

Frequently Asked Questions

The consultation on Simplifying New Zealand qualifications and credentials ran from April to June 2021. Following the consultation Cabinet have considered proposed changes to the system to enable the reforms of vocational education (RoVE). These questions are to assist with understanding about the changes and the implementation of the changes. You can ask for more information at VQconsult@nzqa.govt.nz



Subject	Question	Answer
The reforms	What is the Reform of Vocational Education (RoVE) about?	<p>RoVE is creating a strong, unified, sustainable vocational education system that is fit for the future of work and delivers the skills that learners, employers and communities need to thrive.</p> <p>Through RoVE, learners will receive more support while they are training, and vocational education that is more relevant to work. They will be able to move more easily between regions and between work-based and provider-based training, and will be able to continue training more easily if their employment situation changes.</p> <p>The new system will have a stronger focus on employers and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering the skills they need • providing more support for their employees • ensuring greater consistency in vocational education across the country. <p>Longer term, this will increase the number of employers who are engaged in vocational education.</p> <p>Work-integrated learning will become an increasingly important part of the vocational education system, giving people the opportunity and flexibility to earn while they learn and gain an education that is more directly relevant to the changing needs of the workplace.</p> <p>A unified vocational education system will bring together industry and educators to make sure New Zealand’s workforce is fit for today’s needs and tomorrow’s expectations.</p> <p>The new system took effect when the new legislation was enacted on the 1 April, 2020.</p>
The reforms	What is the definition of vocational education and training?	<p>The Act defines vocational education and training as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education and training that leads to the achievement of industry-developed skill standards, qualifications and other awards; and • includes work-based training.
The reforms	What are the proposed changes to the Education and Training Act 2020?	<p>In August 2021, Cabinet approved these proposed changes to the Education and Training Act 2020 in relation to qualifications and credentials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow WDCs and other standard-setting bodies (SSBs) to develop a ‘national curriculum’ (working title) linked to a

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		<p>specific qualification to be used by all providers, including universities, wānanga, Te Pūkenga, private training establishments, and government training establishments, offering that qualification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require WDCs and other standard setting bodies, before issuing a ‘national curriculum’, to work closely with providers • the ‘national curriculum’ can be treated as an approved programme for funding, fees, immigration, and other relevant purposes • broaden the definition of skills standards to include learning outcomes, so that WDCs have more flexibility about how they use them to reflect industry skills needs • where a skill standard is specified relating to a qualification or micro-credential all providers, including universities, Te Pūkenga, and private training establishments, must use it unless the relevant WDC/SSB agrees otherwise (with the exception of wānanga, as already provided for in current legislation) • replace the term training schemes with micro-credentials • enable WDCs and others to develop micro-credentials which providers can be accredited to deliver • add micro-credentials to the New Zealand Qualifications Framework • remove training packages from the legislation • rename the Directory of Assessment Standards (DAS) to the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards (DASS).
Next steps	<p>What are the next steps? Will there be further consultation?</p>	<p>A Bill about the proposed legislative changes is being drafted. When the Bill is introduced into Parliament, there will be an opportunity for people to have their say about the content of the Bill through the Select Committee process.</p> <p>NZQA will develop and consult on any Rules that may be required to support proposed changes.</p> <p>NZQA will partner with WDCs, Māori and iwi, providers, and others to implement any changes.</p>
Next steps	When would changes take effect?	<p>The legislative process for amendments to the Act is still to be decided. If legislative changes are passed in 2022, they will be likely to take effect from 2023.</p> <p>There will be an opportunity to comment on any transitional arrangements through the legislative and/or Rule development process.</p>

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Next steps	How can I get involved going forward?	If you are interested in receiving regular updates on the NZQA RoVE programme of work, including consultation on proposed Rule changes, please subscribe from http://vqconsult.nzqa.govt.nz
WDCs	How do we contact our WDC?	WDCs become operational from 4 October 2021. To contact a WDC prior please email info@wdc.nz
WDCs	What is the role of WDCs?	The functions of WDCs are defined under s366 of the Act. They include leadership, developing and settling standards, capstone assessments and qualifications, endorsing programmes and moderating assessments, and advisory and representative roles.
WDCs	What is the role of WDCs in the development of a 'national curriculum'?	WDCs can chose to endorse multiple provider programmes or to facilitate the development of a 'national curriculum' (working title) as part of establishing a qualification. This is a collaborative process with providers.
WDCs	How can we get involved in the development of education products ¹ with the WDCs?	Each WDC will lead the collaborative processes required. These processes will be outlined on their websites over the coming months. Independent websites are being developed for each WDC; these will go live on 4 October 2021. For more information about this visit WDC status and next steps Tertiary Education Commission (tec.govt.nz) If you have any questions about WDCs or would like to contact a WDC before 4 October 2021, email info@wdc.nz
WDCs	Will WDCs receive additional funding to facilitate the development of a 'national curriculum'?	Funding for WDCs included funding for the development of training packages, which providers would have been required to deliver under current legislation. The proposed legislative change removes training packages and adds an option of WDCs facilitating a 'national curriculum'. This approach involves a lighter touch by the WDC and therefore will be less expensive than developing packages of learning that providers would have been required to use.
TITOs	When will TITOs relinquish their qualification and standard-setting function?	TITO qualification and standard-setting functions will transfer to WDCs on 4 October 2021, when WDCs become operational.
TITOs	When will TITOs relinquish their arranging training function?	TITOs are required to develop plans to transition all their functions. Whilst their qualification and standard-setting transfer to WDCs on 4 October, their arranging training function can transfer to providers at any time between now and their disestablishment at the end of 2022. The national moderation function also transfers to WDCs on 4 October.

¹ Education products includes existing and proposed qualifications, 'national curriculum', skill standards, micro-credentials, capstone assessments.
Frequently Asked Questions about proposed changes to simplifying New Zealand qualifications and other credentials

Subject	Question	Answer
TITOs	When will TITOs be disestablished?	TITOs will be disestablished at the end of 2022.
TITOs	I have MOUs/contracts to deliver arranged training - what happens to these?	You should contact the appropriate TITO to discuss any arranging training functions that have been transferred or are transferring.
Skill standards	What is a skill standard and who develops them?	<p>A skill standard specifies skills and the level of performance in those skills. It is proposed to broaden the current legislative definition of a skill standard to include learning outcomes, so that WDCs have more flexibility about how they use them to reflect industry skills needs.</p> <p>WDCs, and where appropriate, standard setting bodies will develop skill standards in collaboration with industry and providers. Skill standards will form the building blocks of qualifications, including programmes or of any 'national curriculum'.</p> <p>Where a skills standard is specified relating to a qualification or micro-credential, all providers including universities, Te Pūkenga, and PTEs, must use it unless the relevant WDC/SSB agrees otherwise (with the exception of wānanga, as already provided for in current legislation).</p> <p>NZQA approves and lists skill standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards (DAS). The DAS will be renamed Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards (DASS).</p>
Skill standards	When will skill standards be introduced?	NZQA has begun early thinking to inform future engagement with WDCs and others on the definition and design of skill standards. We expect substantial progress on this collaborative work in the first half of 2022.
Skill standards	Will we be required to use skill standards?	<p>Where skill standards exist, all providers must use them in vocational qualifications, unless the relevant WDC/standard setting body agrees otherwise (with the exception of wānanga, as already provided for in section 367 of the Education and Training Act 2020).</p> <p>We expect skill standards to replace unit standards over time, as qualifications and the standards are reviewed.</p>
Skill standards	How can I get involved in the development of skill standards?	<p>Skill standard development will be led by WDCs (and NZQA for the standards they are responsible for).</p> <p>Developing skill standards is just one of the many operational processes WDCs will need to develop. Over time, more information will be made available by them.</p>
Skill standards /	What is the future of unit standards in schools?	Both unit standards and achievement standards will continue to count towards all levels of NCEA. Skill standards could contribute to the vocational education award.

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unit standards		<p>The design of skill standards will need to take account of how schools will use those skill standards. NZQA will collaborate with WDCs and others on the design and then consult on the proposals.</p> <p>Over time, skill standards will replace unit standards as the core components of vocational education.</p>
Existing education products ²	What will happen to the existing education products?	<p>We anticipate there to be a phased implementation of new products where applicable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing qualifications, unit standards, micro-credentials and programmes will continue to be delivered by providers. WDCs processes for review or input to reviews of these products will be developed. Skill standards will be developed by WDCs over time for implementation Micro-credentials may be developed by WDCs or others for providers to deliver All existing training schemes will be renamed micro-credentials and NZQA will work with providers to grandparent training schemes out of the system over time Training packages will be removed from the legislation as they are no longer required in the new system.
Te Hono o Te Kahurangi framework	Will providers who use NZQA's Te Hono o Te Kahurangi framework need to get programmes endorsed?	Providers who follow the Te Hono o Te Kahurangi framework will need to seek endorsement for programmes which fall within a WDC's industry to ensure the programme meets the needs of the industry.
Mātauranga Māori qualifications	What is happening with mātauranga Māori qualifications?	NZQA is retaining its status as the standard-setting body for mātauranga Māori standards and qualifications. It is also retaining its standard setting role in relation to foundation and English language qualifications and standards.
'National curriculum'	What is a 'national curriculum' (working title)	<p>A 'national curriculum' will draw on skill standards for a qualification and provide further context, structure and information to guide a provider's approach to teaching and assessment.</p> <p>The WDC will facilitate a collaborative process so that a 'national curriculum' reflects both the practical needs of industry and good educational practice.</p>
'National curriculum'	When will a 'national curriculum' be introduced and how can we get involved?	'National curriculum' is one of proposed legislative changes. WDCs will determine if a 'national curriculum' is required for some qualifications. For other qualifications, the standard setting body will develop the 'national curriculum'. They will work collaboratively with tertiary education providers; this is where you can get involved.

² Existing education products include qualifications, standards, micro-credentials
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		NZQA will develop an illustrative 'national curriculum' as a starting point for WDC consideration of how best to use 'national curriculum' in their particular context.
Micro-credentials	How will micro-credentials be developed, approved and accredited if the proposed changes to legislation pass?	<p>Micro-credentials can be developed by WDCs and providers. NZQA expects WDC-developed micro-credentials to be comprised of skill standards. Providers should talk to WDCs if they plan to develop a micro-credential within a WDC's industry coverage.</p> <p>Micro-credentials will replace training schemes over time.</p> <p>Micro-credentials will continue to be approved by NZQA. Providers can seek accreditation to deliver an approved micro-credential.</p>
Training schemes	What is the process to transfer training schemes to micro-credentials?	If the proposed changes to legislation pass, NZQA will develop the process and timeline for transitioning existing training schemes to micro-credentials. NZQA will work with providers to gradually grandparent training schemes out of the system.
Endorsement	What is the difference between programme endorsement and programme approval?	<p>Endorsement is a statement by a WDC that a programme meets industry expectations. WDCs will provide a statement that a programme has met defined principles for endorsement, that there has been sufficient engagement with industry to establish its requirements and is therefore ready to be assessed by NZQA for programme approval.</p> <p>Programme approval is carried out by NZQA and involves quality-assuring a programme leading to a qualification on the NZQF, to make sure the programme is clear, consistent and delivers on its intended outcomes.</p>
Endorsement	Which products need to be endorsed by WDCs and how do they get endorsed?	Programmes leading to industry qualifications must be endorsed by WDCs before they can be approved by NZQA. The scope of endorsement will be Gazetted by the Minister of Education. The criteria WDCs will use to carry out endorsement is being developed by the WDCs in collaboration with NZQA and providers, so the endorsement and approval processes work well together and do not unnecessarily overlap.
Endorsement	Are there any exceptions for products that do not need to be endorsed?	The full scope of the endorsement process is yet to be Gazetted by the Minister of Education. Once the scope has been finalised, more information will be available about the endorsement process on NZQA's website.
Endorsement	Do we have to get our existing programmes endorsed?	<p>The endorsement function will apply to new programmes primarily but will also apply to Type 2 programme changes. WDCs may ask providers to review a programme if the programme is not meeting industry need, which may result in a Type 2 change.</p> <p>Please see NZQA's website for further information about Type 1 and Type 2 changes.</p>

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Quality assurance	Who quality assures providers going forward?	NZQA continues to quality assure tertiary providers other than universities which are quality assured by Universities New Zealand. WDCs will undertake the national moderation of any standards that they set and/or maintain.
Quality assurance	We need to review our product soon, what do I do?	The current Rules apply so please follow the process as listed on the NZQA website for any reviews.
Wānanga	What are the implications of the reforms for Wānanga?	A WDC may endorse a programme developed by a wānanga only if requested by the wānanga. If a wānanga programme includes a component of work-based training WDC endorsement will be required. The use of skill standards and other arrangements for vocational education qualifications will apply to all providers, including universities, wānanga, Te Pūkenga, private training establishments, and government training establishments, offering that qualification. As per the existing legislation, wānanga may choose whether to use skill standards, except where they are offering work integrated learning. Wānanga may wish to be guided by WDC skill standards for campus-based programmes but would maintain āhuetanga Māori and tikanga Māori in their approach. A capstone assessment developed by a WDC applies to a wānanga if the wānanga requests it or if the wānanga is delivering a programme that includes a component of work-based training. A national curriculum will be developed in consultation with providers, including wānanga, so there will also be greater opportunities to take account of Māori identity, language, and culture. Wānanga will use WDC developed 'national curriculum' if it is linked to a specific industry qualification.
Schools	What are the implications of the reforms for schools?	Schools have a significant role in vocational education. The changes provide an opportunity to ensure that schools and tertiary education organisations are better linked to each other and to the world of work. Schools are encouraged to continue supporting students as they study vocational learning options including those undertaken through funding and programmes such as STAR, Gateway, and Trades Academies. Both unit standards and achievement standards will continue to count towards all levels of NCEA. Skill standards could contribute to the vocational education award. The design of skill standards will need to take account of how schools will use those skill standards. NZQA will collaborate with WDCs and others on the design and then consult on the proposals. Over time, skill standards will replace unit standards as the core components of vocational education.
Universities	What are the implications of the reforms for universities?	The use of WDC-determined skill standards within New Zealand qualifications will apply where universities offer sub-degree vocational education programmes that are within a WDC's coverage.

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		<p>For each New Zealand qualification, WDCs will decide whether there can be multiple provider programmes (including unique university programmes) or whether all providers, including universities, should teach to an agreed 'national curriculum'. In practice, many university sub-degree programmes do not fall within the coverage of WDCs (e.g. preparatory programmes for higher level study and language programmes).</p> <p>NZQA has been able to identify 28 active university qualifications which may come under a WDC coverage. It is suggested that over time these qualifications transfer to the WDC by agreement, with a priority on those close to an existing NZ qualification (noting that some of these qualifications may be in specialist vet fields not of interest to WDCs).</p>
Learners	What are the implications of the reforms for learners?	<p>The changes will help learners to get more industry-relevant qualifications and micro-credentials because the industry-led WDCs will develop skill standards, qualifications and micro-credentials, and endorse programmes or develop 'national curriculum'. This gives learners greater assurance that what they are taught will meet the needs of employers.</p> <p>Learners will receive more support while they are training, and will graduate with skills, knowledge and attributes sought by employers. Learners can move more easily between regions, providers and modes of delivery. Learners will be able to continue training more easily if their employment situation changes.</p>
Qualification developers	What are the implications of the reforms for qualification developers?	<p>New Zealand certificates and diplomas listed on the NZQF are developed on behalf of the education system and ownership is not recognised within that system. Changing the name of an existing qualification developer to a WDC needs to be undertaken by agreement except where NZQA invokes rule 14 of the NZQA Qualification Listing and Operational Rules to replace a qualification developer. NZQA will contact all qualification developers that have developed qualifications in areas that now fall under a WDC's coverage over time.</p>
Qualification developers	What happens to the qualifications I have developed outside this new system or after they expire?	<p>Qualifications for which TITOs or NZQA are not the developers will not transfer to WDCs on 4 October. If you have developed one of these qualifications, we encourage you to work with the relevant WDC if a qualification falls within their coverage.</p>
Who to contact	Who should we contact with questions?	<p>You can contact NZQA with questions through VQconsult@nzqa.govt.nz</p> <p>You can contact a WDC before 4 October 2021 by emailing info@wdc.nz Contact details for individual WDCs will be published on their websites when they go-live.</p>