

What you told us and how we responded

English Years 7-10

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Strengthening the curriculum

The National Curriculum is being updated to provide teachers, kaiako and school leaders with a clear, knowledge-rich and internationally comparable curriculum to underpin their teaching and learning programmes.

The curriculum includes:

1. Knowledge, practices, and capabilities that students will develop through their time at school.
2. Guidance for teachers and school leaders for developing effective teaching and learning programmes.

The New Zealand Curriculum recognises that all learners should be supported to reach their full potential. We want to help teachers and Kaiako focus on bringing learning to life in the classroom. By introducing clearer progressions to the curriculum, we aim to give teachers and kaiako greater direction about what to teach, and how and when to teach it, freeing them up from having to create sequences themselves.

A knowledge-rich curriculum is:

- › Selective – content is chosen purposefully for each learning area and subject
- › Coherent – content progresses and flows through the years and within learning areas and subjects and is carefully connected across disciplines
- › Carefully sequenced – designed to develop knowledge mastery over time by building on prior content and gradually increasing in complexity
- › Specific and clear – explicitly outlining what students are expected to understand, know and be able to do for learning areas, subjects and topics across all year levels 0-13.

We have developed a 5-year implementation timeline to give you a picture of the key curriculum, assessment and aromatawai changes taking place between 2024 and 2028 which is available at tahurangi.education.govt.nz/implementation-supports.

The New Zealand Curriculum includes a framework and eight learning areas, per the existing 2007 Curriculum.

The learning areas are being strengthened with year-by-year teaching sequences, which provides greater clarity about what teachers need to teach and what students need to learn in each year from Years 0–13.

We asked for feedback from the sector on the revised English Years 7–13 learning area in 2025. This report summarises what we heard, and the actions we took to respond to that feedback for Years 7–10. We are considering feedback we received on Years 11–13 as we develop new curriculum content. Reports on the feedback we gathered earlier this year on Years 11–13 and how we've responded will be published with the release of curriculum content for these years in 2026.

How was the English learning content developed?

During 2021, we worked with a wide range of people and groups to develop the draft curriculum content.

We tested the draft with the sector, refined it and published it in 2023.

The writing group¹ further developed the content based on advice from the Ministerial Advisory Group (December 2023 – May 2024).

In August and September 2024, we asked teachers, school leaders, and organisations and agencies with a strong interest in English teaching for detailed feedback on the draft English learning area for Years 0–6. The English learning area for Years 0–6 was then refined and published in October 2024. As a result of changes that have occurred in how sequenced, disciplinary knowledge is made explicit, there have been further changes to Years 0–6 to improve clarity and strengthen progression across the entire learning pathway. The English writing group then further developed content for the Years 7–13.

From 31 March to mid-June 2025, we again asked teachers and the public for detailed feedback on the draft English Years 7–13 learning area. The feedback was gathered through two avenues. One was an online survey comprised of demographic and open-ended feedback questions on each component of the learning area, and the other was through submissions sent directly to the Ministry.

Online survey: We received 296 responses, 82% of which came from respondents in schools. The remaining responses came from other interested groups and people, mostly with roles in the education sector.

Submissions and emails: 68 additional submissions or emails were received by the Ministry and were included in the analysis of feedback.

The survey feedback submissions and emails were independently analysed and reported back to us by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER)². We used these reports to identify key themes in the responses to the draft curriculum content.

Taking account of these key themes, we planned actions for making changes to the draft curriculum content and for providing implementation supports and resources. We checked the validity and reliability of these planned actions with our interest groups before finalising the content.

1. Writing group members include academics, Ministry of Education subject matter experts, practising teachers, and other people from the education sector with experience and expertise.
2. Read the NZCER report on this survey and its results.

What did we hear and how are we responding?

Key changes to Years 7-10 curriculum content

Changes to Years 7-10 learning area content were made following consultation and alongside the development of the other learning areas within the NZC, with the intention of strengthening the English learning area, as well as creating consistency across other learning areas.

Consultation feedback

Some teachers responded positively to aspects of the draft English curriculum for Years 7-10. The Purpose Statement was seen as clear and well-balanced across literacy, language, and literature. Some teachers commented favourably on the emphasis on oral language and structured literacy approaches in Years 7-8, which they felt provided a strong foundation for reading and writing. Teaching guidance was considered helpful, especially for newer teachers, and the text specifications were seen as useful for designing diverse and engaging programmes. These features were viewed as supporting consistency and improving teaching practice across schools.

"I am so thankful and relieved we finally have a more systematic method for teaching English, and explanation of the skills to be taught and acquired, and the types of texts for children to be exposed to."

School response

The responses from a wide range of individuals and groups produced, many different perspectives about the draft learning area content and how it could be improved.

Key themes that emerged from feedback:

- › People requested greater clarity and coherence across year levels to make planning and teaching easier
- › People wanted to see that the curriculum content was more inclusive and achievable for all learners
- › People wanted a greater focus on reading for pleasure to lift student engagement and were concerned about text specifications
- › People wanted to see more content that reflected the New Zealand context
- › People were concerned that digital and multimodal texts are underrepresented, despite their relevance to students' lives and literacy needs
- › Teachers want better support, including planning tools, resources, and time for implementation.

We've described each key theme and how we have responded to it on the following pages.

People requested greater clarity and consistency to make planning and teaching easier

Some respondents welcomed aspects of the draft English curriculum for Years 7–10 but asked for greater clarity and consistency to support planning and teaching. They found the structure across year levels confusing and wanted a more unified format, especially between Years 7–8 and Years 9–10. While teaching guidance was seen as useful, some respondents requested practical examples and templates to make it easier to apply. The teaching sequences were considered detailed, but some wanted clearer progression in literary and conceptual depth across year levels.

“Why isn’t there consistency in the terminology across all phases of learning?”

Feedback on Purpose Statement and understandings

How we responded to this theme

- › We’ve revised the curriculum layout to ensure greater consistency across year levels, aligning the format to reduce confusion and support planning. The knowledge and practice structure is now uniform throughout the curriculum. This makes it much easier to see progression.
- › The teaching sequence (knowledge and practices statements) has been revised to better illustrate clearer progression across year levels, ensuring students build on knowledge in a structured way.
- › The introduction to the year levels at the front of the document explains the different domains and how they build on each other through the years. This helps to provide clarity.
- › We’ve revised the Purpose Statement and learning area structure to provide greater clarity across all year levels.
- › We’ve reduced the amount of teaching guidance to reduce cognitive load and support teacher agency.
- › We’ve improved how we share New Zealand Curriculum content on Tāhūrangi, so it is easier to access and use.

People wanted to see that the curriculum content was more inclusive and achievable for all learners

The draft English curriculum for Years 7-10 was seen as promising, but many respondents wanted it to be more inclusive and achievable for all learners. They felt the expectations were too high and called for more flexibility to adapt content for students at different levels. Teachers asked for clearer support for neurodivergent and English Language Learners, more culturally relevant texts, and a broader range of oral language formats. They also highlighted the need for more time, resources, and practical guidance to implement inclusive teaching effectively.

“The expectations of what teachers can cover over this phase are too high. There is not enough time in the school year to teach the number of texts and text types to the depth expected ... In the real world of state schools, it takes seven-eight weeks minimum to work through one complex, extended text.”

Feedback on Phase 4

“I’m not sure if it is inclusive of neurodiverse students or those with learning challenges, because it is ramping up the volume of teaching with very little thought given to how to support these students with this.”

School response

How we responded to this theme

- › We’ve reinforced the importance of being responsive to a student’s prior knowledge, strengths and interests, and the importance of identifying and reducing any barriers to learning. The teaching sequence guidance advises teachers to explicitly plan for multiple ways for students to participate in learning experiences and to provide universal supports for all students.
- › We’ve provided content addressing the English Language Learners, and the Working with Text sections has guidance on teaching students who need support decoding texts. Links have also been provided to ‘accelerating progress in literacy’ guidance for targeted support and to ‘teaching resources to support structured literacy approaches.’

People wanted a greater focus on reading for pleasure to lift student engagement and were concerned about text specifications

People wanted the curriculum for Years 7-10 to give more attention to reading for pleasure, seeing it as vital for student engagement. They felt the number and type of required texts were too rigid and made it harder to tailor learning to students' interests. Many called for more flexibility and clearer support for diverse learners. We also heard that the volume and density of content should be reduced to support accessibility and practical implementation, ensuring the curriculum is knowledge-rich – focused, purposeful, and coherent – rather than knowledge-full and cognitively overwhelming.

“This is a curriculum focused on telling students what they have to read, not helping them to find what they should, need, or want to read.”

Member of the public response

“With the two ‘must-do’ texts and the amount of texts required to be covered in a year, how will reading for pleasure be developed?”

School Response

How we responded to this theme

- › The teaching sequence now highlights reading for pleasure where relevant, such as in the ‘Reading Enrichment for Years 7-8’ and ‘Response to Texts’ sub-elements for Years 9-10.
- › We’ve included guidance on the importance of fostering reading for pleasure in the ‘Working with Text’ sections including strategies for promoting reading motivation and student autonomy.
- › Text Specifications highlight the need for students to be supported to select texts for personal interest and enjoyment.
- › We have reduced the form, range and complexity requirements in the Text Specifications to make the content load more manageable and to allow teachers and students to explore texts in greater depth.
- › We have clarified that students will read texts by a range of authors representative of New Zealand’s rich bicultural (both Māori and Pākehā) and multicultural literary heritage and are developing guidance resources to support teachers in making decisions around text selection.

People wanted to see more content that reflected the New Zealand context

There were some positive comments about the requirement to cover a range of text types, including those by authors from New Zealand and the Pacific.

“We felt we would like more explanation as to what ‘seminal world texts’ are and who is deciding their worth. Texts by ‘New Zealand’ authors does not specifically refer to Māori writers, and it should.”

School response

Many respondents wanted the English curriculum for Years 7-10 to better reflect New Zealand. They called for more Māori authors, mātauranga Māori, and clearer references to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The curriculum was seen as too focused on Western traditions, with limited space for Indigenous perspectives and oral storytelling. While some welcomed local texts, they felt these needed greater emphasis to support student identity and engagement.

Some people commented there was an overemphasis on Eurocentric content and therefore a missed opportunity to explore the range of stories and texts that reflect the diversity in New Zealand.

How we responded to this theme

- › We have expanded the text requirement for Years 7-10, ensuring that students read texts by a range of authors representative of New Zealand’s rich bicultural (both Māori and Pākehā) and multicultural literary heritage.
- › There is greater reflection of New Zealand context in the examples provided in teaching sequences (e.g., texts forms unique to New Zealand such as waiata, whaikōrero, pūrākau storytelling traditions).
- › We’ve strengthened how oral language structures (e.g., rhetorical devices, mihimihi, pepeha, whaikōrero) can influence how messages are delivered and received.
- › We’ve highlighted that students will explore how texts from New Zealand reflect culture, history, or values through the way they represent topics, people, places and ideas. Students will examine how authors draw on and connect different literary traditions to enrich meaning and explore perspectives, such as Māori pūrākau and short stories from other cultural contexts.
- › We will add exemplar planning and teaching resources for teachers and kaiako, beginning with Years 7-10. These include annual plans, unit plans, lesson plans, teacher guidance and classroom resources.
- › Guidance for text selection including an expanded example text list.

People were concerned that digital and multimodal texts are underrepresented, despite their relevance to students' lives and literacy needs

Many teachers said the draft English curriculum for Years 7-10 overlooks digital and multimodal texts, which are central to students' lives. They wanted more focus on formats like graphic novels, podcasts, and online media, and clearer guidance on how to teach them. While some welcomed the inclusion of varied texts, most felt digital content was still underrepresented and needed stronger support in the curriculum.

"We recommend adding guidance that signals the importance of early exposure to genre, theme, and multimodal text. For instance, introducing literary concepts through accessible formats (like graphic novels or short allegorical films) builds schema for more abstract senior-level texts."

School response

"Reading digital texts gets little mention, and multimodal texts, while mentioned in the section 'working with texts', are not present in any meaningful way in the teaching statements for reading."

Academic/tertiary provider

How we responded to this theme

- › The curriculum now explicitly includes digital and multimodal texts — such as podcasts, social media posts, and digital advertisements — as valid and valuable text types for study and creation.
- › We've ensured that there is a progressive development of digital literacy. Across Years 7-10, the teaching sequence guides students to analyse, compare, and create digital texts, examining features such as hyperlinks, embedded media, and interactive elements, with increasing complexity and ethical awareness as they progress.
- › There's a focus on Critical and Ethical Engagement with texts. Curriculum content now supports students to critically evaluate digital content—including misinformation, bias, and credibility—and to apply ethical practices when using and creating digital media, including citation, representation, and responsible sharing.

Teachers want better support, including planning tools, resources, and time for implementation

Many teachers said they need more time, examples, and guidance to implement the Years 7-10 English curriculum effectively. They asked for planning templates, support for teaching diverse learners, and help selecting suitable texts. Schools also raised concerns about ordering resources in time. While some appreciated the curriculum's structure and clarity, many felt rushed and underprepared for the scale of change.

“Overall, there is a lot more to plan for, and it would be good to see examples of the detail required before we begin.”

School response

How we responded to this theme

- › Much of the content within this version of English will be familiar to teachers as we've built on the valuable feedback and input the sector provided on previous versions.
- › We want to ensure that senior secondary teachers and kaiako have enough time to implement new national curriculum changes for Years 11-13. Your feedback has clearly indicated that you would like greater phasing of the introduction of senior secondary learning areas. We've heard from you that this phasing will support quality implementation by giving teachers and kaiako more time to build confidence with the new content, support resource and assessment alignment and help maintain consistency for students. Following sector feedback, we are updating expectations for Years 11-13 to create a phased roll-out of senior secondary subjects. Full details are available at [Curriculum timeline change responds to feedback from senior secondary teachers](#).
- › To support the updated curriculum timeline for secondary schools and kura, an **implementation package** will be available to ensure that teachers and kaiako are supported every step of the way.
- › Professional learning and development (PLD) for teachers and kaiako of Years 9-10 on the new knowledge-rich curriculum to support implementation of all learning areas and wāhanga ako.
- › Expanded Curriculum Advisory Service for secondary schools and kura.
- › Exemplar planning and teacher resources for Years 9-10 teachers and kaiako which include unit plans, lesson plans, teacher guidance and resources.
- › Subject Association and Kahu Pūtoi funding available to support curriculum roll out.

Where to find content, guidance and resources

You'll find information on implementation supports, including a 5-year implementation timeline of key curriculum, assessment and aromatawai changes available at tahurangi.education.govt.nz/implementation-supports.

Find English learning content and resources here: [Learning Content & Resources – English](#). Use the curriculum level and series filters to quickly locate the resources you are looking for.

Familiarise yourselves with the Ministry's existing [literacy resources](#) to support structured literacy approaches, which are available to you free of charge.

Information on professional learning and development (PLD) for structured literacy approaches is available here: [PLD for structured literacy & te reo matatini approaches – Professional Learning & Development](#). PLD opportunities for structured literacy approaches will be ongoing throughout 2025 and 2026, offering schools multiple opportunities to engage.

Research and background papers commissioned to support the development of The New Zealand Curriculum can be found at [Research and background papers](#).

Timeframes

Your feedback has clearly indicated that you would like greater phasing of the introduction of senior secondary learning areas. We've heard from you that this phasing will support quality implementation by giving teachers and kaiako more time to build confidence with the new content, support resource and assessment alignment, and help maintain consistency for students.

Years 0–10

The final curriculum content for Years 7–10 English and Te Reo Rangatira and Years 9–10 Mathematics and Statistics and Pāngarau will be available in early Term 4, 2025 and in use from the start of Term 1, 2026.

The remainder of the Years 0–10 curriculum content will also be available in draft across all learning areas and wāhanga ako in early Term 4, 2025 to invite wider feedback and to inform planning and professional development days ahead of the new school year. This content will be used from the start of Term 1, 2026.

As students in Year 9 will be the first cohort to take the new Year 11–13 subjects from 2028, and the first to use any changes to the national qualification and assessments aligned to the new curriculum, we encourage schools and kura to use the new Year 9 curriculum in 2026.

Years 11–13

The Years 11–13 curricula will be available in Term 1, 2026 to invite wider feedback and help build familiarisation and readiness. There will be no formal requirement to use this content until 2028 (for Year 11 content), 2029 (for Year 12 content), and 2030 (for Year 13 content).

Following feedback from English and Maths Associations as well as your representative principal groups, we have decided to include Years 11–13 English, Maths, Te Reo Rangatira and Pāngarau in this rephased roll-out. This means that changes to the Year 11–13 curriculum will not be required until 2028, creating more time for quality implementation.

If you see areas in this content that could be improved, please send details to us at nationalcurriculum.refresh@education.govt.nz

The **English learning area content** can be found on [Tāhūrangi | the Online Curriculum Hub](#) in PDF.