



Years | Tau 11-13 Curriculum

The Years | Tau 11–13 curriculum is knowledge-rich, nationally consistent, and internationally comparable. It’s designed for Aotearoa, reflecting our bicultural heritage and preparing students to have agency over their life in a changing world.

- It is a detailed curriculum that specifies what needs to be taught in a subject throughout the year. It provides clarity for teachers about what students | mokopuna are expected to know, and be able to do, for every learning area and year level.
- The curriculum supports mastery over time by providing content that is carefully selected, sequenced, and is coherent to make sure students build deep and transferable understanding. This is a shift from learning driven by NCEA standards.
- The draft curriculum includes a wide range of exciting subjects. Some subjects are new, some are organised differently, and across all subjects teachers are given greater depth of instruction to know what to teach, the knowledge and capabilities students should be able to access and build.
- The Ministry is consulting on draft curriculum subjects in three groups between mid-May and mid-August 2026. The first group includes subjects in five learning areas. These subjects are listed on page three.

Knowledge-rich curriculum design

What is a knowledge-rich curriculum?

- A knowledge-rich curriculum clearly selects and sequences what knowledge students | mokopuna should be taught and what they should be able to do at each year level. This coherence builds deep conceptual understanding and subject specific capabilities over time.
- A strong learning entitlement embedded through a knowledge-rich curriculum can address some of the educational inequalities built into our current system. Every student | mokopuna is entitled to access all of discipline knowledge in a subject, and this is ensured through the year-by-year teaching sequences.
- Implementation of a knowledge-rich curriculum brings the knowledge and skills in a discipline together in a way that is aligned with how students | mokopuna learn and how learning needs to be sequenced across a curriculum.

- Knowledge and practices should be read and taught together; practices are the enactment of the knowledge statements.
- Through engagement with coherent disciplinary knowledge, students | mokopuna develop the capability to understand the world, contribute confidently, and shape sustainable futures.
- Explicit teaching in a knowledge rich curriculum involves clearly identifying, explaining, and revisiting essential knowledge and vocabulary so all students can build secure understanding and apply learning with confidence. It does not imply whole class teaching all the time.
- The phase five (Years 11-13) curriculum provides clarity about what students are expected to know, and be able to do, for every learning area and year level. It supports mastery over time by providing content that is carefully selected, sequenced, and is coherent to make sure students build deep transferable understanding.
- Video explainers about the knowledge-rich curriculum are here - [NZC - A knowledge-rich curriculum](#) and [TMoA - A knowledge-rich curriculum](#).

How was the curriculum designed?

- Over 300 subject advisors (teachers, subject association members, learning area specialists) across both New Zealand Curriculum and Te Mātauranga o Aotearoa are contributing to the development and refinement of these curriculums.
- The draft curriculum was designed using a knowledge-rich approach, deliberately selecting and sequencing essential disciplinary knowledge, concepts, practices, and capabilities rather than starting from existing NCEA standards or pedagogy.
- A clear, coherent progression is being mapped from Phases 1–4 into Phase 5, with explicit sequencing of knowledge and practices across Year 11 and alignment through to Years 12–13 pathways.
- Appropriate subjects are being co-designed for English-medium and Māori-medium contexts, with collaboration across before final version are written in both English and Te Reo Māori.
- Design principles acted as quality-assurance criteria, ensuring coherence, conceptual development, subject-specific capabilities, and benchmarking against international curricula.
- Content choices were contextualised for Aotearoa New Zealand, integrating Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles, bicultural heritage, and local examples while remaining benchmarked internationally.
- Design documents developed prior to the draft curriculum documents explicitly defined what was in scope and out of scope, clarifying disciplinary boundaries and avoiding overlap with subjects.
- Local, national, and global contexts were deliberately selected to ensure relevance while supporting transfer of learning across settings and future pathways.
- The draft curriculum was designed to ensure common learning outcomes across schools, supporting system wide coherence regardless of delivery context.

Capabilities

- Draft subject specific capabilities are articulated alongside content, making explicit how disciplinary thinking develops through engagement with disciplinary knowledge and

practices.

- Students | mokopuna develop capabilities through the gradual mastery of disciplinary knowledge and practices, supported by the development of productive dispositions towards learning.
- Subject specific capabilities enable students | mokopuna to pursue varied pathways and to successfully participate in their personal, professional, civic, and educational environments.

Draft subjects for public consultation

The following subjects represent the first of three groups released for public consultation. We welcome feedback on these draft subjects between 15 May and 15 June 2026.

English Te Reo Rangatira	
English	Y11
English	Y12-13
Media, Journalism & Communications	Y12-13

Mathematics and Statistics Pāngarau	
Mathematics and Statistics	Y11
Pāngarau	Y11
Mathematics Pāngarau	Y12-13
Statistics & Data Science Tauanga me te Mātai Raraunga	Y13
Further Mathematics Pāngarau Whānui	Y13
Mathematical and Statistical Modelling Te Whakatauiria i te Pāngarau me te Tauanga	Y12-13

Science Pūtaiao	
Science	Y11
Biology Mātai Koiora	Y12-13
Chemistry Mātai Matū	Y12-13
Earth & Space Science Ao ā-nuku Ao ātea	Y12-13
Physics Mātai Ahupūngao	Y12-13
Agricultural & Horticultural Science Mātai Whenua me te Ahumara	Y12-13

Social Sciences Te Pūmanawa Tangata	
Accounting	Y11-13
Business & Economics Te Mātai Pakihi me te Ōhanga	Y11
Business Studies Te Mātai Pakihi	Y12-13
Economics Te Mātai Ōhanga	Y12-13
Geography Matawhenua	Y11-13
Classical Studies	Y12-13
Religious Studies	Y11-13
Sociology	Y11-13
Civics, Politics & Philosophy	Y12-13
Psychology	Y12-13

Health and Physical Education Te Waiora	
Health Education	Y11-13

Questions and answers

What are the benefits of the new curriculum:

- Sequenced learning is organised within subjects and disciplines
- Knowledge builds year by year, giving students strong foundations
- There is clear progression for students, so teachers know what has been taught and what comes next
- Teachers can focus on how to teach, not what to teach.

How much autonomy do schools still have?

The new curriculum gives teachers clear guidance on what to teach, so teachers can focus on how to teach it. This reduces uncertainty and workload – and gives more time for quality teaching.

Between now and 2028, the Ministry will be designing the support for Principals, leaders and teachers to confidently implement the changes. Professional learning and resources will support classroom practices.

What does the new curriculum mean for assessment?

The new qualifications system to replace NCEA will be phased in with the Foundational Award introduced in 2028, Year 12 qualification in 2029 and Year 13 qualification in 2030.

Further detailed design work is in progress and further information will be available in the coming weeks. The Ministry is working with NZQA, the Technical Advisory Group, the Curriculum Senior Secondary Assurance Group, and the Professional Advisory Group, and undertaking targeted engagement.

When will we see the new vocational subjects?

As well as the Ministry-led subjects in schools, students will also be able to take new industry-led subjects within the same qualifications system. The Ministry is working in collaboration with Industry Skills Boards to align these subjects with real career opportunities in the workforce. These industry-led subjects will set students up to pursue vocational pathways in a range of industries such as construction, engineering, and health and community.

The final list of industry-led subjects will be approved by the Minister of Education and shared publicly in June 2026.

Once confirmed, the subjects will be developed during 2026 and into early 2027. The work will be done in partnership with industry, schools and the tertiary sector, to make sure the subjects are practical, high-quality and useful for students planning their next steps after school.

When will the new curriculum be ready?

The final Years | Tau 11–13 curriculum will be published later this year and be implemented progressively from 2028 to 2030, giving schools time to prepare and plan for change.

How can I give my feedback on the new curriculum?

You can give your feedback by completing an online survey on [Tāhūrangi](#). This is also where you will find the curriculum subject documents outlining the draft content for each subject, including knowledge, capabilities, practices, pathways, subject structure, teaching sequence and assessment guidance.