

Aide-Memoire: 2019 NCEA Online Summary

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education
From:	Dr Karen Poutasi, Chief Executive
Date:	2 December 2019
Reference:	CR19957

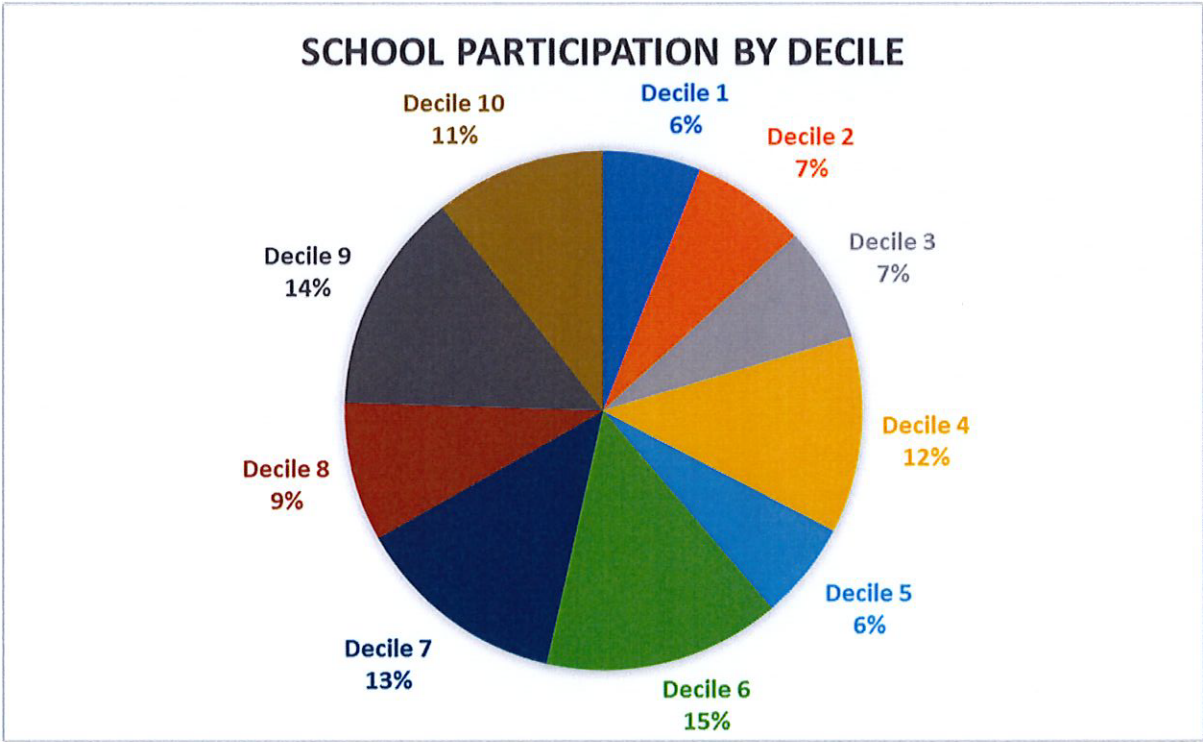
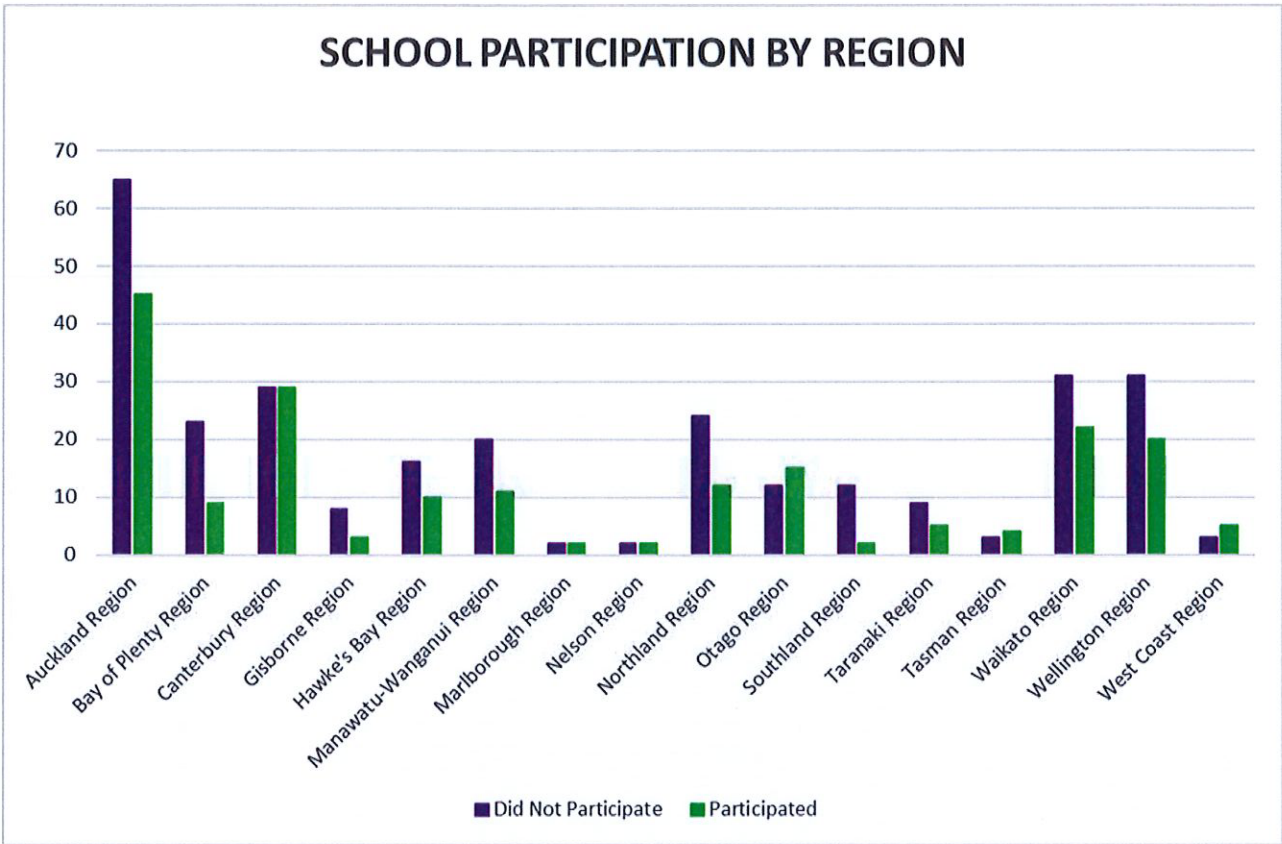
Purpose

1. This aide memoire is to provide you with a high-level summary of the 2019 NCEA Online experience for schools, noting that the full evaluation, including additional data analysis, survey results and qualitative feedback will be published around March / April 2020 when all results processing is completed.
2. NZQA proposes to proactively release this briefing as part of the next publication of documents.

Background

3. As part of the regular examination cycle for 2019, and enabled by the Budget 19/20 appropriation, NZQA offered 35 digital examinations (four times as many as in 2018). There were entries from approximately 20,000 students (three times as many as in 2018) attending approximately 200 examination centres (four times as many as in 2018).
4. As is usual for examinations, a smaller number of students attend on the day than entries suggest, and this is the case with NCEA Online as well. Some students switch to paper before the examination commences, and if they experience technical issues, e.g. with their device, they may switch during an examination. A summary level reconciliation of entries and digital results will be published as part of the 2019 NCEA Online User Experience Evaluation in March / April 2020.
5. Some provisional highlight numbers:
 - a. Largest digital sitting days – over 5000 students (2 days in a row)
 - b. Largest digital examination cohort – 4850 students for English Level 1
 - c. Six schools have had 200 – 400+ students (generally their whole cohort) doing digital examinations at one time
 - d. 1 school participated in 18 digital examination sessions
 - e. 19% of schools participated in 1 digital examination session; these were mainly schools new to NCEA Online
 - f. 78% of schools participated in 1 – 6 digital examination sessions

6. The following tables outline the provisional national picture of school-level participation in NCEA Online:



Note that lower decile schools have overall lower levels of participation in external examinations.

Discussion

7. Early indications from the student surveys are that students continue to highly value the opportunity to sit their examinations online. The following are a sample of unsolicited feedback directly from schools, none of which participated in 2018:

"Yay!!! Very exciting running our first digital exam. I'm totally converted. Our taiohi loved it too." [REDACTED]

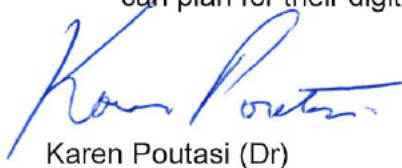
"Just wanted to pass on from [REDACTED] school there very positive response to the digital exams. The Principal Nominee has said the four they have done this year have been such a positive experience that they are already thinking and discussing which they will do in 2020. Staff are excited."

"I visited [REDACTED] this morning; they did one digital exam this year and told me that it went so well they are intending to enter all candidates into every digital exam available for the subjects they do next year."

8. The NZQA support model for NCEA Online worked well when it was needed. This year N4L undertook the role of monitoring Internet access into schools, potential security threats towards NCEA Online schools, and monitoring the examination dashboards.
9. As in previous years, a small number of students experienced technical issues, with causes traceable to their device, the school infrastructure, or the assessment software. All issues were quickly contained and managed. NZQA has well developed processes for marking and managing the application of Derived Grades so students are not disadvantaged.
10. With ongoing investment, NZQA will offer Te Reo Māori and Te Reo Rangatira at Levels 2 and 3, as well as the foreign languages in 2020. We will also work on new functionality, for example, for increased support for students with Special Assessment Conditions or other undiagnosed conditions for which computer support is essential, supporting changes arising from the Review of Achievement Standards and making improvements to stay on top of security and software quality, as uptake of NCEA Online scales.

Next steps

11. NZQA will shortly communicate the NCEA Online 2020 work programme to schools so they can plan for their digital participation in 2020.



Karen Poutasi (Dr)

Chief Executive, NZQA

02/12/19

Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister Education

___ / ___ / ___