



# NZMEB Newsletter

January 2018

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2018. I hope you have all managed to enjoy the summer, and have a well earned break.

## NCEA Credits

In our last newsletter I gave you some detail about our new facility to assess NCEA credits. There are a few things to take into account when entering your students which are detailed on the website, but here it is in a nutshell. To facilitate this, NZMEB works in conjunction with Vision College, a division of ATC NZ Ltd. Entrants can enrol to be examined for NZMEB music exams, and at the same time be assessed for NCEA standards. So all those entrants who cannot take music into their school programmes can still achieve on their "Record of Learning" with achieved, merit and excellence grades. As required by NZQA, NZMEB are receiving and processing enrolments.

The NCEA assessment happens as an integral part of the exam - the entrant must choose the pieces being assessed and write the titles on their exam slip which they hand to the examiner when they enter the exam room. The examiner will then assess the chosen pieces for both NZMEB and NCEA as they are performed during the course of the exam. A short additional report will be written for NCEA.

You will find some further detail about the marking on the back of this newsletter.

## Syllabus Review

The reviewed Piano Syllabus is now printed and available. There have been slight changes to the technical work in some grades, please check the syllabus. There has been a lot of serious consideration given to the format of our syllabuses - please remember to press the refresh button on your browser to keep up to date. In our woodwind and brass syllabi there have been changes in the technical work so it is advisable to check the website.

## Exams

When entering for practical exams please ensure your entrants' availability for the whole time - there were so many requests for change in the recent session that we were unable to accommodate them. Please consider entering for the August session as so many students are unavailable for some of the days in the December session.



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## IRMT Conference - Pathways to Performance

The 2018 Institute of Registered Music Teachers Conference is in Hamilton from Thursday 18th to Sunday 21st January. NZMEB is a major sponsor and is pleased to be presenting a session on Friday January 19th at 4pm. If you are going to this conference, do come to our table and say hello.

Kindest regards,  
Lynne Sperring.

### NCEA External Assessment: Grade Score Marking

Grade Score Marking accompanies the implementation of the revised achievement standards. All external revised achievement standards have been written with a single outcome to allow aggregation of assessment evidence from across an examination paper.

#### Question marking

Each question in each NCEA examination paper is awarded a single N, A, M, or E grade. This grade is awarded using the criteria from the standard. Each response is marked for the quality of the evidence it contains. Markers are instructed to ensure a high quality response is not marked down for a minor error. Marking is “top down”, which requires the marker to initially look for evidence for Excellence, as described by the Excellence criterion in the standard. Only if this evidence is missing or deficient, do markers look for Merit evidence, and then down to Achievement.

**The grade is based on the whole response to the question and takes account of all evidence in the candidate’s answer. Some questions may have parts, bullet points, or other scaffolding, but this does not affect the award of a single holistic grade.**

Grade Score Marking has brought an additional refinement to marking. Recognition of the quality of evidence within each grade is made possible by assigning a number to show upper and lower levels of grades. For example, lower Merit = M5, upper Merit = M6; both 5 and 6 are Merit scores. The scores indicate that the student has met the criterion for a Merit grade in the question.

Possible grade scores for a **question**:

Not Achieved			Achievement		Merit		Excellence	
NØ	N1	N2	A3	A4	M5	M6	E7	E8

#### Overall result for a standard

The judgement about overall performance against the standard is made by aggregating the scores from the questions. For example, in an examination paper with three questions, a candidate may score M5 for Question One, A3 for Question Two, and M6 for Question Three. For the whole paper, the candidate’s score is M5 + A3 + M6 = 14. This score will be written in the “total” box on the front cover of the candidate’s answer booklet.

During marking in each year, cut scores are set by senior markers. The senior markers use the standard and a large sample of papers on each score to decide where the scores that separate the grades fall. These scores are called the cut scores. It is essential to the integrity of Grade Score Marking that holistic judgement across actual papers is used to determine the cut scores.

When **judgement statements** are published on the NZQA website, they appear as score ranges (e.g. Merit range 14 – 19). In this example, the lower cut score (between Achievement and Merit grades) for a Merit grade is 14; any paper with a score of 14 written in the “total” box would receive a Merit grade. In this example, the upper cut score (between Merit and Excellence) for a Merit grade is 19; any paper with a score of 19 written in the total box would receive a Merit grade. All papers between and including 14 to 19 receive a Merit grade.

Each set of cut scores relates only to that particular assessment. Each year, new grade score ranges will be set using marked examination papers and the standard being assessed. These cut scores are published on the NZQA website at the same time examination papers are returned to candidates. This allows candidates to check whether their grade as shown in their online results is correct.

Prior to implementation, five years of research at NZQA confirmed that Grade Score Marking is a fair and effective method of standards-based marking.