

Summary of Changes to School Assessment Rules for 2026

NZQA revises the Assessment and Examination for NCEA and New Zealand Scholarship Rules ('the Assessment Rules') and their corresponding Administrative Guidelines **annually**. The rules stipulate the conduct for assessment and examination for NCEA and New Zealand Scholarship. They include quality assurance requirements for internal assessment and the quality assurance procedures that will be undertaken by NZQA.

The 2026 Assessment Rules commence on 1 February 2026 and will be made available on the NZQA website.

The Assessment Rules have been revised for 2026 to incorporate changes to requirements for qualifications and awards made in the previous school year and include:

Schedule 1: NCEA Levels 1-3

- Level 2 Psychology has been added to the subjects exempt from the requirement for 3 credits from external assessment for Course Endorsement
- UE numeracy - the 266*** numeracy Unit Standards are no longer valid for the award of University Entrance:
 - a minimum of 10 numeracy or te pāngarau credits either from:
 - (i) NCEA co-requisite standard 32406 (for numeracy) or 32412 (for te pāngarau); or
 - (ii) the Published list of Numeracy Achievement standards for University Entrance.

Schedule 2: Candidate Derived Grade processes

- Approvals of Derived Grades will only be made after completion of the exam cycle
- Review of Appeals changes from the Chief Executive to the Deputy Chief Executive Assessment Division of NZQA.

Schedule 3: Candidate Special Assessment Conditions

- The term "entitlement" has been changed to "provision"
- Review of Appeals changes from the Chief Executive to the Deputy Chief Executive Assessment Division of NZQA.

Schedule 4: Moderation

- Review of Appeals changes from the Chief Executive to the Deputy Chief Executive Assessment Division of NZQA.

Schedule 5: Candidate Breaches of External Assessment

- **Section 5 Decision – making process**

Clause 1(a) has been revised and the following words in parentheses removed: (*with delegated authority from the Chief Executive*). This clause now reads as follows:

“a decision will be made by NZQA on the alleged breach, taking into consideration all the information received, when NZQA reasonably believes there is sufficient information upon which to make the decision”

- Review of Appeals changes from the Chief Executive to the Deputy Chief Executive Assessment Division of NZQA.

Other changes include:

- consistency in wording for appeals and reviews
- format and numbering changes due to the implementation of new specifications for the drafting of secondary legislation
- minor wording clarifications
- changed title, and changes to two definitions.