

**Chair
Policy Committee**

Ongoing Improvements to the National Certificate of Educational Achievement

Proposal

1. This paper seeks a series of decisions from Cabinet regarding ongoing improvements to the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA).
2. Over the last 18 months the Ministry of Education (the ministry) and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) have been working systematically through the 191 recommendations arising from a number of reviews of the NCEA. Most of these recommendations related to examination processes and have been addressed. I have now asked the ministry and NZQA to focus on design issues that address motivation, moderation, consistency, credibility, transparency and confidence.
3. It was always envisaged that the new qualification system would evolve and continually improve to maintain relevance and quality. These proposed improvements relate to:
 - 3.1. the design of the qualification
 - 3.2. programme and pathway coherence for students
 - 3.3. aligning qualifications with the curriculum
 - 3.4. supporting teachers' professional practice
 - 3.5. reviewing the roles and responsibilities of the ministry and NZQA, to make the system work better for students, parents and schools, and
 - 3.6. communicating changes to the public.
4. Following 18 months of sector-wide discussion the ministry and NZQA have jointly developed a work plan of proposed actions to implement these improvements.
5. The work plan includes a timeline and summarises the proposed actions; indicating those that are currently being implemented and those that require Cabinet's approval for implementation.

Executive Summary

6. The NCEA is designed to be a flexible and modern national qualification for secondary school students. It aims to provide students, their parents and employers with a complete picture of an individual's achievements.
7. The ministry and NZQA have developed a work plan that reflects extensive engagement with the sector over the past 18 months. The work plan includes ongoing improvements to strengthen the NCEA's place in supporting senior secondary students on pathways to tertiary study, training and work. It is imperative that student education outcomes continue to improve.

8. It is vital that parents and the wider community have increased confidence in what is a world-class qualifications system. Therefore, further work is needed to improve the qualification, motivate students to do their best, and increase the level of understanding about the NCEA: how it works and what it means for students, tertiary institutions and employers.
9. Actions outlined in the work plan have been carefully explored with a number of key stakeholders and are designed to address the issues identified including moderation, variability, and motivation. These actions:
 - 9.1. contribute to improving the NCEA design, for example, endorsing certificates and subjects with excellence, merit and achieved, reporting all “not achieved” results, and improving internal assessment practices with additional moderation and random sampling
 - 9.2. improve the coherence and clarity of programmes and pathways for all students to ensure their qualifications are relevant and meaningful
 - 9.3. align the qualification with the curriculum
 - 9.4. provide teachers with professional support, and
 - 9.5. communicate these changes to the public and in doing so build credibility for the qualification.
10. Implementation of actions within the work plan, which contribute to the ongoing improvements, has begun. I am seeking Cabinet’s agreement to implement four actions within the plan as follows:
 - 10.1. the introduction of “excellence” and “merit” endorsements on NCEA level 1, 2 and 3 certificates for the 2007 cohort of students
 - 10.2. the introduction of “excellence” and “merit” endorsement at the subject level for the 2008 cohort of students
 - 10.3. introduction of a new School Results Summary Notice that will report “not achieved” for all internally and externally assessed standards for the 2008 cohort, and
 - 10.4. moderating up to 10% of internally assessed standards in schools through the appointment of full-time moderators to deal with moderation issues.
11. The ministry and NZQA, in consultation with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), will clarify the roles and responsibilities of the three agencies for senior secondary qualifications for the sector. The ministry has an overarching policy role for the strategic direction of senior secondary education. NZQA has an operational policy role responsible for the implementation of the NCEA.
12. Both organisations are committed to ensuring the qualification continues to serve all young New Zealanders well, that the public has full confidence in the credibility of the systems that support the qualification, and that there is a greater understanding of the benefits of the NCEA. This plan seeks to address these points.

Background

13. The NCEA level 1 was introduced in 2002 and the first full cycle was in 2004 with the implementation of level 3. The NCEA is designed to be a high quality and flexible qualifications system, providing a pathway to tertiary education, workplace training and employment. Ongoing improvements to the design of the NCEA are fundamental to ensure its purpose remains relevant and meaningful for all students. Now that process issues have been addressed, it is timely to look at design improvements, staging these improvements in an orderly, managed fashion in line with the advice contained within the July 2005 State Services Commission finding that “[g]iven the scale of the change involved ... the implementation path should extend over five years or so”.
14. Students can study courses based on achievement and unit standards at levels 1, 2 and 3 and can achieve credits at more than one level in any one year leading to an NCEA qualification¹. Credits can be accumulated through internal and external assessment. Approximately 250,000 students have now studied for NCEA qualifications.
15. Since 2004, the first year when all three NCEA levels were implemented, there has been a 10% increase in the number of students gaining NCEA qualifications at all levels, approximately 9,900 more students overall. The number of students gaining at least NCEA level 2 has increased by 6% over the same period.
16. Of these students, Maori and Pasifika have the largest increase in the number of students gaining at least NCEA level 2 at 22% and 26% respectively. More students are able to enter the labour force with qualifications and to participate in tertiary studies or training.
17. Since its inception, the NCEA has been a dominant issue for education. Recent research shows a high level of support from principals; and that the NCEA is better than the previous system and Cambridge International examinations at identifying students who will do well at university. Recent research also shows that there is a high level of confusion amongst parents and that their support for the system has fallen. This disquiet has prompted some schools to consider adopting alternatives to the NCEA by using Cambridge International examinations or International Baccalaureate Diploma. In these schools the NCEA is not the qualification of choice for students.
18. In February 2007, front bench ministers and the Chief Executives met to discuss issues relating to young people. Actions identified to improve outcomes for young people included:
 - 18.1. increasing the flexibility and relevance of programmes and qualifications in schools, and

¹ For NCEA level 1 students must achieve 80 credits. Of these, eight credits must be in literacy standards and eight credits in numeracy standards.

For NCEA level 2, students must achieve:

- 60 credits at level 2 or above; plus
- 20 credits at any level, even if gained for any other National Qualification.

For NCEA level 3 students must achieve:

- 60 credits at level 3 or above; plus
- 20 credits at level 2 or above, even if gained for any other National Qualification.

- 18.2. improving transitions to further education, training and work.
19. The proposed developments in this paper are integral to implementing the priorities of government and addressing issues raised in public debate. As the NCEA continues to evolve to be relevant for students, ongoing refinements will be needed in some areas. For example, further consideration will be given to how the qualification system can support student retention initiatives.
20. The following actions have been discussed in detail at the Leaders' Forum. Members of the forum include: New Zealand Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA), New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee, Independent Schools of New Zealand, New Zealand School Trustees Association, PPTA Te Huarahi, Secondary Principals Association of New Zealand, Principals Council of NZPPTA, New Zealand Career Services, National Association of Secondary Deputy and Assistant Principals, Te Runanga Nui o Nga Kura Kaupapa Maori, the Education Review Office, and Teacher Education Forum of Aotearoa New Zealand.
21. In recent meetings over the last month, held jointly by the ministry and NZQA, there was overwhelming consensus to the planned actions to improve the design of the NCEA qualification. While there was a range of opinions on when to implement the changes if Cabinet agreed to the proposals, there were few negative reactions to the intent of the proposals. The emphasis at the meetings was making sure that decisions for change were based on what would work best for students and building the public's credibility in the NCEA qualification.

The Proposed Work Plan

22. Following comprehensive discussions with sector groups over 18 months, the ministry and NZQA have been working to develop a work plan for ongoing improvements that address motivation, moderation, consistency, credibility, transparency and confidence. The work plan includes:
- 22.1. Actions where I am seeking Cabinet's approval for implementation. These actions, outlined in Table 1, relate to the improvements to the design of the qualification and building credibility.
- 22.2. Actions underway or planned for the current year. These actions, outlined in Table 2, relate to:
- programme and pathway coherence
 - alignment with the curriculum
 - support for teachers professional practice, and
 - clarification of roles and responsibilities of the ministry and NZQA.

Summary of Proposed Actions

Table 1: Actions requiring Cabinet’s Approval

Actions	Rationale	Risks	Time Frame for Implementation	Seeking Cabinet’s Approval
Improving the Design of the Qualification				
<i>Endorsement of Certificates</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorsement of existing level 1, 2 and 3 achievement standards 	Rewards students for “doing their best” to improve students’ motivation	Implementing during the year could be an issue	For 2007 cohort results	Seeking Cabinet’s approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorsement of subjects 	Overcomes course fragmentation and promotes student motivation	Changing in middle of school year could upset students and parents. Emerging subjects and courses based on unit standards which are not subject based could be a problem	Implement for 2008 cohort results	Seeking Cabinet’s approval on action and timing of implementation
<i>Reporting on “not achieved”</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On students’ Results Summary notices for all standards attempted 	Promotes transparency of results. Ensures consistency between reporting of external and internal results	Negative reaction from schools if implemented in 2007 because this change has implications for how schools report student entries and results. Software developments may be required in some schools. Failure to comply with the request from some could cause problems. Students’ Record of Learning at school looks different from tertiary information	Implement on Results Summary notices for 2008 cohort	Seeking Cabinet’s approval on action and timing of implementation
<i>Internal Assessment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 10% of internally assessed standards are moderated through appointment of full-time moderators 	Addresses the issue of quality moderation processes to ensure internal assessment is valid and reliable	Proposal would take a number of quality teachers out of the classroom	Implemented for the 2008 school year	Seeking Cabinet’s approval

Table 2: Actions Planned or Underway

Actions	Possible Time Frame	Underway or Planned
Improving the design of the qualification		
<p><i>Standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of achievement standards at level 1 • Review of Unit Standards <p><i>Internal Assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project to randomly sample student work • Comparison of internal and external results • <i>Managing National Assessment</i> Reports and Supplementary Reports to be published online 	<p>February – November 2007 Beginning 2007 for completion in 2008</p> <p>September 2007 Ongoing Implemented 2007</p>	<p>Underway Planned</p> <p>Underway Underway Planned</p>
Ensuring programme and pathways coherence		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancements to Record of Learning • School Leaver Profile 	<p>Near completion In development for use in 2008</p>	<p>Underway Underway</p>
Aligning with the curriculum		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement Standards aligned with the new curriculum 	<p>Late 2007 – 2008</p>	<p>Planned</p>
Supporting teachers' professional practice		
<p><i>Exemplars</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work underway to increase the number and quality of exemplars for internal assessment • Developing online exemplars of annotated student work for external assessment <p><i>Professional Learning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide quality professional learning through School Support Services 	<p>Current</p> <p>Current</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Underway</p> <p>Underway</p> <p>Underway</p>
Clarifying roles and responsibilities of the ministry and NZQA		
<p>Paper clarifying roles and responsibilities of the ministry and NZQA</p>	<p>August 2007</p>	<p>Planned</p>
Communicating changes and building credibility		
<p>Communications Strategy</p> <p>Audit of NCEA information online</p>	<p>Current and ongoing</p> <p>Current</p>	<p>Planned</p> <p>Planned</p>

Improving the Design of the Qualification

23. The NCEA is a qualifications system that is sufficiently flexible to respond to change and remain relevant and current. The NCEA must be responsive to evidence, global and national trends, and the needs of students, parents and employers, therefore, fine-tuning of the NCEA is likely to be ongoing. Recommended improvements include:

Endorsement of certificates with merit and /or excellence

24. The student motivation research² commissioned last year by the ministry, along with sector feedback, recommended endorsing NCEA certificates to ensure students “do their best” rather than “just enough”. With Cabinet’s approval, students who gain sufficient “merit” or “excellence” grades for achievement standards will receive certificates in recognition of their achievement. Because unit standards have “achieved” and “not achieved” (see paragraph 37), they do not allow for the awarding of “merit” or “excellence”. This will need to be considered in decisions made for the awarding of the endorsement of certificates.
25. The proposed endorsement of the certificates will add “excellence”, “merit” or “achieved” to the existing level 1, 2 and 3 certificates, based on an aggregation of a student’s overall achievement at that level. To gain an “excellence” students will need to demonstrate a depth of learning to a high level. This should encourage schools to focus on quality teaching and learning to motivate students to “do their best”. One possible effect is that more students might attempt fewer standards to gain a higher ratio of “excellences” or “merits”.
26. Implementation of the endorsement of certificates can occur for the 2007 cohort of students.

Endorsement of subjects

27. It is possible to endorse subjects to provide an indication of a student’s overall performance. To receive a subject endorsement a student will need to achieve a certain number of standards at “merit” or “excellence” level in that subject. Subject endorsement has the advantage of addressing concerns about fragmented courses and could also contribute to improving motivation.
28. Opinion varied on whether this could be implemented for the 2007 cohort. Students are well into their school year. Their course choices were made based on different information. They could rightly feel aggrieved by changes to the design that prevented them from achieving the subject endorsement.
29. Because implementation details are to be worked out, the preference is to develop a quality plan for implementation for the 2008 cohort. This will give more time to consider how to address such issues as:
- emerging subjects like Environmental Studies which use a package of standards from a range of subjects
 - the inclusion of essential content within a subject that must be included to gain the endorsement, and

² Reference: The Report of the Research into *The Impact of NCEA on Student Motivation* by Professor Luanna Meyer, Victoria University, Wellington, July 2006.

- unit standards which are not developed from recognised subjects or based on a curriculum or syllabi.

Reporting “not achieved” on students results notices

30. Students receive two records of achievement: the annual results notice and the Record of Learning. The Record of Learning, a comprehensive summary of achievement, is updated as results are submitted. It covers a student’s profile of learning through the secondary and tertiary systems and does not report standards “not achieved”.
31. Currently “not achieved” is reported on the results notice for externally assessed standards only. This paper proposes that for the 2008 cohort and thereafter, a School Results Summary be introduced, in addition to the current results notice. The School Results Summary will report all “achieved” and “not achieved” results for internally and externally assessed standards. It will be a cumulative record and will be issued to students when they exit school. It will provide students, parents and employers with a complete record of a student’s achievement while at school.
32. It is also proposed that the Record of Learning be renamed the Record of Achievement for both tertiary and school sectors and be retained as a document summarising only achieved grades. This document would record all credits gained towards any national qualification throughout a person's life; local provider qualifications including university degrees would not be included. Credits gained at school and through tertiary education providers, and workplace learning gained through Industry Training Organisations and the assessment of skills and knowledge acquired on the job would be included.
33. Currently NZQA have 1,104,738 registered New Zealand learners on the database that potentially have received a Record of Learning. This number will grow substantially, as successive school cohorts gain NCEA credits. There will therefore be a transition period during which time documents with both names will be in circulation.
34. There would be significant practical information technology and reporting issues for schools to implement this proposal for 2007. Because schools are half way through the year, it might be difficult to get data from schools to report “not achieved” for internally assessed standards on results notices. I recommend that the reporting of “not achieved” on the new School Results Summary be implemented with the 2008 cohort results to give schools time to prepare for this change, and for the ministry and NZQA to finalise implementation details.

Internal assessment

Moderation

35. Concerns have been raised about the validity and reliability of internally assessed work. Moderation is essentially a checking process to ensure that assessment tasks and marking are valid and reliable. In the past year it has come under a great deal of criticism because moderators’ decisions have been inconsistent from time to time. The quantity of work moderated is deemed inadequate and this has led to growing lack of confidence in the results for internal assessment.

- 35.1. NZQA proposes a substantial increase in the number of internally assessed standards that are moderated by NZQA in schools. By employing fulltime moderators they expect to achieve 10% coverage. Currently NZQA employs and trains moderators who are employed on a part-time basis. By providing them with fulltime employment a significant signal is given to the sector that an emphasis is being placed on this role and the work. The intent is to establish robust practices for internal assessment. A detailed plan will be prepared for me by July 2007 for implementation in 2008, including the fiscal implications, which will be jointly funded by the ministry and NZQA from baselines.
- 35.2. NZQA has initiated a random sampling project for level 3 to be included in the current moderation process from September this year. This will act as a quality check of the results of the moderation process and enhance the credibility of the moderation system.
- 35.3. Work is underway to compare internal and external assessment results. This will provide better data on the nature of internal assessment processes in schools, and identify schools with larger than average variations between external and internal assessment results.

Standards

36. The NCEA can be gained with credits entirely from achievement standards, or entirely from unit standards, or from a combination of both.
37. Achievement standards developed by the ministry are, almost exclusively, for assessment in schools only and are used for external or internal assessment. They are based on the New Zealand curriculum and on subjects that were traditionally assessed in the previous school system. Students can get “not achieved”, “achieved”, “achieved with merit”, and “achieved with excellence” for individual standards.
38. Unit standards are developed and owned by Standard Setting Bodies – either Industry Training Organisations or NZQA and are all internally assessed. Unit standards help expand the courses of study and provide multiple pathways to work, training or tertiary education for senior secondary students. There is concern that when students do not succeed in unit standards, this is not recorded. If Cabinet agrees to report “not achieved” on results notices this will be addressed (paragraphs 30-34 refers).
39. Currently, the ministry develops and reviews achievement standards. NZQA develops and reviews unit standards. The ministry undertakes an annual cyclic review of achievement standards and level 1 achievement standards are being reviewed this year. The NZQA reviews unit standards on a three to five year cycle.
40. The process of aligning these reviews is planned for this year with the purpose of achieving better coherence and identifying issues of duplication, credit parity and quality on the National Qualifications Framework. This process will address concerns about the level of difficulty between unit and achievement standards, and the so-called “soft” credits gained through unit standards at level 1.

Managing National Assessment Reports published online

41. Managing National Assessment (MNA) is the term used to describe the processes for achieving valid, fair, accurate and consistent internal assessment in schools. An external check of a school's assessment systems is carried out every three years and a MNA Report is written. If aspects of a school's internal assessment systems are not acceptable, there will be a follow up check and report - a Supplementary Report. These reports are not currently published.
42. NZQA intends to publish the *Managing National Assessment Reports* and Supplementary Reports online. The purpose of publishing these reports is to increase and improve information available for parents and the public about the effectiveness of the quality assurance systems of individual schools.

Ensuring Programme and Pathways Coherence

43. The NCEA is a flexible system. Schools have a responsibility to ensure students participate in coherent and meaningful programmes, and do not just acquire a collection of unrelated standards that neither lead them to a useful qualification nor enable them to pursue the study or career of their choice. A tool to help students and parents monitor their achievement and future pathways is in development. This tool will enable students to incorporate their learning goals on the web-based Record of Learning. The tool should be ready for use mid 2008.

Building Credibility

44. A communications strategy has been designed to support improvements to the NCEA system and to ensure it remains a flexible, modern, and successful national qualification for secondary students.
45. The communication strategy currently involves the ministry, NZQA, the Minister of Education, Associate Minister of Education and sector advocates. There is scope to involve other associated portfolios/Ministers.
46. Ensuring that all online information communicated to the public is coherent and easily accessed is a priority for the ministry and NZQA this year.
47. An audit of all online material currently available on NCEA will be carried out this year. A joint working group will edit and update online information.

Aligning with the Curriculum

48. The revised national curriculum is emphasising the importance of teachers planning coherent and meaningful programmes and appropriate pathways for all students. This addresses the criticism from some teachers that assessment is driving the curriculum.
49. When the New Zealand curriculum is finalised later this year, the achievement standards will be aligned with the new curriculum. Any revisions to standards will occur in 2008 for implementation in 2009.

Supporting Teachers' Professional Practice

50. The consistency of assessment judgements has been identified as an issue. Providing annotated student work to exemplify assessor judgements for internal and external assessment will help improve the consistency of assessment judgements.
51. For external assessment, NZQA is developing online examples of annotated student work to guide better understanding of external assessment expectations. There will be fifty externally assessed exemplars completed by the end of 2007.
52. For internal assessment, the ministry is developing further exemplars to support better practice. A range of examples of student work will complement existing assessment resources and improve the consistency of assessment judgements. They will exemplify the standard at the various grade boundaries. These exemplars will be available by the end of the year.
53. Teachers, as well as the system, will benefit from access to full time moderators as proposed in paragraph 35.1. For a number of years teachers have requested the opportunity to have professional discussions about making judgments concerning grade boundaries. Trained moderators will work closely with subject specialists and advisors employed by School Support Services, the six professional learning centres in New Zealand.

Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, NZQA and TEC with regard to NCEA

54. The ministry has an overarching policy role that includes setting the strategic direction of senior secondary education. NZQA has an operational policy role and is responsible for the implementation requirements of the NCEA.
55. The two agencies are working to make sure that their roles and responsibilities for senior secondary qualifications are clear both to the sector and within each organisation. This will enhance interagency coordination of NCEA resources and processes, and reduce compliance for schools. A paper clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the ministry and NZQA to make the system work better for parents, students and schools will be presented to me by August 2007 as part of the joint regular quarterly reports on implementation progress. This work will be framed within the context of the wider issues of roles and responsibilities of the three agencies with interests in the secondary/tertiary interface – TEC, NZQA and the ministry.
56. The agencies will monitor the implementation of the actions proposed in this paper to ensure that the issues identified are addressed. Work that is currently underway or planned in the future, to address youth engagement and achievement issues such as Realising Youth Potential, could contribute to the ongoing work on future design improvements to the qualification. The agencies will provide me with information through the quarterly reports.

Consultation

57. This paper was developed in collaboration with NZQA. The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet has been kept informed and Treasury has been consulted.

58. This paper has been sent to the following agencies for their consideration: Te Puni Kokiri, the State Services Commission, the Education Review Office, the Ministries of Women's Affairs, Economic Development, Social Development, Pacific Island Affairs, Labour, Justice, and Youth Development.
59. Over the past 18 months the proposed activities have been discussed in many different settings. A key group has been the Leaders' Forum, a group of key stakeholders and representatives from professional associations. The group was established to provide advice to the ministry and NZQA about NCEA.
60. Recently the ministry and NZQA held briefings to canvass the views of key stakeholders to the proposed activities. Attendees included secondary school principals from around New Zealand, representatives from professional associations, employers, businesses, and tertiary institutions. While there was overwhelming support for the proposed actions, opinions differed on when to implement the actions. The options have been outlined for Cabinet's consideration.

Financial Implications

61. Implementing these proposals will require resources to be reprioritised within the ministry's and NZQA's baselines. In particular, increasing moderation of internally assessed standards up to 10% per year will cost in the order of \$3.950 million. \$1.300 million currently used for part-time moderators will be reallocated to this activity. Therefore the net additional cost to be found within baselines will be \$2.650 million.
62. The ministry and NZQA, in consultation with Treasury, will report back to the Ministers of Education and Finance by November 2007 to confirm the reallocation of funds identified within agency baselines to meet the costs of the proposals outlined in this paper and to seek any Ministerial or Cabinet approvals to fiscally neutral changes in appropriations required.

Human Rights Act Implication

63. There are no implications in this paper.

Reducing Disparities Implications

64. There are no implications in this paper.

Treaty of Waitangi Implications

65. There are no implications in this paper.

Legislative Implications

66. There are no implications in this paper.

Regulatory Impact Statement

67. There are no implications in this paper.

Communications

68. I will announce Cabinet's decisions in May 2007. At this time a Communications Plan will be in place to ensure a comprehensive information sharing process for students, parents, employers, tertiary institutions and teachers, that will make them aware of the changes and their implications, particularly those to be implemented this year.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

1. **note** that a proposed work plan for ongoing improvements to the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) has been developed by the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), with consultation across the education sector over the last 18 months;

Endorsement of Certificates

2. **agree** that the 2007 cohort results include an endorsement of "achieved", "achieved with merit" or "achieved with excellence" on NCEA level 1, 2 and 3 certificates to reflect the overall achievement of students who complete NCEA qualifications with credits in achievement standards (not unit standards);
3. **agree in principle** that from the 2008 school year NCEA certificates at levels 1, 2 and 3 should include subject endorsements for students gaining sufficient credits through achievement standards in any subject area with "achieved with merit" and "achieved with excellence" grades available for higher levels of achievement;
4. **note** that further work is required on issues such as how subjects are defined and what the criteria should be for receiving a subject endorsement, and on other aspects of implementation;
5. **direct** the Ministry of Education and NZQA to report back by July 2007 with further advice on feasibility and implementation issues for subject endorsements, for a final Cabinet decision;

Recording of "not achieved" on results notices

6. **agree** that for the 2008 cohort, NCEA results notices should include a record of any standards attempted for which the result is "not achieved", including externally and internally assessed achievement standards and unit standards;
7. **agree**, in addition to recommendation 6, that for the 2008 cohort and thereafter, students should receive a separate School Results Summary when exiting school which includes all results "achieved" and "not achieved";
8. **agree** that the tertiary sector would not be covered by the proposal in recommendations 6 and 7;
9. **agree** that the lifelong Record of Learning will now be renamed the Record of Achievement for both tertiary and secondary school students;

Internal Assessment

10. **agree** that from 2008 and thereafter, moderation of internally assessed standards in each school will be substantially increased with a goal of 10%;
11. **note** that NZQA intends to appoint moderators on a full-time basis to achieve this objective and that the costs of this change are to be met within baselines;
12. **direct** the Ministry of Education and NZQA to report to the Minister of Education by August 2007 on the details of those changes to be adopted for the 2007 and 2008 school years, including the decisions made above;
13. **note** the plans to communicate any proposed changes to the NCEA to the public, in particular, to students, teachers and parents;
14. **note** that the Ministry of Education and NZQA are carrying out the following actions as summarised in Table 2 in 2007 and will provide progress reports through joint quarterly reports beginning in August 2007:
 - reviewing level 1 achievement and unit standards in 2007 and 2008 to update and improve the standards and address issues of duplication and credit parity
 - conducting annual reviews of data regarding the relative achievement of students in external and internal assessment to ensure unexpected variations are checked
 - publishing online the NZQA *Managing National Assessment* reports and supplementary reports to ensure parents can access information about every school's assessment processes
 - developing a web-based tool to help students monitor their achievement and future pathways
 - implementing a comprehensive communications plan in 2007 to provide the public with regular, clear updates
 - auditing online NCEA information
 - revising the achievement standards to align with the mandating of the revised New Zealand curriculum
 - providing further examples of student work to assist students and teachers preparing for internal assessment during 2007
 - continuing to develop detailed and annotated examples of student work to assist both students and teachers preparing for external assessment, by clearly articulating the standards expected at each achievement level, and
 - continuing to provide teachers with high quality professional learning support.

15. **note** that the Ministry of Education and NZQA, in consultation with Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), will report to the Ministers of Education and Tertiary Education in August 2007, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, TEC and NZQA to make the system work better for parents, students and schools; and
16. **direct** the Ministry of Education and NZQA, in consultation with Treasury and TEC, to report to the Minister of Finance, the Minister for Tertiary Education and the Minister of Education by November 2007:
 - 16.1. to confirm the reallocation of savings identified within agency baselines to meet the costs of the above proposals;
 - 16.2. on any further Ministerial or Cabinet approvals to fiscally neutral changes in appropriations that are required to give effect to the reallocation of savings identified within agency baselines.

Steve Maharey
Minister of Education