

New Zealand

Educational System Overview

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New Zealand's education system has three levels – early childhood education, schooling (primary and secondary level education for Years 1 to 13) and tertiary education – across which students can follow a variety of flexible pathways. Education is compulsory for all students aged between six and 16 years (generally up to Year 11), though the vast majority of students begin school at age five. Early childhood education (ECE) is for children under five and is characterized by strong quality assurance and a world-leading national curriculum.

Further, more detailed information about the profile and structure of the New Zealand education system is available here:

[Students and Parents](#) and [Nature and Source of Our Functions](#)

School curriculum

New Zealand has a national curriculum which applies to all state schools and state integrated schools. It covers all the years of schooling and is compulsory from Year 1 to the end of Year 10. The curriculum describes the key competencies and learning outcomes people need in order to live, learn, work and contribute as active members of their communities, rather than prescribing what school students must learn or what teachers must teach. A variety of special projects in specific areas of the curriculum are making a difference, especially in ages and groups that have been identified as underachieving.

New Zealand has specific programs for formative assessment, known as assessment for learning. Such assessments become formative when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching to meet the student's learning needs.

New Zealand has a program of Best Evidence Synthesis (BES), designed to strengthen the evidence base that informs education policy and practice. For more information on the New Zealand curriculum, go to the New Zealand Curriculum website: nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz

School governance and management

Schools in New Zealand are self-governing and managed within a national framework of regulation and guidance. Community involvement and meeting each student's needs are fundamental principles. National Administration Guidelines (NAGs) for school administration set out desirable principles of conduct or administration in schools.

School boards are required to develop individual charters and annual plans and report their performance against these.

The Network of Provision

Administrative authority for most education service provision is devolved from central government to the educational institutions which are governed (in the public sector) by individual Boards or Councils, members of which are elected or appointed. Schools and tertiary institutions work within the framework of guidelines, requirements and funding arrangements set by central government and administered through its agencies.

There are no state or provincial systems. Although there is diversity in the forms of institutions through which education is provided, national policies and quality assurance provide continuity and consistency across the system.

The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) is the central government agency responsible for guiding the education sector to deliver a world-leading education system that equips all New Zealanders with the knowledge, skills and values to be successful citizens. The Ministry gives effect to the government's priorities for education to ensure that desired educational outcomes are achieved. It does this by working with parents, schools and communities. Further information about the Ministry of Education is available on this website: www.minedu.govt.nz

Separate education agencies are responsible for qualifications and quality assurance.

Education initiatives in New Zealand

Information regarding current initiatives in New Zealand education is available [here](#).

Other central education agencies are:

- TeachNZ, www.teachnz.govt.nz
- The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), www.nzqa.govt.nz
- The Education Review Office, www.ero.govt.nz
- The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), www.tec.govt.nz