



Learning Languages 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 Learning Languages.

Consultation is now open on the draft curriculum content for the New Zealand Curriculum Years 0–10 Learning Languages 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:

Learning Languages remains an optional learning area and encouraged in Years 7-10.

The learning area itself is designed to support schools to teach languages regardless of the level of intensity or year level of the teaching. It can be used to support short “taster” programmes which are often offered in Years 7-8, ongoing low intensity programmes (e.g. 30 mins a week) that might begin ahead of Year 7 (e.g. for supporting everyday use of te reo Māori in the classroom), and ongoing higher intensity programmes (e.g. 3 hours a week) that are more typical from Year 9.

The general progression can be used to support teaching of any language, with detailed teaching sequences provided on those languages which are specified subjects in senior secondary and supported as part of associated qualifications.

- It includes a teaching sequence for te reo Māori to support schools to provide opportunities for students to learn te reo Māori in everyday teaching and learning.
- The wider curriculum also supports schools to provide opportunities for students to learn tikanga Māori and te reo Māori. E.g. the inclusion of kupu Māori as part of everyday language in New Zealand is recognised in the English learning area, with students to be taught to read and decode kupu Māori as part of New Zealand texts from Year 2.

- Schools may use the teaching sequences with any Year levels as they are based on a language-proficiency progression (rather than being tied to specific Year levels).
- Teaching sequences are also included for New Zealand Sign Language, which is also an official language of New Zealand, and several Pacific, Asian and European languages, which connect to the subjects available as part of secondary school qualifications.
- Te Mātaiaho, the draft curriculum framework, provides schools with indicative teaching time allocations to help manage the inclusion of Learning Languages.

What you will notice across all learning areas

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 an understanding of, 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. It describes the evolving role of teachers and the different emphasis of teaching and learning programmes across the different levels.

Teaching sequence — organised through the knowledge strands, sets out the knowledge and practices to be taught at each level. 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 Learning Languages

Learning Languages has two knowledge strands as detailed below. Together, they support the development of communicative competence, enabling students to use language effectively and appropriately across diverse contexts.

Linguistic knowledge (Novice and Emergent)

- This strand focuses on how language works, with signing, articulation, pronunciation, spelling, grammar, and vocabulary

Cultural and sociolinguistic knowledge (Novice and Emergent)

- Cultural knowledge covers the understanding of the social norms, values, beliefs, customs, and behaviours of the people who speak the target language
- Sociolinguistic knowledge covers how language use varies across different social groups and contexts.

There are five language groups to support progressions tailored to each language group:

- Te Reo Māori
- New Zealand Sign Language

- Pacific Languages
- Asian Languages
- European Languages

There are detailed year-by-year teaching sequences for 13 languages:

- Te Reo Māori
- New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL)
- Gagana Sāmoa
- Gagana Tokelau
- Lea Faka-Tonga
- Te Reo Māori Kūki 'Āirani
- Vagahau Niue
- French
- German
- Spanish
- Chinese (Mandarin)
- Japanese
- Korean

Teaching sequences are organised into Novice 1, Novice 2, Emergent 1, and Emergent 2 to support flexible entry points and accommodate students' diverse learning journeys.

This design is motivated by a recognition that students begin learning languages at different year levels and have varying degrees of prior knowledge.

The Learning Languages area prepares students with the knowledge and practices to access related curriculum subjects for Years 11-13.

Language examples are included alongside knowledge and practice statements to provide teachers with exemplification of the target language they could teach. These are non-exhaustive, allowing teachers to draw upon other relevant target language examples.

Students learn through five modes of communication:

- signing and watching in New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL)
- listening, speaking, reading, and writing in all other languages.

Inclusion of modes tables with explicit skills progressions across the four teaching sequences: Novice 1, Novice 2, Emergent 1, and Emergent 2

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, 24 April 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. Learning Languages will become required teaching in:

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

As is the case now, schools will be encouraged, but not required, to offer language learning opportunities in years 7–10 — it is not a required learning area.

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