

Year 11 - FAQ's

Background

In 2018 we participated in the national review of NCEA. We gained feedback from our students, parents and teachers. One outcome of the review was that NCEA is a very flexible system but we could be making better use of the flexibility it provides.

It is evident that three years of continuous NCEA assessments are a contributor to the high stress levels and anxiety experienced by a growing number of students, including at St Hilda's Collegiate School. It is in the best interests of our students to reduce the time spent on assessment and turn the focus to increased engagement in learning. NCEA assessments often have some form of practice assessment, a review and feedback of the practice assessment, and then the actual assessment – this results in many hours being focussed on assessment and fewer on learning.

Prior to NCEA, School Certificate was the minimum exit qualification. Now NCEA Level 2 is the gateway qualification that is the prerequisite for the great majority of tertiary courses and job opportunities.

FAQs

What are the main advantages of having a course at Year 11 with limited NCEA Assessment?

We believe the main advantage is the increased teaching time made available by removing most NCEA assessments. NCEA assessments often have some form of practice assessment, a review and feedback of the practice assessment, and then the actual assessment – this results in many hours being focussed on assessment and fewer on learning.

Moving the focus from this type of assessment to learning will allow us to better prepare students with the knowledge and skills required for Year 12.

Why is St Hilda's Collegiate thinking about no longer offering NCEA Level 1?

One of the reasons stated in the national review, for making Level 1 optional, is:

We want to keep NCEA Level 1 for schools who wish to continue to use this qualification. Others would be free to adopt alternative approaches to Year 11, in a way that best meets the needs of their students.

The large amount of internal assessment students complete reduces teaching time and places unnecessary stress on students. Reducing the NCEA type assessment will mean there will be opportunity for greater breadth and depth in teaching and learning.

NCEA Level 1 does not provide an exit qualification. That is, it does not provide entry into tertiary study or training.

NCEA Levels 2 and 3 provide 'exit' qualifications and are much more important and will be offered by St Hilda's Collegiate School.

We also will continue to offer Scholarship.

How will St Hilda's Collegiate ensure the quality of this course?

The Year 11 course will follow the New Zealand Curriculum guidelines and will be designed to fully prepare students for Level 2 NCEA.

The curriculum content that is covered in Year 11 will be the same, or similar, to what is currently covered in preparation for Level 2 content. However, there will be opportunity for greater breadth and depth as less time will be spent on NCEA assessment which takes a lot of time out of learning (as explained above).

What subjects will be available?

A similar range of subjects will be offered giving students the opportunity to select a programme that prepares them well for Years 12 and 13.

How will students gain numeracy and literacy requirements for NCEA and University Entrance?

The course will include assessment for numeracy at Year 11. Literacy requirements are assessed in Year 12 so this will not be affected by the Year 11 course.

Special Assessment Conditions?

All students who need it will get special assessment conditions and support in the same way it presently happens under NCEA.

How will students be assessed in Year 11?

There will be a variety of rigorous assessments used. Subjects that are mainly written will have tests, assignments and examinations. Practical subjects, including the arts and technologies will use project work and portfolios in addition to tests and examinations. Parents and students will be given timely and specific feedback on their learning so they are well informed of progress and next steps.

Will there still be examinations in Year 11?

Yes. We believe that examinations are an important assessment tool for many subjects. There will be at least one set of major examinations

Don't we need external exams to motivate the students?

No. New Zealand is one of the few countries in the OECD to have three years of national assessment in high school. Examinations and credits do provide some extrinsic motivation but we believe high quality teaching, engaging courses and self-motivated students with supportive families have been the key ingredients in the success of St Hilda's Collegiate School students for many years – and so it will continue.

What if my child leaves or moves school at the end of Year 11?

If a student leaves St Hilda's Collegiate School to attend another school at the end of Year 11 they will have had the opportunity to gain numeracy credits and they will be able to enter Level 2 NCEA at their new school. If a student leaves school to enter the workforce it will not matter whether they have Level 1 NCEA or not.

How will entry to Year 12 courses be determined?

We will still be collecting Year 11 assessment data and this will be used in the same way it is currently.