

Final version for signatures for the purposes of section 452 of the Education and Training Act 2020

NZQA Board:  Date: 24 April 2025
Minister of Education:  Date: 14/5/25

Programme Approval, Recognition, and Accreditation Rules 2025

1. Authority

- 1.1 These Rules are made under section 452 of the Education and Training Act 2020.

2. Commencement

- 2.1 These Rules commence on 1 July 2025.

3. Interpretation

- 3.1 In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

accreditation means accreditation to provide all or part of an approved programme (including a New Zealand programme) under section 441 of the Act

Act means the Education and Training Act 2020

approval means approval of a programme under section 439 of the Act

consent and moderation requirements means the standard-setting body requirements listed for standards that relate to the particular skills and knowledge of teachers and assessors, any special resources required for assessing against the standards, learner access to resources, practical experience, and national external moderation

credit recognition and transfer means a formal process whereby credit for outcomes already achieved by a student in relation to a qualification is recognised as credit for comparable outcomes in another qualification

external evaluation and review, or **EER**, means the quality assurance system known as EER that is set out in the rules from time to time made under section 452 of the Act

industry qualification means a qualification maintained by a WDC for the purposes of section 366(1)(c) of the Act

institution has the same meaning as in section 10(5) of the Act

level means any of levels 1 to 10 on the NZQCF

national curriculum means a national curriculum for a qualification developed and maintained by a standard-setting body for the purposes of section 438A of the Act

New Zealand programme means a national curriculum developed by an approved standard-setting body for the purposes of section 438A of the Act

NZQCF means the Qualifications and Credentials Framework described in section 436 of the Act

programme has the same meaning as in section 10(1) of the Act, and by virtue of section 438C of the Act includes a New Zealand programme

qualification means a qualification listed on the NZQCF

qualification-type description means the description for the relevant qualification type set out in **Appendix 2** of the Qualification and Micro-credential Listing and Operational Rules

recognised New Zealand programme means a New Zealand programme recognised by NZQA under section 438B of the Act

recognition of prior learning means a process that involves formal assessment of a student's relevant and current knowledge and skills (*gained through prior learning*) to determine achievement of learning outcomes of a programme leading to a qualification for the purpose of awarding credit towards that qualification; and for the avoidance of doubt it does not include credit recognition and transfer

standard-setting body means an approved standard-setting body as described in section 438(1) of the Act

Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance means applying Te Hono o Te Kahurangi whare ako framework and quality assurance tools for programmes and accreditation, as that framework and those tools are published by NZQA from time to time on its website

Type 1 change means one or more changes to components of an approved programme which do not impact on the programme as a whole

Type 2 change means one or more changes to components of an approved programme which do have an impact on the programme as a whole

Universities New Zealand means the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee continued by section 311 of the Act

WDC means a workforce development council as defined in section 10(1) of the Act.

Part 1

Programme approval and recognition criteria and applications

4. Criteria for approval of programmes for institutions under section 439 of the Act

4.1 The following are the criteria for approval of programmes for institutions:

Criterion 1 Qualification to which the programme leads

The programme meets both the listing details for the qualification it relates to and the qualification-type description.

Criterion 2 Title, aims, learning outcomes and coherence

The title, aims, stated learning outcomes, and coherence of the whole programme are suitable for the qualification it relates to.

Criterion 3 Delivery methods

The delivery methods are adequate and appropriate, given the stated learning outcomes for the programme. Where specific resources are necessary for the programme to be provided, those resources are clearly outlined.

Criterion 4 Acceptability of the programme and consultation

There is a written summary of the consultation undertaken, the views expressed, and consideration of the views. The consultation and summary must articulate the need for and acceptability of the programme to the relevant communities (*including ākonga, whānau, hapū, iwi and where appropriate, hapori Māori*) and other key stakeholders (*including the qualification developer and any relevant academic, employer, industry, professional and other bodies*). Any required endorsement by a WDC under section 366(1)(g) of the Act must have been obtained.

Criterion 5 Regulations

There are clear, relevant, and appropriate regulations that specify requirements for:

- admission
- credit recognition and transfer
- recognition of prior learning
- programme length and structure
- integration of practical and work-based components
- assessment procedures, including authenticity of student work
- normal progression within the programme, and completion.

Criterion 6 Assessment and moderation

Assessment methodology is fair, valid, consistent and appropriate given the stated learning outcomes.

There is an effective system for moderation of assessment materials and decisions.

Criterion 7 Programme review

The institution:

- assesses the currency and content of the programme
- has adequate and effective processes for the ongoing review of the programme, taking account of the results of any review of the qualification
- has adequate and effective processes for monitoring the quality of outcomes for learners and other stakeholders, and for reviewing programme regulations and content
- updates the programme accordingly.

Criterion 8 Research required for degrees and post-graduate qualifications

The links between research and the curriculum are clear, adequate, and effective.

5. Applications for approval of programmes

5.1. Applications by institutions (*other than universities*) for approval of programmes at

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levels 1 to 6, and under-graduate diplomas at level 7, must contain the following information:

- (a) programme documentation that includes:
 - (i) a clear statement of the title and aims of the programme;
 - (ii) a clear articulation of the structure, components and length of the programme;
 - (iii) clearly identified links between the programme component learning outcomes and the qualification graduate profile outcomes;
 - (iv) specified learning outcomes for each component of the programme;
 - (v) allocation of appropriate levels and credits for each component; and
 - (vi) clear identification of any standards used in the programme that are taken from the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards;
 - (b) information that demonstrates the programme meets the criteria specified in rule 4.1;
 - (c) evidence of internal quality assurance approval of the programme by the institution;
 - (d) an explanation of how the institution will monitor and assure the consistency of qualification achievement by students;
 - (e) a copy of any required endorsement of a WDC under section 366(1)(g) of the Act.
- 5.2. Applications by institutions (*other than universities*) for approval of programmes leading to degree, graduate and post-graduate qualifications at levels 7 to 10 must contain the following:
- (a) programme documentation that includes:
 - (i) a clear statement of title and aims of the programme;
 - (ii) a clear articulation of the structure, components and length of the programme;
 - (iii) specified learning outcomes for each component of the programme;
 - (iv) clearly identified links between the programme component learning outcomes and the qualification graduate profile outcomes; and
 - (v) allocation of appropriate levels and credits for each component;
 - (b) information that demonstrates the programme meets the criteria specified in rule 4.1;
 - (c) evidence of internal quality assurance approval of the programme by the institution.
- 5.3. Applications by universities for programme approval must be made to Universities New Zealand.

6. New Zealand programme recognition

- 6.1. An application for recognition of a New Zealand programme under section 438B must contain the following information, and will be assessed against that information:

Criterion 1 Title and purpose statement

The title identifies the qualification to which the New Zealand programme leads.

There is a suitable purpose statement.

Criterion 2 Structure, length, coherence, and relationship to qualification

The structure (*including components and learning outcomes*), length, and coherence of the whole New Zealand programme are suitable for the qualification it relates to.

Any standards to be used in the New Zealand programme are to be identified.

The New Zealand programme meets both the listing details for the qualification it relates to and the qualification-type description.

Criterion 3 Delivery methods

The delivery methods must be adequate and appropriate, given the stated learning outcomes for the programme. Where specific resources are necessary for the programme to be provided, those resources are clearly outlined.

Criterion 4 Collaboration, acceptability and consultation

There is a written summary of the collaborative process and consultation undertaken, the views expressed, and consideration of the views. The consultation and summary must identify the bodies that participated and articulate the need for and acceptability of the programme to the relevant communities (*including ākonga, whānau, hapū, iwi and where appropriate, hāpori Māori*) and other key stakeholders (*including the qualification developer, institutions that will be providing the programme, other standard-setting bodies, and any relevant academic, employer, industry, regulatory, professional and other bodies*).

Criterion 5 Regulations

There are clear, relevant, and appropriate regulations that specify requirements for:

- admission
- credit recognition and transfer
- recognition of prior learning
- programme length and structure
- integration of practical and work-based components
- assessment procedures, including authenticity of student work
- normal progression within the programme, and completion
- details for transitioning from an approved programme to the recognised New Zealand programme, for both students and accredited institutions.

Criterion 6 Assessment and moderation

Assessment methodology is fair, valid, consistent and appropriate given the stated learning outcomes. Any assessment requirements, in addition to those specified in standards used in the programme, are identified.

There is an effective system for moderation of assessment materials and decisions.

Criterion 7 Review

The approved standard-setting body:

- assesses the currency and content of the programme
- has adequate and effective processes for the ongoing review of the programme, taking account of the results of any review of the qualification
- has adequate and effective processes for monitoring the quality of outcomes for learners and other stakeholders, and for reviewing programme regulations and content

- updates the programme accordingly.

Part 2

Accreditation criteria and applications

7. Criteria for accreditation of institutions to provide approved programmes or parts of approved programmes under section 441 of the Act

- 7.1 The following are the criteria for accreditation of institutions to provide approved programmes or recognised New Zealand programmes or parts of those programmes:

Criterion 1 Assessment and moderation

The institution has the capability and capacity to ensure assessment materials and decisions are fair, valid, consistent and appropriate for the level, given the stated learning outcomes.

Criterion 2 Resources

The institution has the capability and capacity to support sustained delivery of the programme through appropriate academic staffing, teaching facilities, educational and physical resources, and support services.

Criterion 3 Support for delivery

If the applicant institution is not the holder of the programme approval, there is support from the holder of the programme approval.

Criterion 4 Programme review

There must be adequate and effective review of programme performance and the institution's capability to support the programme.

There must be monitoring of improvement following review, and processes for determining whether the programme should continue to be delivered.

Criterion 5 Research activity required to deliver degrees and post-graduate qualifications

Research facilities and the support of staff involved in research are adequate, the levels of research activity of staff involved in the programme are satisfactory, and the ways by which the research-teaching links are made in the curriculum are appropriate.

8. Applications for accreditation to provide approved programmes, recognised New Zealand programmes or parts of those programmes

- 8.1 This rule 8 applies to applications by institutions (*other than universities*) for accreditation to provide:
- (a) an approved programme; or
 - (b) a recognised New Zealand programme; or
 - (c) part of an approved programme or recognised New Zealand programme.
- 8.2 For programmes at levels 1 to 6 and programmes for under-graduate diplomas at level 7, applications must contain the following information:
- (a) information that demonstrates the institution meets the criteria specified in rule 7.1:

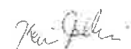
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- (b) evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the institution:
 - (c) agreement to participate in the monitoring of consistency of qualification achievement by students for the purposes of rule 5.1(d).
- 8.3 For programmes leading to a degree or to graduate or post-graduate qualifications at levels 7 to 10, applications must contain the following information:
- (a) information that demonstrates the institution meets the criteria specified in rule 7.1:
 - (b) evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the institution.
- 8.4 Where the programme or part of the programme for which accreditation is sought includes assessment of standards listed on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards, and the applicant is not the holder of a consent to assess against those standards under section 449 of the Act the applicant must also provide evidence of the applicant's ability to meet the consent and moderation requirements for those standards.
- 9. University accreditation applications**
- 9.1 Applications by universities for accreditation to provide an approved programme, a recognised New Zealand programme, or parts of them must be made to Universities New Zealand.

Part 3

Granting of programme approval, recognition and accreditation

- 10. Granting of programme approval, recognition and accreditation (*other than universities*)**
- 10.1 NZQA will advise applicant institutions (*other than universities*) if any of the details in the application require further work.
- 10.2 NZQA may establish a panel to assess the application.
- 10.3 NZQA may carry out a site visit for accreditation applications.
- 10.4 Where NZQA is satisfied with the details in the relevant application, NZQA will grant, and advise the applicant institution of:
- (a) approval of the programme or recognition of the New Zealand programme:
 - (b) accreditation to provide the approved programme, the New Zealand programme or part of the programme.
- 10.5 Where NZQA is not satisfied with the details in the application, NZQA will not approve the application, and will advise the applicant.
- 10.6 NZQA will publish on its website up to date and appropriate details of approved programmes, recognised New Zealand programmes and details of institutions accredited to provide approved programmes, New Zealand programmes or parts of them.
- 11. Granting of programme approval and granting of accreditation to universities**
- 11.1 Where satisfied with the content of an application, Universities New Zealand will, under section 453 of the Act and in accordance with any procedures set up for inter-university course approval and moderation under section 312(a) of the Act, grant the relevant:
- (a) programme approval:
 - (b) accreditation.



Part 4

Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance

12. Requests for Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance

- 12.1 When applying for programme approval, New Zealand programme recognition or accreditation, an applicant may request that Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance is used for assessment of the application.
- 12.2 An applicant making a request under rule 12.1, in addition to providing the relevant information required under rules 4 to 7, must provide the information that the Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance framework and tools require, including a self-reflective summary which shows how the applicant meets the criteria expressed through ngā kaupapa o Te Hono o Te Kahurangi.
- 12.3 NZQA will evaluate a request made under rule 12.1, together with the information supplied, in accordance with Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance.

Part 5

Maintaining programme approval, New Zealand programme recognition and accreditation

13. Requirements to be met to maintain programme approval

- 13.1 To continue to maintain a programme approval leading to a qualification at levels 1 to 6, and for an under-graduate diploma at level 7, institutions (*other than universities*) must ensure:
 - (a) the criteria specified in rule 4.1 continue to be met:
 - (b) ongoing assessment and reviews of the programme are undertaken:
 - (c) the consistency of qualification achievement by students for the purposes of rule 5.1(d) is monitored and assured:
 - (d) relevant information is provided where requested by NZQA for the purposes of:
 - (i) assuring consistency of graduates of New Zealand qualifications at levels 1-6, and of under-graduate diplomas at level 7; and
 - (ii) reviews of suites of qualifications and of individual qualifications:
 - (e) where requested by NZQA, participation and cooperation for the purposes of assuring consistency and carrying out reviews as described in rule 13.1(d)(i) and (ii).
- 13.2 To continue to maintain approval of a programme leading to a degree, graduate or post-graduate qualification at levels 7 to 10, institutions (*other than universities*) must:
 - (a) ensure the criteria specified in rule 4.1 continue to be met:
 - (b) ensure regular reviews of the programme are undertaken.
- 13.3 To continue to maintain approval of a programme universities must:
 - (a) ensure the criteria specified in rule 4.1 continue to be met:
 - (b) ensure regular reviews of the programme are undertaken.

14. Requirements to be met to maintain New Zealand programme recognition

- 14.1 To continue to maintain New Zealand programme recognition the standard-setting body must:
 - (a) ensure the criteria specified in rule 6.1 continue to be met:
 - (b) ensure regular reviews of the programme are undertaken.

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15. Requirements to be met to maintain accreditation

- 15.1 To continue to maintain accreditation to provide an approved programme, a New Zealand programme or part of them at levels 1 to 6, or an under-graduate diploma at level 7, institutions (*other than universities*) must:
- (a) ensure the criteria specified in rule 7.1 continue to be met:
 - (b) participate and cooperate in the monitoring of consistency of qualification achievement by students for the purposes of rule 5.1(d):
 - (c) undertake self-assessment:
 - (d) provide the programme (*or part*) as it was approved, including adhering to the programme regulations, unless a specific change has been approved in writing by NZQA:
 - (e) participate and cooperate in external evaluation and review:
 - (f) where requested by NZQA, participate and co-operate in programme monitoring, which may include visits to the institution:
 - (g) provide relevant information where requested by NZQA for the purposes of:
 - (i) assuring consistency of graduates of New Zealand qualifications at levels 1-6, and of under-graduate diplomas at level 7; and
 - (ii) reviews of suites of qualifications and of individual qualifications:
 - (h) where requested by NZQA, participate and cooperate for the purposes of assuring consistency and carrying out reviews as described in sub-paragraphs (g)(i) and (ii) of this rule 15.1:
 - (i) provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate consistency of graduate outcomes effectively, when participating in the process of assuring consistency.
- 15.2 To continue to maintain accreditation to provide an approved programme, a New Zealand programme or part of them leading to a degree, graduate or post-graduate qualification at levels 7 to 10 institutions (*other than universities*) must:
- (a) ensure the criteria specified within rule 7.1 continue to be met:
 - (b) undertake self-assessment:
 - (c) provide the programme (*or part*) as it was approved, including adhering to the programme regulations, unless a specific change has been approved in writing by NZQA:
 - (d) participate and cooperate in external evaluation and review:
 - (e) participate and cooperate in monitoring, which will consist of either:
 - (i) annual visits to the institution by the NZQA appointed monitor, reports by the monitor on the implementation of the programme, and reviews of the first graduating years of programmes by the institution; or
 - (ii) where NZQA permits, self-monitoring in accordance with any conditions imposed by NZQA.
- 15.3 To continue to maintain accreditation to provide a programme, New Zealand programme or part of them universities must:
- (a) ensure the criteria specified within rule 7.1 continue to be met:
 - (b) ensure regular reviews of the provision of the programme are undertaken.
- 15.4 Where the programme or New Zealand programme to which the accreditation relates contains standards, institutions must continue to comply with rules made under section 452(1)(c) for the purposes of maintaining the consent to assess for those standards.

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Part 6

Changes to approved programmes

- 16. Changes to approved programmes by institutions**
- 16.1 Before an institution carries out a Type 1 change to an approved programme, the institution must notify NZQA of the change.
- 16.2 Before an institution carries out a Type 2 change to an approved programme, the institution must:
- (a) obtain endorsement from the relevant WDC where the programme leads to an industry qualification (*except where this is not necessary under section 367 of the Act in relation to wānanga*); and
 - (b) obtain approval from NZQA for the change after applying to NZQA and providing the information in rule 16.3.
- 16.3 The information required for the purposes of an application for a Type 2 change under rule 16.2 is:
- (a) full details of the changes made to the approved programme and any impacts on the accreditation of institutions to provide the programme or part of the programme;
 - (b) information that demonstrates the programme continues to meet the criteria specified in rule 4.1;
 - (c) evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the institution;
 - (d) a copy of any WDC endorsement obtained under rule 16.2(a).
- 17. Process and notification of result of application for Type 2 programme changes**
- 17.1 NZQA will advise applicants if any of the details in the application for a Type 2 change requires further work.
- 17.2 NZQA may establish a panel to assess the application.
- 17.3 NZQA may carry out a site visit.
- 17.4 Where NZQA is satisfied with the details in the application, NZQA will approve the application and advise the applicant.
- 17.5 If there are a significant number of changes made to the programme NZQA may decline the application and require a new programme approval application to be submitted.
- 17.6 Where NZQA is not satisfied with the details in the application, NZQA will decline the application, and will advise the applicant.
- 17.7 NZQA will publish on its website up to date and appropriate details of the approved changes to the programme.
- 18. Changes to New Zealand programmes**
- 18.1 Before a standard-setting body carries out a Type 1 change to a New Zealand programme, the standard-setting body must:
- (a) consult institutions accredited to provide that programme on the proposed changes and consider their views;
 - (b) notify institutions accredited to provide that programme of the changes made after considering their views; and
 - (c) notify NZQA of the changes.

- 18.2 Before a standard-setting body carries out a Type 2 change to a New Zealand programme, the standard-setting body must:
- (a) consult institutions accredited to provide that programme on the proposed changes and consider their views;
 - (b) obtain approval from NZQA for the change after applying to NZQA and providing the information described in rule 18.3; and
 - (c) notify institutions accredited to provide the programme of the changes.
- 18.3 The information required for the purposes of an application for a Type 2 change under rule 18.2 is:
- (a) full details of the changes made to the New Zealand programme and any impacts on the accreditation of institutions to provide the programme or part of the programme;
 - (b) information that demonstrates the New Zealand programme continues to meet the criteria specified in rule 6.1;
 - (c) evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the standard-setting body.
- 19. Programme changes by universities**
- 19.1 Universities New Zealand will, under section 453 of the Act and in accordance with any procedures set up for inter-university course approval and moderation under section 312(a) of the Act, approve programme changes for universities.

Part 7

Miscellaneous requirements

- 20. Use of sub-contractors by institutions other than universities to provide approved programmes, New Zealand programmes or parts of them**
- 20.1 Where an institution (*other than a university*) proposes to use a sub-contractor to provide an approved programme, a New Zealand programme, or part of a programme on the institution's behalf, and the institution and the sub-contractor are both accredited to provide the programme (*or part*), the institution must notify NZQA of the sub-contracting arrangement prior to the programme (*or part*) being provided, and supply the following information with that notification:
- (a) a copy of the sub-contracting agreement which must outline the responsibilities and obligations of the parties;
 - (b) the duration of the arrangement;
 - (c) the reasons for the arrangement;
 - (d) confirmation that any advertising and other information provided to prospective students clearly shows that the study or training involved is provided under a sub-contracting arrangement.
- 20.2 Where an institution (*other than a university*) proposes to use a sub-contractor to provide an approved programme, New Zealand programme or part of a programme that the institution is accredited to provide, and the sub-contractor does not itself hold accreditation, the institution must apply to NZQA for approval to engage the sub-contractor prior to any provision of the programme (*or part*) by the sub-contractor.
- 20.3 Applications under rule 20.2 for approval to engage the sub-contractor must include the following information:
- (a) the name of the sub-contractor;
 - (b) identification of the programme(s) or part(s) to be provided under the arrangement;



- (c) the rationale for the proposed sub-contracting arrangement;
 - (d) a copy of the sub-contracting arrangement between the institution and the sub-contractor;
 - (e) evidence of internal quality assurance approval by the institution.
- 20.4 NZQA will grant approval to an application under rule 20.2 where it is satisfied that:
- (a) the institution remains responsible for the sub-contractor meeting all of the institution's obligations that are relevant for the accreditation;
 - (b) the sub-contractor will meet all relevant obligations in the Act and in rules made under section 452 of the Act in relation to the provision of the programme or part;
 - (c) there is a formal documented arrangement between the holder and the sub-contractor that includes provisions to ensure that NZQA is able to exercise its quality assurance and enforcement powers and functions in respect of the acts or omissions of the sub-contractor relating to the provision of the programme or part;
 - (d) the information and advertising for the study or training clearly states that it is provided through a sub-contracting arrangement;
 - (e) all student enrolments are through the institution, and the institution maintains all student enrolment and academic information.
- 20.5 To continue to maintain approval under rule 20.4 an institution must ensure the sub-contracting is conducted at all times in accordance with the requirements set out in paragraphs (a) to (e) of rule 20.4.

21. Special reviews

- 21.1 Where concerns are raised with or come to the attention of NZQA about a programme approval, New Zealand programme recognition, or accreditation to provide an approved programme or recognised New Zealand programme, NZQA may undertake (as appropriate) a special review of:
- (a) the programme approval (*other than a university programme approval*);
 - (b) the New Zealand programme recognition held by a standard-setting body;
 - (c) the accreditation to provide the programme (*other than a university accreditation*) or the New Zealand programme.
- 21.2 Before NZQA undertakes a review described in rule 21.1, NZQA must give reasonable notice to the relevant institution or standard-setting body.
- 21.3 The relevant institution or standard-setting body must provide relevant information and otherwise cooperate with NZQA for the purposes of the special review.

22. English language requirements for international students

- 22.1 An institution (*other than a university*) must:
- (a) verify, prior to enrolling an international student in a programme (*other than an English language programme or a programme taught in a language other than English*) at level 3 or above, that the student has the necessary English language proficiency as demonstrated through the use of evidence of one of the kinds described in rules 22.2 to 22.4; and
 - (b) retain a copy of that evidence for at least two years from the date the student is enrolled in that programme.
- 22.2 Evidence that the student has:
- (a) achieved NCEA level 3 and has met New Zealand university entrance requirements; or
 - (b) been awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma or Cambridge A-level

- qualification for which the teaching and assessment was conducted in English; or
- (c) been awarded the Cambridge Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) or the Trinity College London Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CertTESOL); or
- (d) achieved, within the two years preceding the start date of the programme in which the student is enrolled, one of the internationally recognised proficiency test outcomes specified in the Table in Appendix 1 for the level of the programme in which the student is enrolling.

22.3 Evidence that the student has:

- (a) completed all primary education (*being the equivalent of New Zealand primary school years 1 to 8*) and at least three years of secondary education (*being the equivalent of three years from New Zealand secondary school years 9 to 13*) at schools in one of the countries listed in rule 22.5 where the student was taught using English as the language of instruction; or
- (b) completed at least five years of secondary education (*being the equivalent of New Zealand secondary school years 9 to 13*) at schools in one of the countries listed in rule 22.5 where the student was taught using English as the language of instruction; or
- (c) been awarded a Bachelor's degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Bachelor Honours Degree, Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, Master's Degree or Doctoral Degree with English as the language of instruction from a tertiary education provider from one of the countries listed in rule 22.5; or
- (d) met the English level and grade specified for the European countries listed in the Table in Appendix 2.

22.4 Evidence that the student has been granted a Manaāki New Zealand Short Term Training Scholarship offered by the New Zealand government and has:

- (a) completed all primary education (*being the equivalent of New Zealand primary school years 1 to 8*) and at least three years of secondary education (*being the equivalent of three years from New Zealand secondary school years 9 to 13*) at schools where the student was taught using English as the language of instruction; or
- (b) completed at least five years of secondary education (*being the equivalent of New Zealand secondary school years 9 to 13*) at schools where the student was taught using English as the language of instruction.

22.5 The countries for the purpose of paragraphs (a) - (c) of rule 22.3 are: New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

22.6 Nothing in this rule 22:

- (a) prevents an institution from requiring from a student a higher level of evidence of English proficiency than that set out in this rule 22; or
- (b) requires an institution to enrol a particular student who has the relevant evidence of English proficiency set out in this rule 22.

23. Revocations

23.1 The Programme Approval, Recognition, and Accreditation Rules 2022 are revoked.

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Appendix 1

Rule 22.2(d)

Internationally Recognised English Proficiency Outcomes for International Students

Acronyms used in the Table below

- C1 Advanced – the qualification of Cambridge Assessment English of that name, found at <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/advanced/>
- C2 Proficiency – the qualification of Cambridge Assessment English of that name, found at <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/proficiency/>
- B2 First – the qualification of Cambridge Assessment English of that name, found at <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/first/>
- B2 First for Schools – the qualification of Cambridge Assessment English of that name found at <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-tests/first-for-schools/>
- IELTS – the International English Language Testing System, jointly owned by the British Council, IDP Education Australia, and Cambridge English Language Assessment, found at <http://www.ielts.org>
- LanguageCert - a set of English Language qualifications owned by PeopleCert Qualifications Limited, member of the PeopleCert Group, found at www.languagecert.org
- LRW – listening, reading, and writing.
- NZCEL – the New Zealand Certificates in English Language listed on the NZQCF (NZQA *being the qualification developer*).
- OET – the Occupational English Test of Cambridge Boxhill Language Assessment, found at <https://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/>
- PTE – the Pearson Test of English (Academic), found at <https://pearsonpte.com>.
- TOEFL – the Test of English as a Foreign Language of the Educational Testing Service, whose headquarters are in Princeton, United States, found at <http://www.ets.org/toefl>
- Trinity ISE – the Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English, found at <http://www.trinitycollege.com/site/?id=3192>

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TABLE for Internationally Recognised English Proficiency Outcomes for International Students					
Internationally recognised proficiency tests	Programme Level and required outcome taking into account the Criteria listed under this Table that must be applied				
	Certificate at Level 3	Certificate at Level 4	Certificate or Diploma at Level 5	Certificate or Diploma at Level 6 Diploma or degree at Level 7 Graduate Certificate or Diploma at Level 7	Post-graduate Diploma or Post-graduate Certificate at Level 8 Bachelor Honours Degree at Level 8 Master's Degree at Level 9 Doctoral Degree at Level 10
IELTS test	General or Academic score of 5 with no band score lower than 5	General or Academic score of 5.5 with no band score lower than 5	Academic score of 5.5 with no band score lower than 5	Academic score of 6 with no band score lower than 5.5	Academic score of 6.5 with no band score lower than 6
TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT)	Score of 35 (with a writing score of 14)	Score of 46 (with a writing score of 14)	Score of 46 (with a writing score of 14)	Score of 60 (with a writing score of 18)	Score of 79 (with a writing score of 21)
Cambridge English Qualifications	B2 First or B2 First for Schools with a score of 154. No less than 154 in each skill	B2 First or B2 First for schools with a score of 162. No less than 154 in each skill	B2 First or B2 First for schools with a score of 162. No less than 154 in each skill	B2 First, B2 First for schools, C1 Advanced, or C2 Proficiency with a score of 169. No less than 162 in each skill	B2 First, B2 First for schools, C1 Advanced or C2 Proficiency with a score of 176. No less than 169 in each skill
OET	Minimum of Grade C or 200 in all sub-tests	Minimum of Grade C or 200 in all sub-tests	Minimum of Grade C or 200 in all sub-tests	Minimum of Grade C or 200 in all sub-tests	Minimum of Grade C+ or 300 in all sub-tests

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NZCEL	Level 3 (General)	Level 3 (Applied) or (Academic)	Level 4 (General) or (Employment)	Level 4 (Academic)	Level 5 (Academic)
Pearson Test of English (Academic)	PTE (Academic) score of 36 with no band score lower than 36	PTE (Academic) score of 42 with no band score lower than 36	PTE (Academic) score of 42 with no band score lower than 36	PTE (Academic) score of 50 with no band score lower than 42	PTE (Academic) score of 58 with no band score lower than 50
LanguageCert	International ESOL B1 Achiever with overall PASS and no less than 25/50 in each skill or Academic with a minimum score of 55 overall and no skill below 55	International ESOL B2 Communicator with overall PASS and no less than 25/50 in each skill or Academic with a minimum score of 60 overall and no skill below 55	International ESOL B2 Communicator with overall HIGH PASS and no less than 25/50 in each skill or Academic with a minimum score of 65 overall and no skill below 60	International ESOL C1 Expert with overall HIGH PASS and no less than 25/50 in each skill or Academic with a minimum score of 70 overall and no skill below 65	International ESOL C1 Expert with overall HIGH PASS and no less than 25/50 in each skill or Academic with a minimum score of 70 overall and no skill below 65
Trinity ISE	ISE I with no less than distinction or 71 in any band	ISE II with no less than pass or 80 in any band	ISE II with no less than merit or 90 in any band	ISE II with no less than distinction or 96 in any band	ISE III with no less than pass or 105 in any band

General Criteria that must be applied:

- The listed outcomes represent the minimum scores or grades for each test or qualification that qualify a student for enrolment at each programme level
- Students with higher scores or grades than required for a particular programme level may still enrol at that level
- Where the entry requirements for a programme are for a higher English proficiency outcome than is listed in the relevant row of the Table for the programme level in which the student is being enrolled, the student must meet that higher level
- Test results for any student must be verified through the test provider

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Test-specific Criteria that must be applied:

- The Cambridge English Qualifications must be taken at an authorised exam centre, school or external venue. All test scores must be from a single Statement of Results.
- The IELTS test must be taken at an official IELTS test centre. The scores must be from a single Test Report Form. The IELTS One Skill Retake can be accepted.
- The LanguageCert test must be taken at a LanguageCert approved test centre. All test scores must be from a single Test Report, except for the International ESOL where the results may be provided in a single Statement of Results for Written (LRW) and a separate statement of results for Spoken (S).
- The OET test must be taken at an OET venue. All test scores must be from a single Statement of Results.
- The Pearson Test of English (PTE) test must be taken at a PTE test centre. All test scores must be from a single Score Report.
- The TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT) must be taken entirely at an authorised TOEFL iBT test center. The iBT paper edition has one component (speaking) assessed outside an authorised test centre, so cannot be accepted. All test scores must be from a single Score Report. The 'My Best Scores' option cannot be accepted.
- The Trinity ISE test must be taken at a Trinity registered exam centre. All test scores must be from a single Certificate.

Trinity

Appendix 2

Rule 22.3(d)

English proficiency grade and level specified for the following European countries

Country	English level and grade
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studentereksamen English A grade 7 or English B grade 10
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ylioppilastutkinoto or Studentexamen, English Language grade 5 (0-7 grading scale) • Upper Secondary School Certificate English A or English A Language grade 8 (4-10 grading scale)
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abitur English Language grade 3 (1-6 grading scale) or grade 10 (1-15 grading scale) • DAAD test B2 in all three sections
Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs (VWO) (Gymnasium A/B and Athenaeum A/B) Diplomas (university preparatory education) English Language grade 9 (0-10 grading scale)
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitnemal English Language grade 4 (1-6 grading scale)
Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hogskoleforberedande examen English 6 grade C

Explanatory note

This note is not part of these Rules. It is intended to indicate the general effect of these Rules.

These Rules set out, in relation to programme approval, recognition and accreditation,-

- (a) the processes for making applications:
- (b) requirements for approval, recognition or accreditation to be granted:
- (c) requirements to maintain approval, recognition and accreditation:
- (d) where NZQA consent is needed for changes:
- (e) requirements relating to the use of sub-contractors:
- (f) when and how special reviews may occur:
- (g) English language proficiency requirements for enrolment in a programme at level 3 and above.

These Rules were re-issued in 2025 to:

- (a) update the definition of level descriptors:
- (b) link Criteria 1 and 2 in rule 4.1 more clearly to the listing details for the qualification:
- (c) provide in Criterion 5 of rule 4.1 for programme regulations to have completion requirements:
- (d) add a requirement for a self-reflective summary in rule 12.2 for Te Hono o Te Kahurangi quality assurance:
- (e) remove outdated wording in rule 16.1:
- (f) extend and update English language proficiency outcomes in rule 22 and the Appendices, including adding a new Appendix 2 and renumbering “the Appendix” as Appendix 1:
- (g) clarify in rule 22 that institutions can apply higher levels of evidence of English language proficiency outcomes than that provided in the Rules, and that the Rules do not require an institution to enrol a student who has the relevant evidence of English language proficiency as provided in the Rules:
- (h) make various other minor amendments for grammatical or clarity purposes.

These Rules are administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

