Aide-Memoire: May 2025 Literacy and Numeracy I Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau Co-requisite Assessments: Results Release dates

To:	Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education
From:	Dr Grant Klinkum, Chief Executive
Date:	3 September 2024
Reference:	OC01148

Purpose

1. This aide memoire is to notify you of NZQA's plans for the marking and results release processes for the May 2025 NCEA co-requisite assessment event, including significantly shortening the time between the conclusion of the assessments and the release of results.

2. We propose not to proactively release this briefing as part of the next publication of documents, and recommend instead that it is released once results release dates for the May 2025 NCEA co-requisite event are announced by NZQA in early 2025.

Background

3. We provided you with a briefing on 21 June about the two 2025 co-requisite assessment windows (OC00939 refers). These dates have since been published. The first assessment event window is 19 – 30 May 2025, and the second assessment event window is 1-12 September 2025.

4. We acknowledge that the current time required for marking, quality assurance of results and preparation of feedback reports for students and teachers (7-9 weeks) is longer than desirable and that the period between the release of the results of the first assessment event and the start of the second assessment event (currently 5 weeks) should be extended as much as possible.

5. The questions in the Reading assessment are all multiple-choice items, which enables them to be machine marked. The Writing and Numeracy assessments are currently marked by panels of teachers, with over 100 markers contracted for each. The Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau co-requisite assessments are also marked by appointed panels.

6. NZQA is progressing the use of technology for marking the Numeracy and Writing assessments to achieve a significant reduction in the time required for marking. Exploration and testing of the options is being conducted in a systematic way to ensure the change is managed and sector and public confidence in the process remains high. A much-reduced number of human markers to check the computer marking will be an integral part of ensuring confidence in the process. Failure to gain sector confidence in similar contexts in Australian jurisdictions have impacted on their plans to implement automated marking processes.

7.   We ran a successful trial of an auto-text scoring solution for the Writing assessments earlier this year and we are running a full live pilot of the solution for the marking of the September 2024 Writing co-requisite assessments.

8.   We are exploring the possibility of changing the format of the questions in the Numeracy assessment to multiple-choice items that can be machine marked. This work needs careful consideration given the nature of outcome three of the standard which requires the student to "explain mathematical and statistical responses to situations". This does not easily lend itself to a multi-choice assessment solution without careful testing. We are working through how we might do this with our expert examiner and NZCER. We expect to be able to report on options in early 2025. This change may be able to be implemented for the September 2025 Numeracy assessments, but not for the May assessment event as these need to be finalised by December 2024.

Discussion

9.   We are planning for 60,000-70,000 entries for each of the Reading, Writing and Numeracy co-requisite assessments in May 2025, and around 600 entries for each standard for the Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau co-requisite assessments. For each of the Reading, Writing and Numeracy co-requisite assessments, we will be developing and administering two assessments (a week one assessment and a week two assessment) to minimise opportunities for assessment breaches[1]).

10.   We are working to provide results for the May assessment event to students within a much shorter timeframe in 2025. We will be doing a staggered results release, with Reading first in the last week of Term 2 and Writing and Numeracy the first week of Term 3.

11.   We expect to be able to shorten the timeframe from 7 to 3.5 weeks for Reading, and from 9 to 5 weeks for Writing and Numeracy. However we do not propose releasing results during the school holidays, which run from 28 June to 13 July 2025, therefore Writing and Numeracy will be released at the same time on 14 July.

12.   There are several reasons why we are not able to shorten the release time further for the first assessment event of 2025. These include:

- We can only start marking processes once the two-week assessment window closes. Our system does not allow an assessment to be live for students and for marking to occur at the same time.

- The operationalising of the auto-text scoring for Writing carries some risks due to the result integration requirements with NZQA's system[2], so we need some contingency time.

- Altering the format of the Numeracy assessment to adopt multiple choice items requires in-depth development and testing. A "multiple-choice assessment" can therefore only be ready for the September assessment event of 2025, at the earliest.

---

[1] Behaviours which compromise the integrity of the assessments and the assessment process.

[2] NZQA's core IT infrastructure is critical to delivering our core functions. We have a significant 3-6 year programme of work underway to ensure our systems are future-proofed and support a robust digital assessment environment. In the interim, additional support is needed to ensure digital vendor applications such as the auto marking application integrate with our core result and records management system.

OC01148

13. The tables below summarise our plan for the activities and timings for each phase of the marking, quality assurance and results processing activities for Reading, Writing, and Numeracy.

Reading

Activity	2025 Assessment Event 1 timings	Comparative 2024 Assessment Event 1 timings
Data extraction and preparation for machine marking	1 week	2 weeks (delays due to other activities)
Machine marking processes	3 days	2 weeks (included marking of paper assessments)
Cut score setting to determine achieved/not achieved for two assessments by the Examiner, NZQA staff, and NZCER	3-5 days	3-5 days
Results preparation for release including quality checks of system configurations, entries against results reconciliation, and preparation of student feedback reports	1 week	2 weeks
Total	**3.5 weeks**	**7 weeks**

Writing

Activity	2025 Assessment Event 1 timings	Comparative 2024 Assessment Event 1 timings
Data extraction and preparation for external vendor	0.5 week	1 week (preparation for marking)
Auto-text scoring processes with external vendor and concurrent check marking of 10% of scripts (~6,000)	1 week	5 weeks of marking time including school holidays. Covers benchmarking, marker training and marking for the two Writing assessments offered.
Results integration back into eQA legacy system	2 weeks	n/a
Cut score setting to determine achieved/not achieved for the two assessments by the Examiner, NZQA staff, and NZCER	3-5 days	3-5 days
Results preparation for release including quality checks of system configurations, entries against results reconciliation, and preparation of student feedback reports	1 week	2 weeks
Total	**5 weeks**	**9 weeks**

OC01148

Numeracy

Activity	2025 Assessment Event 1 timings	Comparative 2024 Assessment Event 1 timings
Data extraction and preparation for marking	0.5 week	1 week
Benchmarking processes with senior markers	2 days (weekend)	2 days
Benchmarking with all markers	2 days	2 days
Marking	2 weeks	4 weeks including school holidays
Cut score setting to determine achieved/not achieved for the two assessments by the Examiner, NZQA staff, and NZCER	3-5 days	3-5 days
Results preparation for release including quality checks of system configurations, and preparation of student feedback reports	1 week	2 weeks
Total	**5 weeks**	**9 weeks**

14. Results releases for the Te Reo Matatini me te Pāngarau co-requisite assessments will follow the same timeframe as Writing and Numeracy.

15. In summary, the period between the release of the results of the first assessment event and the start of the second assessment event in 2025 will be extended from the 2024 five weeks. The table below shows this.

	Assessment Event 1 2025	Planned results release date 2025	Assessment Event 2 2025	Time between results release event 1 and start of assessment event 2
Reading	19-30 May	25 June	1-12 September	9.5 weeks
Writing	19-30 May	14 July	1-12 September	7 weeks
Numeracy	19-30 May	14 July	1-12 September	7 weeks

Next steps

16. We will provide you with confirmation of our approach for 2025 in early December ahead of the release of the September 2024 assessment event results on 5 December. The confirmation of our approach will include the outcomes and lessons learned from both the auto-text scoring pilot for the Writing assessments, and the work to adapt the Numeracy assessment to be a fully multi-choice assessment.

Dr Grant Klinkum

Chief Executive

3 September 2024

Hon Erica Stanford

Minister of Education

__ __ / __ __ / __ __