

The NCEA

Result: Not Yet Achieved

An executive summary

This paper summarises PPTA's policy positions on qualifications as they have evolved from the early 1990s, then looks in detail at the problems which have arisen in 2002 during the implementation of Level 1. These include: problems about availability and quality of assessment tasks; training shortcomings; moderation problems; reassessment problems; workload issues; software problems; and communications problems.

The paper reiterates the union's strong support for deferment of Levels 2 and 3 so that two years are allowed for each level to 'bed in' before the next phase of implementation is embarked upon, and two of the recommendations (see below) reflect this position.

Recommendation 4 continues the calls for adequate resourcing. PPTA's support for the NCEA has always been conditional on adequate resourcing, and experience so far has given us no confidence that this condition has been met.

The last two recommendations call for evaluation and review of the qualification, both by teachers and by assessment experts. The HoD meetings reviewing Level 1 that are scheduled to begin at the time of publishing this paper only partially answer this call.

Because the politics of the NCEA are so fluid, the paper includes a response form for branches to submit comments on any aspects which they believe have been omitted, understated or misrepresented in the paper. These will help to shape a supplementary paper on the NCEA which will need to be produced just before Annual Conference in late September.

Recommendations

The Minutes of Annual Conference 2002 record the following Recommendations were passed:

C02/10 THAT PPTA continue to demand adequate resourcing of the NCEA at all levels.

C02/15 THAT full implementation of Level 2 NCEA be deferred until 2004 and Level 3 NCEA until 2006.

C02/17 THAT the NZ PPTA agree to a carefully planned, implemented and monitored pilot programme of Level 2 NCEA in 2003.

C02/18 THAT this programme follow the guidelines in the Conference paper and adhere to the following conditions:

- The schools/departments volunteer based on consensus;
- There be at least five days' training and release time before the end of the 2002 school year;
- There be at least two days of release time for training and preparation at the start of the 2003 school year;
- Other resourcing be no higher than that which would be available in full implementation;
- The programme be monitored by PPTA monitors (external to a pilot school) reporting regularly to national Executive who will lobby NZQA [NZ Qualifications Authority] and the Ministry of Education to correct and solve problems as they are identified, and collate and report on progress to PPTA members and to Conferences in 2003 and 2004;
- Monitoring and lobbying will take place to ensure that a good quality Sixth Form Certificate qualification remains available for the next two years as Level 2 NCEA is gradually implemented.

C02/19 THAT a decision be any school or department to take part in the pilot programme be made by consensus following a branch meeting attended by an Executive member or regional representative to ensure that members are not subjected to undue pressure from any quarter.

C02/20 THAT PPTA calls on the Ministry of Education to commission an ongoing independent review of the NCEA by assessment experts.

The NCEA — Result: Not Yet Achieved

Note: This is an interim paper. The issues surrounding implementation of the NCEA are a moveable feast for the Association for two main reasons:

- as a result of the merging of NCEA and Collective Employment Agreement issues
- as new issues arise for members through experience of delivering the qualification

For this reason, it is inevitable that a supplementary paper will have to be prepared just before Annual Conference. Branches are asked to forward comments on aspects which they believe have been omitted, understated or misrepresented in this paper to National Office, using the response form provided.

1. Background

- 1.1. Papers on qualifications have been on the table at PPTA Conferences almost annually since 1991, proof of the significance of qualifications issues in teachers' lives over that time.
- 1.2. The target for these papers was at first the Qualifications Framework which had given us Unit Standard assessment. In the mid-1990s, out of concerns about the educational validity and resourcing of the Qualifications Framework, PPTA launched its own Qualifications Framework Inquiry, Te Tiro Hou. Its recommendations were a significant influence on the development by the Ministry and NZQA of a new version of standards-based assessment, the NCEA.
- 1.3. The 1997 Annual conference had laid down criteria to be used for determining the validity of any new qualification, that it be fair, inclusive, cumulative, clear, motivating, constructive and manageable. When the government in late 1998 announced "Achievement 2001", the process which would launch the NCEA, PPTA focussed on getting formal access to the forums and processes charged with developing the new qualification, to ensure that it met the criteria laid down by the Association. The Association withheld its support from the qualification until a ballot of members.
- 1.4. The extent to which PPTA was asked to participate in the developments was large compared with previous experience during that decade. In October/November 1999, PPTA and Ministry staff co-operated in a nationwide series of seminars with school representatives to discuss a number of issues around the development. We had significant representation on the Secondary Sector Forum which advised the Ministry on the developments as a whole and PPTA representatives on all subject panels. It was clearly recognised by the government that the qualification could not proceed without PPTA's support.
- 1.5. The election of a Labour government at the end of 1999 provided an opportunity to get across our message that it was all going too fast and

too much on the cheap, and the new Minister, Trevor Mallard, announced in March 2000 that there would be a year's delay in beginning the new qualification. Achievement 2001 became Achievement 2002. After some negotiations, it was also agreed that there would be a further two days of training for Level One in 2001, and two days for both the next two years, for Levels Two and Three.

- 1.6. The ballot was eventually held in November 2000, and 64% of members expressed approval for the NCEA in principle, but only 18% expressed confidence in the adequacy of resourcing available or likely to be available for the NCEA's implementation. Executive's neutral policy position shifted to one of cautious approval but it continued to vigorously pursue improved resourcing. Promises were extracted about resourcing such as that there would be at least four sample assessment activities available on the Net for each achievement standard; that there would be sample examination papers on the Net for the external standards; that schools would receive training for the school-wide management issues; that funding would be available to train people in the electronic entry systems required and that the external moderation system would be light in its impact on teachers. In addition, a policy on re-assessment, later renamed 'further opportunities for assessment' was developed which recognised the workload implications of this.

2. Preparations for Implementation

- 2.1. During 2001 teachers were very busy preparing for implementation:

- Year 11 courses and assessment materials were rewritten;
- Many teachers tried out the new style of assessment, either with a Year 11 class or more commonly with Year 10 classes as practice for them as well;
- Further training was undertaken.

- 2.2. Senior management also had extra tasks:

- Reviewing schools' assessment procedures and systems;
- Ensuring that the technology was available for a new system of NZQA entries;
- Supporting middle managers;
- Ensuring parents understood the new system.

- 2.3. Some schools gave teachers extra time for this preparation work by closing early or opening late a day a week or a fortnight, but others did not. Even where extra time was given, it was found to be not enough for what was a mammoth task. The load varied, too, depending on whether a subject was being taught by a team of teachers who could share the tasks to some extent, or whether it was being taught by a sole teacher who had no-one with whom to share it. The load on middle managers

who had to co-ordinate the efforts in their subjects was particularly intense.

- 2.4. Teachers became aware of the extra demands imposed on ancillary support (if they were lucky enough to have any available) and on photocopying budgets. Assessment materials for the NCEA tend to be quite bulky, and a lot of new materials had to be produced.

3. **Implementation in 2002**

- 3.1. 2002 arrived and teachers' expectations covered the full range from highly optimistic to highly pessimistic. Some schools and departments felt well prepared; others were scrambling to be ready.

- 3.2. And then reality hit. Even many teachers who supported the NCEA in principle have admitted that the workload impacts were higher than anticipated, and that problems had developed which they had not expected. Some of the implementation issues which have arisen are:

- **Problems about availability of assessment tasks.** While the promise to have four sample tasks on the Net for each internally assessed standard was fulfilled in most subjects, these cannot always be just downloaded and used by teachers because students can access them. Maths teachers, for example, have to rewrite them because of the right/wrong nature of their assessments. There have been repeated appeals for secure assessments, either in a secure part of the website or in hard copy. This need has still not been met.
- **Problems about quality of assessment tasks.** The tasks available on the Net vary from excellent to poor, and teachers' professionalism has required them in many cases to produce their own, better, tasks or to revise the ones provided. Furthermore, some teachers who have used tasks straight off the Net have had them rejected by NZQA moderators as being sub-standard, a situation which has really riled teachers. This has happened to our knowledge in Accounting, Geography, Music, Science, and Technology. NCEA Update 11, which did not arrive in schools till June 2002, pointed out that "some of the materials published on website are based on draft versions of the achievement standards, which may have been modified at registration". Registration of all standards did not occur until December 21 2001, long past the time when most teachers would have prepared the bulk of their assessment activities for the following year. The fact that the Ministry did not consider it important to revise the assessment activities in the light of these changes to standards, and to notify schools of the changes, is a further source of annoyance to teachers. (We have been told that some changes were made in May 2002, where the Ministry "had been made aware of the problem"!) There have also been changes to some sample external assessments, e.g. English 1.6, and again there has been no official notification to schools of these changes. Update 11 also told teachers that in some cases schools might need to adapt both the

activities and schedules to their own specific contexts, a warning which was not included on the activities themselves.

- **Lack of training of teachers to produce their own NCEA assessment tasks.** The four training days provided, focussed on training teachers to make judgments against the internally assessed standards using samples of student work. The new skills involved in developing NCEA-style tasks were apparently assumed to be assimilated at the same time, or perhaps it was assumed that teachers who lacked confidence about that would just download the ones from the Net. However, what was not considered was that at the very least teachers would have to produce practice exams, probably twice in the year, modelled on the one sample exam per external standard available on the Net. For some standards this involves little change from School Certificate questions. For other standards it involves dramatic changes, and teachers have struggled to see the rationale behind the types of questions asked in the samples and the assessment schedules. To make matters worse, some of these samples have been revised during this year and teachers are struggling to keep up with the changes.
- **Experience with internal moderation systems which reveals huge disparities in different teachers' judgments of the same piece of work.** As an example of this, the English Online Forum has been carrying on a debate about some samples of student work in which different teachers' judgments of the same piece of work have ranged from Excellent to Achieved. This mirrors the experience within departments, and makes teachers worried that the same disparities will be reflected between schools, throwing the credibility of the levels into doubt.
- **Assessment practices which overly emphasise surface features.** It is not clear whether it is a fault of the standards themselves, or the sample assessment activities and schedules provided, or teacher practice, but there are worries developing that assessment is becoming 'picky' and good students are performing poorly because of careless or minor errors which under previous systems would not have had a serious impact on their results. While advisers are recommending that teachers' judgments need to be 'global' and that they should look at the student's overall standard of performance and use all the evidence they have available to find the appropriate level, this is not always as easy as it sounds. It also worries teachers who have been told their judgments will be audited both internally and externally, and can have significant extra workload implications.
- **Issues about reassessment (renamed by NZQA as 'further opportunities for assessment').** The lengthy and tortuous debates at the Secondary Sector Forum on this issue resulted in a letter from the Minister in May 2001 which simply confused the issue further for many people. NZQA's Rules and Procedures contain no rules about reassessment, but leave it to schools to

develop their own policies. Most schools probably adopted the guideline from the Minister's letter that there be one reassessment opportunity given but only when the Achieved level has not been reached the first time and only when it is manageable. However in practice this is feeling quite unfair to some teachers where, for example, a good student makes an unexpectedly poor job of the task the first time and reaches only the Achieved level, but is unable to have another chance, while a poor student who fails to achieve the standard the first time does have another chance and may even gain Merit or Excellence the second time. There is also inconsistency about how the guidelines are being applied, for instance in English the training suggested that it would be normal English practice for everyone to have more than one opportunity for assessment of some of the standards, so some English departments are making a second opportunity available to all students for some of the standards. The situation was muddied further in June 2002 when NCEA Update 11 appeared containing a large section headed 'Managing Assessment' which appeared to teachers to change the rules midstream. The advice was intended to provide a range of ways that teachers could collect further evidence of whether a student met the standard in situations where they had failed on one attempt or had been absent for all or part of an assessment activity. However its introduction of such methods as conferencing with students, seeking further written work or using formative assessment led to howls of outrage from teachers about further workload imposition and the rules changing midstream.

- **The amount of time involved in ensuring that all students are able to be assessed for each standard.** In the lead-up to implementation there was a lot of discussion about re-assessment, but relatively little about the fact that unlike Sixth Form Certificate where it is possible to estimate a student's mark for a particular piece of work for which they are legitimately absent, this is not possible for the NCEA because it is a performance-based system. If an assessment activity takes place and one or more students are away for good reasons (ill, sports trip, field trip, etc), then another time has to be found for them to complete the assessment. As a consequence, 'catch-up' assessment sessions are occupying lunchtimes and after school times, or holding up teaching programmes while some students do catch-ups and others mark time. Again, Update 11 provides some suggestions on ways through this, but its timing and the fact that it floats some new ideas midstream have made its messages unwelcome with many teachers.
- **Problems with the software required to enter students with NZQA.** NZQA used to provide a programme, SADE, which was used to enter students electronically. It did not interface with schools' administration systems particularly well and had many bugs, so its departure this year is not mourned. However NZQA's communication with the companies who provide administrative software to schools appears to have been inadequate and after the

event. The largest software provider, Musac, did not appear aware until well into Term One that their new programme would have to function to enter students for Sixth Form Certificate and Bursary as well as NCEA Level One. The part of the programme for billing students was not completed until some time in Term Two. At one stage there were almost daily updates of the software as the bugs were ironed out. Schools whose ICT networks were substandard, or who lacked good technical skills, were desperate for help from Musac's advisers, who were run off their feet.

- **Destabilising u-turns on external assessment.** Many Information Management teachers were outraged when they received in May a circular seeking their views on a possible change to the exam arrangements for this year which would have involved them supervising the external standards in three separate hours during Term 4, rather than outside supervisors being provided for the one exam in November. NZQA backed off after a flurry of angry responses, but the impression of an agency struggling to cope with the demands of the new system remains. Furthermore, while earlier information had indicated that in most subjects external exams would be less than three hours, the exam timetable published in May 2002 indicated they would all be three hours except for Information Management. Another issue which has caused considerable uproar is the circular SecQual S2002/038, dated 12 July, which informed teachers that all external assessments where the exemplars had shown questions grouped as Achieved, Merit or Excellence level questions would now not follow that format but would now encourage students to answer all questions and be marked 'holistically'. NZQA claims this decision is based on pre-testing with students, but teachers are entitled to be outraged that such pre-testing was not done last year so that reliable exemplars could be posted on the website for teachers to use as models for their school practice exams. Students who have now been taught to manage one kind of exam in the first set of practice exams will now have to be taught to manage a different kind of exam

- **Changes in terminology.** While it was probably a sensible decision, the fact that the terminology of 'Credit level' was changed to 'Achieved level' late in 2001 confused people, especially as most of the sample assessment activities continue to use the word 'Credit'. The change was not sufficiently highlighted, gradually appearing in NCEA Updates 9 and 10 in September and November 2001, so that many teachers were not even aware of it, and it was necessary for NZQA in Update 11 in June 2002 to reiterate that 'Achieved', 'Achieved with Merit' and 'Achieved with Excellence' was the terminology which would be used in results notices. Even then, this significant change was not sufficiently highlighted to ensure all teachers knew about it.

4. And then the Industrial Action ...

4.1. The industrial struggle and NCEA implementation have become inextricably mixed in 2002. The rejection in February of the December 2001 settlement proposal came just as members began to face the realities listed above. Their impact on members' stress levels and workloads clearly fuelled the campaign for a satisfactory collective agreement and caused members' demands in terms of salary to rise rapidly during the first half of 2002. The negotiations began to focus on developing a qualifications allowance of some type which would permit government to give a pay increase to secondary which was not caught up by NZEI's pay parity entrenchment clause. But the clauses insisted upon by the Ministry to establish entitlement to the NCEA allowance showed a singular lack of understanding of the realities of the NCEA. Despite the best efforts of our negotiators to explain realities such as that many courses, for good professional reasons, offered less than 24 credits, and that the workloads of virtually all teachers, not just those who taught Year 11 classes, had been adversely affected by the NCEA, the Ministry proved obdurate. Not surprisingly therefore, it was one of the reasons why the second settlement proposal was also rejected by members.

5. Level 2 and 3

5.1. Up to the date of writing this paper, the members have been under the following instruction from PPTA Annual Conference 2001: "That, pending the outcome of a ballot of members on their readiness to undertake Level 2 of the NCEA to be held prior to the 2002 Annual Conference, members be instructed to concentrate their efforts on the implementation of Level 1."

5.2. During the first half of the year, it became clear that the pressures involved with implementation of Level 1 made it sensible to delay Level 2 and 3 until the Level 1 problems were ironed out. This message was conveyed on many occasions to politicians and Ministry negotiators and officials, but it made little headway.

5.3. The ballot requested by Annual Conference was finally conducted in mid-June, at the same time as consultation with members on a new settlement proposal and on an Action Plan for Term 3. The result of the ballot was overwhelmingly in favour of delaying the implementation of both Levels 2 and 3, so that each Level was given two years to 'bed in' before teachers embarked on implementing the next Level. But in the same ballot, nearly a third of the membership said they wanted those Levels to never be implemented, which was a signal of some pretty determined opposition to the qualification.

6. Where To Now?

6.1. A significant group of our membership would clearly like to see an end to the NCEA. However, the majority view is probably that the NCEA has potential to be a significant improvement on the present system of qualifications, but that until the issues outlined in this paper are

adequately addressed it is not possible for teachers to feel that they are being supported in delivering a high quality qualification system.

- 6.2. PPTA has for some time been calling for a summit on the NCEA to evaluate its implementation to date, including the barriers to successful implementation in areas such as workload impacts, resourcing, professional development, policy decisions and communication by agencies. Such a summit would need to involve a large group of teachers from a wide range of subject areas, plus representatives of PPTA, the agencies, and academics with assessment expertise. Our calls for a summit have so far gone unanswered.

Recommendations

N.B. The recommendations below replace those in the original paper.

- ~~1. THAT the report be received.~~
- ~~2. THAT PPTA continue to demand adequate resourcing for implementation of the NCEA at all levels.~~
- ~~3. THAT full implementation of Level 2 NCEA be deferred until 2004, and Level 3 until 2005.~~
- ~~4. THAT limited monitored implementation of Level 2 NCEA in 2003 and Level 3 NCEA in 2004 be allowed to proceed, subject to members requiring that a democratic vote be held in each department, by secret ballot, to determine whether the department opts into implementation or chooses to offer SFC and/or Bursary for a further year.~~
- ~~5. THAT PPTA members use the Guidelines provided to assist them in making their decision on implementation of NCEA Level 2 and Level 3.~~
- ~~6. THAT PPTA calls on the Ministry of Education to commission an ongoing independent review of the NCEA by assessment experts.~~

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C02/20 THAT PPTA calls on the Ministry of Education to commission an ongoing independent review of the NCEA by assessment experts.

Interim Response to NCEA Conference Paper

Branch: _____

Our Branch wishes to make the following comments on aspects which we believe have been omitted, understated or misrepresented in the paper, for consideration to be included in any supplementary paper produced. (Please use additional sheets if required.)

*Fax to PPTA, 04-382-8763, attention Judie Alison, Advisory Officer, by
Friday 30 August 2002*

Supplementary Conference Paper on NCEA

Note to Branches:

Because of the late arrival of this paper in branches, a response sheet has been provided for use where regions have already held their pre-conference meetings. This response sheet should be sent to your Regional Secretary for circulation among your conference delegates, so that your views can still be represented at Annual Conference.

Seeking Consensus

A Supplementary Conference Paper on the NCEA

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As anticipated in the original paper 'The NCEA. Result: Not Yet Achieved', the ground is shifting in relation to NCEA Level 2 and 3. In the lead-up to Annual Conference, PPTA is maintaining a position which reflects the views of members as expressed in the ballot held at the end of June. The instruction to members to refuse to work towards the implementation of Level 2 in 2003 or Level 3 in 2004 has continued, and Level 2 training has been postponed indefinitely.
- 1.2 However, some branches and individual members have begun to express a wish to trial or fully implement NCEA Level 2 next year. Whether these branches and individuals are confined to those who were already in the 23% of members who expressed a wish in June to proceed to Level 2 next year, or whether that group is increasing in size, is not clear.
- 1.3 In addition, some Principals have publicly expressed a belief that their schools are ready to implement Level 2, though in some of these cases further investigation has revealed that Principals are not reflecting accurately the views of their staff.
- 1.4 In late August, the Minister declared an intention to make implementation of Level 2 optional in 2003, with the alternative of Sixth Form Certificate available for schools or departments who chose not to opt in. Since then, there have been several meetings with the Minister and officials of NZQA and the Ministry to try to find a middle ground. This paper has taken their views into consideration but there are still major points of difference, particularly around whether there can be dual systems of assessment in 2004, i.e. Level 3 and Scholarship, and Bursary.
- 1.5 The implementation problems described in the original paper remain. A series of meetings with Heads of Departments was held during August and September, and almost nothing came out of those meetings which was not already covered in PPTA's Conference Paper. The Heads of Departments conveyed very clearly to the Ministry and NZQA that there were huge problems which the agencies needed to address if the qualification was to have credibility and be manageable for schools and teachers. They also expressed frustration that the problems had not been addressed already.
- 1.6 PPTA has no confidence that these problems will be fully addressed in the immediate future. For that reason, we believe that most schools and departments would choose to defer implementing Level 2 until 2004, if the alternative of SFC was available, and Level 3 until 2005 if the alternative of Bursary was available.

2. **A Professional Decision**

- 2.1 Despite these concerns, it has to be accepted that a number of members in some schools, especially those with extensive Unit Standard experience, hold a sincere belief that if the Level 2 training is allowed to proceed in Term 4, they can be sufficiently well-prepared to implement Level 2 next year. National Office has recently received many messages from Branches expressing this view, and many messages expressing a contrary view too. With settlement of the Collective Agreement, the Association's policy position must be based on members' professional judgment rather than an industrial response, which means that members must be enabled to make their own judgment according to their own particular situation and perspective on the issues.
- 2.2 The recommendations in this paper try to establish a position which will allow all members to exercise the autonomy which is a key feature of professionalism. However collegiality is also a feature of professionalism, and because secondary teachers mostly work in subject teams, conceding to the will of the majority in one's department or school may be necessary. A third feature of professionalism, altruism (or client-focus), is also significant here, and some teachers will perceive this as requiring that their students be able to proceed with Level 2 next year, while others will perceive their students' interests as being best served through SFC.
- 2.3 The paper also recognises that unity within the union would be endangered by persisting with a position (e.g. continuation of the complete ban on Level 2 implementation next year) which a significant group of members have told us they would find it very difficult, or impossible, to adhere to. It would not be in the interests of the union for large groups of members, even whole branches, to find that their professional judgment was at variance with a union directive.
- 2.4 Nevertheless, PPTA recognises the potential for conflict within schools under the policy position established here, particularly in situations where departments or schools are very split about whether to proceed with implementation of Level 2 in 2003 or Level 3 in 2004. We are also conscious that members may feel vulnerable to pressure by Heads of Departments or by Principals and/or Boards of Trustees. Recommendation 4 provides for a secret ballot to be used in voting on when to implement each level. Guidelines will be provided to assist members in determining how to vote. (See Draft Guidelines in Appendix A.) PPTA will work with principals to secure their co-operation with the democratic process set out here. Branches will need to monitor the voting in departments to ensure that democratic processes are adhered to and to ensure that the accuracy of the count can be attested to, and provide collective support to members where this has not happened. If conflict is unable to be resolved within the school, further support will be available from PPTA Field Officers.

3. **Implementation Timeline**

- 3.1 The agencies (Ministry and NZQA) and the Minister are committed to implementation of NCEA Level 3 in 2004 for a number of reasons:
 - The tertiary institutions are gearing up to recognise Level 3 Achievement Standard results as entry qualifications for the 2005 academic year, and it is argued that they would not be happy with two different qualifications operating.

- If Level 3 is not implemented in 2004, there is a fear that alternative qualifications such as the Cambridge exams will gain such a foothold that NCEA Level 3 will never attain the status of the major New Zealand qualification at Year 13.
- The agencies have advised the Minister that it would be impossible for a choice of qualification to operate at Level 3, because it would not be practicable to run Bursary exams alongside exams for NCEA Level 3 and the Scholarship standards.

3.2 For this reason, the Minister has shown a willingness to offer the alternative of SFC at Level 2 for 2003 and 2004, to enable teachers to implement Level 3 in 2004 and, if they choose, not implement Level 2 until 2005, thus enabling teachers to implement only one level a year. He has also agreed that a limited implementation of Level 2 in 2003 would be closely monitored by the agencies to ensure that problems were identified and addressed. (It would also, of course, be closely monitored by PPTA.)

3.3 However, PPTA has informed the Minister that it does not believe that a consensus can be arrived at which involves full implementation of Level 3 in 2004, and instead proposes the timeline described in Recommendation 3, and shown in the diagram below. In voting for this timeline, members need to be aware that further conflict over whether Bursary will be available as an alternative in 2004 is inevitable.

2002	2003	2004	2005
L1 NCEA	L1 NCEA	L1 NCEA	L1 NCEA
SFC	SFC		
	Limited L2 NCEA	L2 NCEA	L2 NCEA
Bursary	Bursary	Bursary	
		Limited L3 NCEA & Scholarship	L3 NCEA & Scholarship
Unit Standards	Unit Standards	Unit Standards	Unit Standards

3.4 Limited implementation of Level 2 in 2003 and Level 3 in 2004 would be opted into by departments which, after conducting the democratic vote referred to in Recommendations 4 and 5, decided that they were ready to do so. A suggested wording for that ballot is included in the Draft Guidelines (Appendix A).

3.5 Concerns about workload as implementation proceeds could be addressed in the following ways:

- Problems with Level 2 and Level 3 would be identified during limited monitored implementation by departments which chose to opt in, and addressed before full implementation began.
- Schools could choose to significantly reduce their assessment at Level 1 from 2003 onwards, recognising that although for most students Year 11 is the final year of compulsory education, few students actually leave school at the end of that year and require a qualification.

- Schools or departments could choose to offer only or mostly the externally assessed standards at one or more levels.

4. Training

- 4.1 The Minister has expressed an intention to offer a day of generic NCEA training to all teachers early in Term 4. This will cover reviewing Level 1 and general training on development of standards-based assessment tasks, to assist those teachers who have requested assistance so that they can modify exemplars provided or develop their own tasks more suited to their programmes and students. PPTA does not oppose members attending such training.
- 4.2 Schools and departments which opted to implement Level 2 in 2003 would be offered one or possibly two days of training for Level 2 after seniors leave for final exams. Materials that have been prepared for the Level 2 training would, however, be made available early in Term 4 to assist teachers in making their decision on whether to implement Level 2 in 2003. Teachers will judge from the quality of these materials how well the officials have been listening to them.

5. Independent Review

- 5.1 It is of serious concern that there is no research being conducted to establish whether the NCEA is achieving the objectives set for it, such as to improve students' access to qualifications, to reduce the number of students who leave school without any qualifications, and to encourage excellence. Serious questions have been raised by some academics about the model of standards-based assessment being used in the NCEA, particularly in regard to questions of reliability and validity.
- 5.2 It is essential that research be funded to do ongoing research as the initiative develops, as envisaged by Recommendation 6. No major change of this kind should happen without such research.

Recommendations

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C02/18 THAT this programme follow the guidelines in the Conference paper and adhere to the following conditions:

- The schools/departments volunteer based on consensus;
- There be at least five days' training and release time before the end of the 2002 school year;
- There be at least two days of release time for training and preparation at the start of the 2003 school year;
- Other resourcing be no higher than that which would be available in full implementation;
- The programme be monitored by PPTA monitors (external to a pilot school) reporting regularly to national Executive who will lobby NZQA [NZ Qualifications Authority] and the Ministry of Education to correct and solve problems as they are identified, and collate and report on progress to PPTA members and to Conferences in 2003 and 2004;

- Monitoring and lobbying will take place to ensure that a good quality Sixth Form Certificate qualification remains available for the next two years as Level 2 NCEA is gradually implemented.

C02/19 THAT a decision be any school or department to take part in the pilot programme be made by consensus following a branch meeting attended by an Executive member or regional representative to ensure that members are not subjected to undue pressure from any quarter.

C02/20 THAT PPTA calls on the Ministry of Education to commission an ongoing independent review of the NCEA by assessment experts.

Level 2 NCEA – Proceed With Caution

1. Introduction

The following Guidelines have been prepared to assist and support PPTA members in making a professional decision as to whether to implement NCEA Level 2 in 2003 or Level 3 in 2004 in their subject department or to defer implementation to the following year.

The Guidelines reflect the Annual Conference decision “That limited monitored implementation of Level 2 NCEA in 2003 and Level 3 NCEA in 2004 be allowed to proceed, subject to members requiring that a democratic vote be held in each department, by secret ballot, to determine whether the department opts into implementation or chooses to offer SFC and/or Bursary for a further year”, and provide some criteria by which members might make that decision.

2. Guidelines

It is PPTA’s view that the default position for members should be the continuation of SFC in 2003 and Bursary in 2004. For those who are giving serious consideration to implementing Level 2 and/or Level 3 earlier, they should reassure themselves that requirements in the following areas have been met:

- Professional development
- Provision of resources
- Time allowances
- Moderation systems
- Procedures for assessment and re-assessment
- Allocation of ancillary time
- Funding for photocopying
- Funding for relevant hardware and software
- School systems for recording of results and submission of entries

A checklist is provided for members to use in making their decision.

3. Ballot Question

A suggested form of wording for use in department voting is provided on the next page. Its use is not mandatory, but it is provided for your assistance.

Department/Faculty: _____

BALLOT ON INTRODUCTION OF LEVEL 2 [*SUBJECT*] IN 2003

After completing the Checklist provided, do you believe that [*subject*] should be offered as an NCEA Level 2 course by this department in 2003?

Yes

No

Unsure/no opinion

Abstain

(Please abstain if you will definitely not be involved in teaching the indicated subject at Year 12 in 2003.)

CHECKLIST

Aspect	Yes	No
<p>Professional development Is the training material and the number of training days offered for Level 2/3 adequate to enable you to implement the new level in a professional manner? (It needs to cover aspects such as development of suitable courses, making judgments against the standards and the development of quality assessment tasks.)</p>		
<p>Provision of resources Are the assessment tasks available of adequate quality and variety for you to be able to use them without major amendment?</p>		
<p>Time allowances Have you been given the compensatory time you need to introduce the new level in a professional manner, e.g. in the form of extra non-contact time in your timetable, late start or early closure of school once a week?</p>		
<p>Moderation systems Have you developed systems for internal moderation which work effectively and do not create extra work? Is the external moderation system reliable and effective?</p>		
<p>Procedures for assessment and re-assessment Have you found ways to manage assessment issues such as catch-ups for absentees and re-assessment in ways which do not create extra work?</p>		
<p>Allocation of ancillary time Has your department been given extra ancillary staffing to meet the demands of delivering two or three levels of the NCEA?</p>		
<p>Funding for photocopying Has your department been given increased funding to cover the increased photocopying that would be required for the delivery of two or three levels of the NCEA?</p>		
<p>Funding for relevant hardware and software With each level of the NCEA that you implement, the demands for computer hardware and software increase. In addition, some subjects require equipment such as video cameras, sound recording equipment, etc. Is your department adequately equipped to deliver a second and then a third level of the NCEA?</p>		
<p>School systems for recording of results and submission of entries There have been major problems in 2002 with Classroom Manager and other software used to record results and do student entries. Are your school's systems able to cope with the extra demands that would be imposed by a second and then a third level of the NCEA?</p>		

PPTA recommends that unless you can tick 'Yes' for all the requirements, you should not vote to implement Level 2 in 2003 or Level 3 in 2004.

To: _____

Response Sheet on Supplementary NCEA Paper

(To be used if your branch has not been able to meet to discuss this paper before your region's pre-conference meeting.)

Branch: _____

No.	Recommendation	For	Against
2	That PPTA continue to demand adequate resourcing for implementation of the NCEA at all levels.		
3	That full implementation of Level 2 NCEA be deferred until 2004, and Level 3 until 2005.		
4	That limited monitored implementation of Level 2 NCEA in 2003 and Level 3 NCEA in 2004 be allowed to proceed, subject to members requiring that a democratic vote be held in each department, by secret ballot, to determine whether the department opts into implementation or chooses to offer SFC and/or Bursary for a further year.		
5	That PPTA members use the Guidelines provided to assist them in making their decision on implementation of NCEA Level 2 and Level 3.		
6	That PPTA calls on the Ministry of Education to commission an ongoing independent review of the NCEA by assessment experts.		

Comments:

Signed: _____ **(Branch Officer)**