (e.g., warnings, expulsions, academic penalties)*
- The measures currently in place to detect and prevent academic dishonesty, including plagiarism detection software and examination protocols.*
- Any assessments or reviews conducted on the effectiveness of these measures in reducing instances of academic dishonesty.*

Response

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982.

NZQA has a role in secondary and tertiary education through its quality assurance and assessment functions, but the collection and reporting of data on academic dishonesty is not part of our role in the tertiary sector. We also do not hold data for primary education.

We are therefore only able to provide information related to secondary school qualifications (the National Certificates of Educational Achievement) and related assessment.

I attach the following information covered by your request:

- OC02069 OIA Response Academic Dishonesty secondary data

The data provided covers the last five academic years (2020-2024). As the 2025 academic year is still underway, full-year data is not yet available.

NZQA has not undertaken any assessments or reviews of the breach process during this period, and as such, no further information is available.

More granular information on breaches can be found in [our Annual Stats Reports](#)

Our response to your request may be published on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed before publication.

If you require further assistance or believe we have misinterpreted your request, please contact ministerials@nzqa.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation or review by the Ombudsman of this decision under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982. Details of how to make a complaint can be found at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz. You can also telephone 0800 802 502 or write to the Ombudsman at PO Box 10152, Wellington, 6143.

Nāku nā



Dr Grant Klinkum
Pouwhakahaere/Chief Executive

The following information has been collated in response to **OC02069 – OIA request - Academic Dishonesty**.

This information is based on **external assessment** in **secondary schools** relating to the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA).

The data covers the five-year period 2020 to 2024. Note: As the 2025 academic year is currently underway, no full-year data is available.

For guidance on the processes NZQA follows when dealing with alleged breaches, please refer to [NZQA Assessment Rules for Schools, TEOs assessing against Achievement Standards and NCEA Co-requisite Standards, and Candidates 2025](#) – Section 5 Process for Candidate Breaches of External Assessment

Annual number of reported cases of alleged breaches

Reported cases of alleged breaches

Description	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Paper-based exam	142	345	212	177	268
Digitally completed assessment	734	155	98	83	64
Total candidate investigations	876*	500	310	260	332

*Formally investigated.

Category of alleged breach

Category	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Following instructions	299	263	181	192	226
Inappropriate or Dishonest practice	250	145	95	14	28
Influencing/ assisting / hindering	57	37	16	20	67
Authenticity / Impersonation	270	55	18	34	11

Outcome of breach investigations

Description	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Breach substantiated	739	449 +	268	191	279
Results released - no breach found	137	49	42	69	53
Result withheld	418	66	39	35	39
Result released – warning issued	321	385	271	156	240

+2 not attributed to any candidate due to lack of evidence

Measures in place to detect breaches

Current measures in place for identifying alleged breaches are by reports from:

1. the Principal's Nominee who sends the report after a teacher, student, supervisor or parent raises a concern;
2. the Examination Centre Manager;
3. markers who detect:
 - a. a change in tone or handwriting within and/or between questions,

- b. work has complexity beyond the level expected
 - c. content that matches known exemplars, images, compositions etc;
- 4. digital detection tools can identify the following behaviours, which increase the risk of breaches:
 - a. multiple access attempts
 - b. text dumps
 - c. concerning language
 - d. if a student has exited the platform.

How an alleged breach is notified	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Schools (Principal's Nominee)	349	8	23	-	-
Examination Centre Manager	267	445	254	196	314
Markers	204	40	19	29	15
Data (digital detection tools)	56	7	5	-	-

Assessment or reviews conducted on the effectiveness of these measures in reducing instances of academic dishonesty

NZQA's role is to investigate alleged breaches that have been formally notified to us.

While we continue to refine and improve our processes to identify and investigate potential breaches, no formal evaluation has been undertaken to determine the effectiveness of these measures during the requested period.