



The Arts Learning Area Years 0–10

28 October 2025

Priority 1: Establishing a knowledge-rich curriculum grounded in the science of learning

We are pleased to release the draft curriculum content for the New Zealand Curriculum Years 0–10 The Arts.

Consultation is now open on the draft curriculum content for the New Zealand Curriculum Years 0–10 The Arts Learning Area. The content is now available [here](#).

This information sheet outlines what you will notice across the learning area, as well as providing the high-level engagement timeline.

Key things to note:

- The draft curriculum content for Years 0–10 The Arts supports students to engage with a wide range of forms, genres and experiences, bringing the diversity of the arts to life across all years and art forms.
- The updated learning area for The Arts provides a clear year-by-year teaching sequence so that all students get a great arts education through to Year 10.
- This provides all students with opportunities to gain enjoyment from artistic exploration, develop an appreciation for the arts in their communities and society, and develop their ability to create and interpret art.
- The focus on Performing Arts as an integrated strand recognises the opportunities for connected learning across dance and dramatic arts forms in the early years. In Year 9, this splits into specific teaching sequences for Dance and Drama to support strong pathways to the Year 11 subjects.
- Students develop their personal artistic expression through engaging with historical and contemporary artworks and practices from Aotearoa New Zealand including Toi Māori, the Pacific, and the wider world.
- Some flexibility is offered in Years 9–10 to support schools in providing knowledge strands in The Arts, so students continue to have choice over what they study in Year 9 or Year 10.
- The content selected reflects careful consideration of available teaching time and the resources that schools and kura could reasonably be expected to have access to for teaching.

What you will notice across all learning areas

UKD Change — in earlier versions of English and Mathematics and Statistics the Understand, Know and Do components had been woven together within the Progress Outcomes. In the updated versions and across all learning areas these concepts of understanding, knowledge and practice are strengthened, while the terms Understand, Know and Do are no longer explicitly referred to in the curriculum.

Purpose Statement — describes why the learning area is important and how it contributes to a student's education. It captures the enduring big ideas that students develop understanding of over the years and sets out the context for teaching and learning programmes.

Learning Area Structure — defines the knowledge strands used as the major organisational components within the learning area. It lays out how the related knowledge and practices are grouped into distinct areas of disciplinary focus.

Introduction — presents the increasingly sophisticated journey of the learning area as the knowledge and practices unfold across Years 0–10. It describes the evolving role of teachers and the different emphasis of teaching and learning programmes across the different year levels.

Year-by-year teaching sequence — organised through the knowledge strands, sets out the knowledge and practices to be taught each year. Together, the knowledge and practice statements support students to build deep understanding and fluency in each learning area.

Through engaging with the disciplinary knowledge and practices of the learning areas, students develop capabilities essential for lifelong learning.

What you will notice in The Arts

The Arts has three knowledge strands in Years 1–8 and four knowledge strands in Years 9–10, as detailed below:

Performing Arts (Years 1–8) includes two elements:

Making and Creating

- Making and creating uses and combines the aspects of Performing Arts (movement, voice, body, space, time, energy, and relationships) to express stories, ideas, place, and culture.
- Students will use voice, movement, and spatial awareness to develop role, emotion, and setting.

Observing and Responding

- Students will explore how performers use movement, space, and gestures to represent ideas, emotions, or stories in performance.
- They will respond to performances, using appropriate terminology to identify aspects and meaning.

Dance (Years 9–10) two elements:

Making and Creating

- Students will learn how to use dance elements, choreography, and technologies to shape movement and communicate ideas for performance.
- They will refine skills through repetition, feedback, and reflection and learn to collaborate effectively in ensemble work.

Observing and Responding

- Students will learn how to observe and describe movement qualities, dance elements, and expressive intent to give and receive effective feedback.
- They will build appreciation and respond to dance across time, place, and cultures, recognising ensemble skills, choreographic intention, and cultural narratives.

Drama (Years 9–10) includes two elements:

Making and Creating

- Students will select and combines drama techniques, conventions, elements, and technologies to shape meaning and communicate ideas through devised and scripted performance.
- Teachers will support students to rehearse, improvise, and collaborate using genre, structure, and expressive skills to develop character, narrative, and dramatic impact.

Observing and Responding

- Students will learn how to observe and analyse how drama techniques, conventions, and technologies communicate meaning, genre, and intention in performance.
- This encourages reflection on collaborative processes, recognising how shared decision-making and values like whanaungatanga and manaakitanga enrich dramatic expression.

Music includes the following elements:

Elements of Music (Years 1–8)

- The elements of music and how they work together are introduced.
- Students will develop the skills of reading and writing of music, including notation.
- They will learn to compose short musical pieces using an increasingly complex understanding of the elements

Listening and Responding (Years 1–10)

- Students will engage with music through listening and analysis, using appropriate terminology to respond to stylistic features.
- They will recognise how composers and performers express ideas and emotions through musical elements and contribute to evolving traditions across eras and genres.

Performing (Years 1–10)

- Students will participate in both solo and ensemble performances, using music conventions and refining through rehearsal.

- This element explores how interpretation and expression in performance is informed by musical elements and cultural context.

Music Theory (Years 9–10)

- Music theory concepts studied include key signatures, time signatures, primary chords, intervals, modulation, and enharmonic equivalents.
- Expressive elements are introduced, such as Italian terms, ornamentation, phrasing, articulation, transposition, and diverse notation systems.
- Students will compose music with intent and arrange music for solo and ensemble pieces.

Music Technology (Years 9–10)

- Students will use music technologies to aid sound creation, enhance performance, and apply effects.

Visual Arts includes two elements:

Making and Creating (Years 1–10)

- Students will use visual art elements, principles, and conventions to make artworks that express ideas connected to identity, culture, story, and context.
- They will plan, reflect, and iterate using media, materials, tools, and techniques to shape meaning and impact.

Observing and Responding (Years 1–10)

- Students will interpret and discuss artworks using visual art terminology, recognising how elements, principles, and conventions convey meaning.
- To deepen understanding and response, students will be encouraged to use observation and appreciation of artworks across time periods, places, and cultural traditions, including Toi Māori, Pacific, and other global art forms.

In Years 9 and 10 students must be taught at least one of the four knowledge strands each year.

Tables for year group exemplify a diverse range of forms, genres, and experiences that teachers can call upon to bring the teaching sequence to life.

Engagement and Timeline

The Years 0–10 NZC draft curriculum is now available, and we welcome your feedback on this content during our consultation through to Friday, 27 February 2026. By drawing on the expertise of teachers, principals, education professionals, academics and associations, we aim to strengthen student progress and achievement. Your insights are central to this and will help shape curriculum content that is clear, structured, evidence-based, and grounded in the science of learning.

Following consultation the draft content will be finalised, with formal release of the updated curriculum content planned for mid-2026. The Arts will become required teaching in:

- Years 9–10 from the start of 2027
- Years 0–8 from the start of 2028.

Online feedback forms are available on Tāhūrangi [here](#).

Schools and kura will also be invited to participate in the in-class testing of the Years 0–10 NZC learning areas and wāhanga ako during Term 1, 2026. More information on how to take part will be shared later in Term 4, 2025.

The Refreshed National Curriculum

2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
English and Te Reo Rangatira 0–6 and Mathematics and Statistics and Pāngarau 0–8 required to be used	English and Te Reo Rangatira 0–10 and Mathematics and Statistics and Pāngarau 0–10 required to be used All learning areas, wāhanga ako and curriculum frameworks available. Encouraged use of all Year 9 content	Full curriculum required to be used for Years 9–10 For Years 0–8 use requirements are extended to include Science and Pūtaiao, Social Sciences and Te Ao Māori, Health & Physical Education and Waiora	All Years 0–11 learning areas, wāhanga ako and curriculum frameworks required to be used	All Years 0–12 learning areas, wāhanga ako and curriculum frameworks required to be used	All Years 0–13 learning areas, wāhanga ako and curriculum frameworks required to be used
English 0–6 Te Reo Rangatira 0–6	English 0–10 Te Reo Rangatira 0–10	English 0–10 Te Reo Rangatira 0–10	English 0–11 Te Reo Rangatira 0–11	English 0–12 Te Reo Rangatira 0–12	English 0–13 Te Reo Rangatira 0–13
Mathematics and Statistics 0–8	Mathematics and Statistics 0–10	Mathematics and Statistics 0–10	Mathematics and Statistics 0–11	Mathematics and Statistics 0–12	Mathematics and Statistics 0–13
Pāngarau 0–8	Pāngarau 0–10	Pāngarau 0–10	Pāngarau 0–11	Pāngarau 0–12	Pāngarau 0–13
		Science 0–10 Pūtaiao 0–10	Science 0–11 Pūtaiao 0–11	Science 0–12 Pūtaiao 0–12	Science 0–13 Pūtaiao 0–13
		Social Sciences 0–10	Social Sciences 0–11	Social Sciences 0–12	Social Sciences 0–13
		Te Ao Māori 0–10	Te Ao Māori 0–11	Te Ao Māori 0–12	Te Ao Māori 0–13
		Health & Physical Education 0–10	Health & Physical Education 0–11	Health & Physical Education 0–12	Health & Physical Education 0–13
		Waiora 0–10	Waiora 0–11	Waiora 0–12	Waiora 0–13
		The Arts 9–10	The Arts 0–11	The Arts 0–12	The Arts 0–13
		Toi Ihiihi 9–10	Toi Ihiihi 0–11	Toi Ihiihi 0–12	Toi Ihiihi 0–13
		Technology 9–10	Technology 0–11	Technology 0–12	Technology 0–13
		Hangarau 9–10	Hangarau 0–11	Hangarau 0–12	Hangarau 0–13
		Learning Languages 9–10	Learning Languages 0–11	Learning Languages 0–12	Learning Languages 0–13
		Ngā Reo 9–10	Ngā Reo 0–11	Ngā Reo 0–12	Ngā Reo 0–13
		Te Reo Pākehā 9–10	Te Reo Pākehā 0–11	Te Reo Pākehā 0–12	Te Reo Pākehā 0–13