

Cromwell College Senior Assessment Handbook

Guidelines for students and parents

**This is a very important document.
Students should keep this in a safe and
accessible place**

Name :

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Cromwell College Senior Student Handbook

Welcome to the Senior School at Cromwell College. This handbook is designed to provide you with information to help achieve qualification goals. If you have any questions please ask some of the following people:

Your subject teacher

The Heads of Faculty

Technology - Mr Wing

The Arts - Mr Shennan

Physical Education - Mr Fuller

Social Sciences - Mrs Greenwood/Mr Ashby

Science - Mr Pearson

Mathematics - Mr McGillivray

English - Mr Hepburn

The Year 11 Levels Manager - Mrs Inglis

The Year 12 Levels Manager - Mrs Jackson

The Year 13 Levels Manager - Mr Streeter

The Careers Advisor - Mrs Page

The teacher in charge of NZQA - Mrs Jackson

Courses of Study at Cromwell College

Year 11 - Each student in Year 11 must study English or Practical English, Mathematics or Practical Mathematics, Science or Alternative Science and Integrated Studies or PE. In addition, each student chooses two additional subjects to study.

Year 12 - Year 12 students must study English or Practical English at either Year 11 or Year 12 and Modular Studies. Each Year 12 student chooses four additional subjects, or 5 additional subjects if doing Outdoor Education. These subjects may be at Year 11 or Year 12. Year 12 students who take Outdoor Education or Golf do not do Integrated Studies.

Year 13 - Year 13 students must study five subjects. You may study subjects from different levels as long as they fit into the school's timetable and your course of study has been approved. Year 13 students should also be aware of the requirements for University Entrance.

National Qualifications

The courses and assessments at Cromwell College contribute towards the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA). Generally speaking students in Year 11 study for Level One, students in Year 12 study for Level Two and students in Year 13 study for Level Three. Students may take longer than one year to gain a national certificate. There is no specified time limit for completing any qualification. For students and parents who desire more detailed knowledge about the NCEA and the NZQA please visit the website at www.nzqa.govt.nz. There are additional nationally recognised certificates that some students can work towards.

Each subject at Cromwell College has a range of assessments. An assessment could be a project, an in-class test, a speech, a practical demonstration, an observation by the teacher, or an end-of-year examination. Each assessment is worth a certain number of credits. These usually range from two to six credits. Most courses at Cromwell College have a total credit availability of between 18 and 24 credits.

NCEA is New Zealand's national qualification for school learners. It is recognised by universities and other tertiary providers in New Zealand. This means that the NCEA will be recognised overseas. NCEA is also a qualification on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Other qualifications on the NQF include Polytechnic certificates and diplomas and university degrees.

There are two types of assessments in the NCEA. Both types count equally for qualifications purposes.

Unit Standards are always given as school-based or internal assessments. A unit standard assessment may be a project, a practical demonstration or an in-class test. There are no end-of-year examinations for unit standards. A unit standard is an accepted standard of achievement for a particular skill. You can either achieve or not achieve a unit standard and you generally can have several attempts at completing the assessment. This is called a “resit”.

Achievement standards can be school-based assessments or they may be assessed through an end-of-year national examination. There are four results available for any achievement standard: Not achieved, Achieved, Achieved with Merit, Achieved with Excellence. “Resits” are available for some achievement standards but not for all.

To be awarded NCEA Level 1

- You achieve the award if you gain 80 credits.
- These credits can come from any level and they may come from unit standards, achievement standards or a combination of both.
- You must have at least 8 credits designated as “literacy” credits and 8 credits designated as “numeracy” credits. Your English or mathematics teachers will tell you more about the requirements for literacy and numeracy.

To be awarded NCEA Level 2

- You achieve the award if you gain 80 credits. 60 credits must come from Level Two or higher. The other 20 may come from any level.
- There are no literacy or numeracy requirements for this qualification but to gain University Entrance you must pass 8 literacy credits at Level Two.

To be awarded NCEA Level 3

- You achieve the award if you gain 80 credits. 60 credits must come from Level Three or higher. The other 20 may come from any level. There are no literacy or numeracy requirements for this qualification.

University Entrance

You will be qualified for entrance to a university in New Zealand if you have obtained:

- a minimum of 42 credits at level 3 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework, including a minimum of 14 credits at level 3 or higher in each of two subjects from an approved subject list, with a further 14 credits at level 3 or higher taken from no more than two additional subjects from an approved list.
- a minimum of 14 credits at level 1 or higher in Mathematics or Pangarau
- a minimum of 8 credits at level 2 or higher in English (minimum 4 credits in ‘writing’ and minimum 4 credits in ‘reading’). The literacy qualification can also be obtained through Te Reo Maori. Your English teacher can tell you more about these.

Credits can be accumulated over more than one year. Where a unit standard and an achievement standard assess the same learning outcome, you can only count one standard towards your NCEA or university entrance.

Scholarship

New Zealand Scholarship is designed to extend the best secondary students and enable top scholars to be identified and acknowledged. Students will be able to enter one or more scholarship standard assessments as well as their level 3 assessments. The aim is to assess a student's ability to synthesise and integrate concepts - to apply higher-level thinking based on in-school and independent learning.

The content assessed for Scholarship will be the same as that covered for level 3 achievement standards, but there will be separate exams. It is expected that Scholarship candidates will have completed a full year of level 3 studies at a secondary school. New Zealand Scholarship is registered as an independent level 4 qualification. To complete the qualification students require 72 credits. Each Scholarship standard contributes 24 credits towards the qualification. More information about Scholarship will be available for students during the year.

Changes to Courses of Study

You may wish to change your selected courses. Generally speaking this will only be allowed during the first two weeks of the school year. If you wish to change a course, you must first see the appropriate level's manager. Your level's manager will discuss the course change with you, talk to the subject teachers and discuss the situation with your parents before making any changes.

Distance Education Study

Additional courses are sometimes available through distance education. Distance education providers include the New Zealand Correspondence School, the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, Otago Polytechnic, Telford and the Otago-Net video-conferencing courses. Ms Sinclair is the teacher in charge of Distance Education. Students must have a proven record of being able to work independently. Please see her if you have questions or need clarification.

Record of Learning and your NZQA Number

Every student in New Zealand is assigned an NZQA number called an NSN. This number is unique to you. The NZQA maintains your Record of Learning on a computer database. This Record of Learning lists all the unit standards and achievement standards you have passed and keeps track of the total number of credits you have gained. You can access your record yourself on the NZQA website. Mr Streeter is the teacher in charge of NZQA matters at the College. Please see him if you have any questions about the NZQA or your Record of Learning.

Course Outlines

Students will be given by each of their subject teachers at the start of the year a course outline this will include:

- the achievement standards and / or unit standards covered, including their name, number, level, credit value and internal/external status
- the topics to be taught and their links to the relevant assessment standards
- a proposed time line for all assessments, and whether there are dual or further assessment opportunities.

This is important information, do not lose it.

If you have any questions about the course outlines please see your class teacher first and then the Head of Faculty for the subject you are studying.

Assessment

The following are the rules and procedures concerning senior school assessment at Cromwell College.

Deadlines, absences and extensions

- 1 All internally assessed standards will have a clearly stated deadline. You will be given sufficient advance notice of this deadline.
- 2 There is no such thing as 'late work'. **All internally assessed work must be handed in by the student on or before the deadline.** Hand in your assessment to the teacher at the beginning of the particular subject period on the deadline day.
- 3 Extensions may be applied for and granted when absences are '**school approved**' and have made it impossible or disabled a student from giving the required time to complete an activity - this may be for important family occasions, illness or school events. No extensions will be given when absences are '**unapproved**'.
- 4 If you have a legitimate unforeseen absence from school on the day internally assessed work is due you must have written evidence of the details of your absence. You should give this to your class teacher on your return to school. The school will decide on the level of evidence required. On you return to school from a legitimate absence the work will be handed in on that day.
- 5 For foreseen absences, extensions must be applied for in advance. All matters regarding assessment absences and extensions of time will be dealt with by the NZQA teacher in consultation with the class teacher. Extensions must be applied for to the NZQA teacher on the form provided in this booklet.

Further Assessment Opportunities (Re-sits)

Generally there will be further assessment opportunities in the internal standards of your course. There is no further assessment opportunity for externally assessed achievement opportunities other than sitting the achievement standard in the following year. Your teacher will make it clear to you when the re-sit opportunity will occur. Re-sit opportunities are scheduled by the teacher and may happen at lunchtimes or after-school.

Certain assessments by their nature will not have a re-sit opportunity. These may include items such as field study, major research projects or practical experiments where logistics make a re-sit impossible. Your teacher will make you fully aware if a re-sit will be available.

If your assessment fails to meet the standard your teacher has several options. They may

- a) make you complete the whole task again.
- b) have you complete a parallel style assessment
- c) talk to you about a simple mistake you may have made
- d) make you do further work but not the whole assessment
- e) give you a “not-achieved” for the assessment.

Return of Work

Your teachers will endeavour to return your work in a timely fashion. You need to be aware that teachers have big workloads and the return of lengthy or complicated assessments may take some time.

When assessed work is returned teachers will provide comments through an assessment schedule – this will be explained to you. Use the advice to improve later performances

Practice Assessments

Many achievement standards are assessed through an end-of-year national NZQA examination. During the course of the year the College holds practice exams to help you prepare for these assessments. The results from these practice exams do not count on your Record of Learning. They are designed to help you and your teachers identify what you know and what you still need to learn. However if you are unable to attend the external exams then the marks received in practice assessments will form the basis for a decision.

Authenticity

Standards-based assessment relies on students providing evidence that they do understand, have the knowledge, or can practise the skill in relation to the achievement standard.

Student misconduct which would disrupt this process includes copying other students' work, the non-referencing of large amounts of information taken from another source, any type of cheating or non-compliance with instructions in any assessment opportunity, any helping of a student who is passing off another student's work as their own.

All students in the senior school will be required to sign an authenticity agreement.

Teachers will give you details for each assessment concerning authenticity. Practices to assure authenticity will depend on the assessment context. Tests will be run on traditional lines; notes during field trips or experiments may be collected by the teacher; during research activities, students may expect to have work-in-progress checked; ongoing work may be kept on the school site; teachers may require plans, draft work and a full bibliography to be included with the final product.

If the teacher feels that the work you hand in is not your own the matter will be referred to the Head of Faculty and Senior Management of the school. Students will be given an opportunity to explain themselves in all cases. At Cromwell College, we will be using our knowledge of students to ensure fairness in assessment. Consequences may include "Not Achieved" grades in any and all Standards likely to have been affected by the misconduct. Very serious misconduct may be reported to NZQA who may disqualify students from any or all qualifications for up to two years. Serious cases would also involve school disciplinary action.

Appeals and Resubmissions

Students may resubmit their original work for any assessment standard to the teacher if they believe that the teacher has missed some of their work, or has misinterpreted an answer or response, or has been inconsistent in relation to other students, or has mis-recorded the grade achieved.

Resubmissions must be made to the teacher concerned by the end of the school day following the return of marked work.

It is hoped that a resolution can be discussed between teacher and student in these cases.

Students may make an appeal to the NZQA teacher on the Appeal Form provided it they still do not accept the teacher's decision on the re-submission. All appeals must be lodged within one week of the return of the assessment. You must first explain the situation to your class teacher. It is also wise to talk to the Head of Faculty of that subject before lodging an appeal.

The NZQA teacher will consider the appeal, where appropriate seeking an independent assessment from another teacher with reliable experience in that subject. A written decision on any appeal will be given to the students, the teacher, and the Principal within 2 weeks. A further appeal can be made to the Principal, but this is most likely to be a check that procedures have been followed.

Compassionate consideration

Students who consider their performance to have been unfairly impaired may make a 'Compassionate Consideration' request.

For **Internal Standards**, this request may result in:

- An extension
- A reassessment opportunity
- A judgement on the level of attainment from work completed so far towards this standard.

Evidence must be specific to the achievement standard being assessed through the compassionate consideration process. Schools cannot make a result for one standard by aggregating the performances or results from other standards within the same course. If the teacher does not have evidence of achievement, then the standard cannot be awarded. If there is evidence of achievement during a practice, then the teacher can use their professional judgement based on that evidence.

For a compassionate consideration request use the form provided.

If a student applies for 'compassionate consideration' after the **External testing** in November each year, the school will be asked for evidence of the level of achievement in the respective standards for the student. This information will be communicated to NZQA by the NZQA teacher.

Costs

As a student you must pay in order to have your credits listed on your Record of Learning. The costs are set by NZQA. Mrs Jackson will advise you early in the year about the costs associated with your chosen level of study. There is a subsidy available for certain students based on the level of their parents income. Information about subsidies will also be available

Classwork

The work that you do in class is very important. Classwork can be quite varied. You may listen to your teacher and take notes, read, work problems, discuss a situation with your fellow students, problem solve with a group of students or a host of other activities. Classwork is designed to help you understand and learn which will ultimately lead to better assessment marks. You should make every effort to complete your classwork in the time allocated to you.

Homework

Regular homework is a necessary ingredient for success in the senior school. Your teachers will give you regular homework to do. Homework is designed to help you reinforce the learning you have done in class. Homework may consist of reading, practice writing assignments, textbook problems or revision. You should make every effort to complete the homework you have been assigned. If you fail to regularly complete homework your parents will be informed and you will come under the school's disciplinary structure.

Attendance

Regular attendance is vital to effective learning. Sometimes even missing a few lessons can put you on the back foot for the rest of the year. As a student at Cromwell College you are expected to attend every lesson unless you are sick or have a legitimate reason for being away from school. The College checks up on attendance very carefully. If you wag school or an individual class you will come under the school's disciplinary structure.

Workload

NCEA requires students to be much more organised and switched in to assessment procedures. Students will need to take responsibility for their learning and their assessment. Staff will attempt to spread the workload through the year, but students can expect to be working at some assessment activities for most weeks of the school year.

If you become concerned about your workload, please seek advice from someone here at school.

Moderation of Tasks and Grades

National qualifications like NCEA require accurate and fair judgements on students' work. Moderation (ie checking) of grades will be done nationally by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. In addition Cromwell College will be moderating internally and with other schools. The school is required to "get it right" or our ability to award the NCEA would be withdrawn.

So that students are not disadvantaged and in order to most accurately meet the national standard, assessment decisions given to students will be 'interim' until schools-based and national moderation processes are completed.

Students will be given qualifications entry information and interim results to check at various times through the year.

The following page gives you space to record which achievement and unit standards you are working towards and which ones you have already passed. There is also a chart you can fill in to see your progress towards 80 credits, but remember most of you are capable of far more and that is what the school and employers expect.

Grades will be verified by being signed off by the students at the awarding of the interim grade, and then again, if necessary, after any moderation or appeal procedure changes. Students will be asked also to check results and sign them as correct before they are sent to NZQA at the end of the year.

