

Criteria for becoming an Examination Centre

NZQA has two options for candidates at each school to sit their examinations:

- **School is an Examination Centre**
Candidates sit examinations at their own school / kura, managed by an Examination Centre Manager (ECM) based on site.
- **School has a Memorandum of Understanding arrangement with an established Examination Centre**
Candidates sit their examinations at a nearby Examination Centre.

Schools should apply to NZQA if they wish to be an exam centre. Otherwise, they are required to complete a Memorandum of Understanding.

Examination centre criteria

NZQA will check schools that apply to be an examination centre for NCEA and NZ Scholarship examinations against the following requirements. *Note that each school will be quality assured against these, before a final decision is made on their application:*

- **Suitable examination centre facilities**
The school must have suitable rooms that are able to be isolated from the normal activities of the school so that the candidates have a quiet environment. These rooms must be located so there is the ability to retain examination conditions while candidates are visiting the toilet. The school must be able to provide any equipment needed to operate all examinations.
- **Secure storage of examination booklets and materials**
The school must be able to demonstrate that there are secure, lockable and electronically monitored storage facilities where all examination papers can be sorted and stored before and during the examinations. Examination booklets must be stored in a lockable cabinet in an alarmed, lockable room that can only be accessed by the Exam Centre Manager (ECM) and Principal's Nominee (PN). Other options may be acceptable, following discussion with NZQA.
- **Digital examination sessions**
The school must be able to demonstrate that they are able to manage any digital examinations according to NZQA requirements. This includes a stable internet connection, access to trained IT support staff, suitable rooms and candidates trained in the use of digital devices.
- **PN responsibility** The PN must understand what their responsibilities are in the lead up to, during and following examinations. More information is available at [Working with the Examination Centre Manager](#)

Application Process

The school should complete the application form: [NZQA examination centre application 2026 – Fill out form](#) before **Friday, 01 May 2026**. We will then assess all applications and advise of the outcome as soon as possible. After this date any schools who are pre-approved as examination centres will be contacted to schedule a pre-examination quality assurance visit.

The final decision on exam centre applications rests with the Manager, Operations and Logistics.