



## Whānau Pānui

10 September 2021

Kiā ora e te whānau

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### Welcome back (Naumai hoki mai)

Great to see so many students back at school. I really enjoyed catching up with many taiohi (young people) about their covid-19 lockdown experience. Many said that they had really appreciated the effort of their teachers to make learning continue, for instance those that had made instructional videos for them. Many said they didn't do as much as they 'should have' and many said they liked the flexibility that being at home brought them. Most were really pleased to be back at school.

We know that many of our learners had challenges engaging with learning at they know they need to catch up as we head to the end of the school year. Seniors have internal assessments to complete and external assessments to prepare for.

Reminder, if your child is sick, they need to stay home. If they appear sick at school, especially with any flu-like or respiratory symptoms then we will contact you and ask you to take your child home and we recommend you contact your GP or Healthline for advice. If they recommend testing we would appreciate being informed and being advised of the result before a return to school.

We look forward to the time when we can enjoy all our freedoms again, but until then, level 2 is the new normal as we reduce the risk of infections.

### Credit 'pragmatism'

Some students are making decisions to focus on a reduced number of credits and ask to pull out of assessments. This is not wise, especially for those who intend to go on to further study. Some students get to the end of their internal assessments and need, say, 20 credits. They then focus on only trying 20 credits worth of externals. Sadly, experience shows that many are not 100% successful. The rate of internal success is often much greater than for externals (not always – some students prefer examinations). They need to leave ample room for not always being successful.

Credit 'pragmatism' is to focus on just the number you need. But too often, as a student aims for the minimum, they miss the target and have no qualification. They then face having to 'catch up' on credits. This could be, at much cost, to do Summer School or a foundation course. Some of these courses cost hundreds or thousands of dollars, to enter their chosen course.

Many students gain valuable credits for doing work placements or other vocational courses, while they are intending to complete degrees at polytechnics or universities, where you must do all the assessments for a course. They 'pass' NCEA but then find they do not have the right subjects or competencies to be successful at higher levels. On one level they are successful (they gain NCEA level 2 for instance) but on the other hand, they find that they do not have the right experience to continue with Level 3 English or Mathematics. Sometimes that is because they said, 'I have enough credits, so I don't need to do that paper'. It is all too easy to do the minimum.

I expect that students remain entered in the standards for their complete course. This gives ample room if they do not achieve some standards, and to still 'pass' NCEA. Leaving the option open until the end of the year is a sensible move. If a student chooses not to complete an exam paper on the day, then that is their responsibility.



## Parents Forum (#2)

Our second Parents Forum will be held Monday 13 September from 6.00 pm to 7.30 pm in the Staffroom.

The first forum was held 16 August, as it was agreed that we have an opportunity to make sure we have a great way to keep parents informed and consult about important topics. The group also is an opportunity to network with other parents and get support on common issues.

Please join this group "for parents, by parents". All are welcome.

## Te Wiki o te Reo Māori – next week



Link to [Te Taura Whiri I Te Reo Māori](#)

## Changes to NCEA Requirements 2021

NZQA has announced changes to NCEA for schools now in Alert Level 2, like Thames High School.

### Learning Recognition Credits (LRCs)

- for every five credits a student earns, students will get one extra LRC
  - o students at **NCEA Level 1** are eligible for up to **eight** additional credits
  - o students at **NCEA Levels 2 or 3** are eligible for up to **six** additional credits.

### Endorsements

- **no change** to normal requirements – still need 50 cr at merit or excellence to get NCEA endorsed with merit or excellence.

### University Entrance

- **no change** to normal requirements – still need to gain NCEA Level 3 including 14 credits or more in at least three approved subjects.

## What LRCs mean in terms of target total credits:

- A student at level 1 who achieves **72 credits** will be awarded the additional 8 LRC to get to the 80 credits required.
- A student at level 2 and 3 **who achieves 54 credits** will be awarded the additional 6 LRC to get to the 60 credits required.

Earlier it was announced that the externa NCEA exams are starting TWO WEEKS LATER, on 22 November, and continue until 14 December.

[Link to the revised NCEA examination timetable](#)

These changes along with all the ways teachers are helping students 'catch up' in class and with extra resources or tutorials, should mean students are positive about doing their best to get the best possible outcomes.

Parents and whānau may be worried about their child's progress due to the disruptions of COVID or other reasons. Please contact your child's teacher or kaiako so a response can be planned together.

Remember that gaining qualifications is a journey and it doesn't end this year, and there are always alternatives that are positive ways forward. Please continue to encourage your children to persist with their education journey. [It is worth it.](#)

## Te Ao Māori Strategic Rōpū Hui

Our next Te Ao Māori Strategic Rōpū Hui is on Tuesday 28 September, after the earlier one planned was called off due to Covid-19 alert levels.

The hui will be held from 6.30 – 8.00 pm in the Wharenui at Thames High School, *Te Puna o Te Pito Mata*.

Naumai, haere mai – all are welcome to join us as we continue to make a positive difference for Māori.

If you are interested in joining the hui, please contact Tracey Reed email: [traceyreed@thameshigh.school.nz](mailto:traceyreed@thameshigh.school.nz)



## School Exams

Years 11 to 13 students will sit examinations from Thursday 23 September to Tuesday 28 September. During this time, we will run an examination timetable.

The examinations are for two main reasons. They are great practice for the NCEA external examinations and they provide evidence of grades (derived grades) should an [unexpected event](#) happens during the NCEA examination period. Examinations are up to three hours long.

### Subjects having examinations

- Year 11/Level 1 – English, Mathematics, Geography, History, Hospitality and Science.
- Year 12/Level 2 – Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, Health, History, Mathematics, Physics and Statistics.
- Year 13/Level 3 – Biology, Chemistry, Calculus, English, Geography, Health, History, Physics and Statistics.

While Year 11-13 students are sitting their examinations, those students who are not sitting an examination with either:

- prepare for an examination in the future; or
- catch up or complete internal assessments or external portfolio work.

The final school examination timetable will be shared next week.

## Senior course selections for 2022

Years 10 to Year 12 students will begin their 2022 course selections from next week and must complete these by Tuesday 21 September. These are done using [Schoolpoint](#), via the student login details.

Advice about how to choose subjects is within [Schoolpoint](#) and on our [website](#).

As always, all courses in 2022 are subject to sufficient students opting for them and being able to schedule the right teachers at the right times (i.e. timetabling).

## What's happening to NCEA 2023 for Year 9

There is a change of date for the information presentation about the changes to NCEA that will affect this year's Year 9s in 2023. New details are below:

**When:** Wednesday 15 September, **6.00 pm – 7.00 pm** (approx.)

**Where:** School Hall or School Library depending on number that attend.

**How:** Please RSVP to [office@thameshigh.school.nz](mailto:office@thameshigh.school.nz)

### What:

1. Overview of NCEA from 2023, including the new literacy and numeracy requirements.
2. What the subject areas are at Level 1.
3. What NCEA from Levels 2 and 3 are looking like too.
4. Questions and Answers that arise.

## Sport

Waikato Sport has announced there is to be no return to sport until after Sunday 12 September. This is to "ensure that the focus of this week is on the safe and smooth return to education for all students, an adequate 'return to play' period is adhered to, and in alignment with Regional School Sport Organisations decisions across the country."

Waikato Sport will provide an update as soon as possible to the remaining term 3 events on the sports calendar.

Ngā manaakitanga

Michael Hart  
**Tumuaki / Principal**  
[principal@thameshigh.school.nz](mailto:principal@thameshigh.school.nz)  
07 868 8688



## Key Dates 2021

*Several Dates have changed due to covid-19 disruptions*

*Dates are still subject to change and will be advised.*

Wed 13 Sept	Parents Forum (6.00 – 7.30 pm)
Mon 13 Sept to <b>Tue 21 Sept</b>	Senior course selections for 2022
Wed 15 Sept	<b>What's happening to NCEA 2023 for Year 9</b> (6.00 pm – 7pm)
Thu 23 Sept to Tue 28 Sept	<b>Year 11-13 School Exams</b> (Some subjects only)
Tue 28 Sept	Te Ao Māori Strategic Rōpū (6.30 – 8.00 pm)
Fri 1 Oct	<b>End of Term 3</b>
Mon 16 Oct	<b>Term 4 starts</b>
Fri 5 Nov	Muffi Day
Wed 17 Nov	<b>Senior Prizegiving</b> (7 pm)
Fri 19 Nov	Year 11-13 "End-of-year" Reports
Tue 23 Nov	NCEA Accord <b>Teacher-only Day 4</b>
Mon 22 Nov	NCEA Exams start (until Thu 14 Dec)
Tue 23 Nov	NCEA Accord <b>Teacher-only Day 4</b>
Mon 25 Oct	Labour Day (School closed)
Mon 13 Dec	Junior Prizegiving (1 pm)
Tues 14 Dec to Thu 16 Dec	Year 9 and 10 end-of-year activities, including Year 10 camps (TBC)
<b>Thu 16 Dec</b>	<b>Last day for Year 9 and 10 students</b>
Fri 17 Dec	Year 9-10 "End-of-year" Reports
<b>Fri 17 Dec</b>	<b>Staff only Day / End of School Year</b>

## Key Dates 2022

**(subject to change)**

Thu 27 Jan 2022	Staff only day
Fri 28 Jan 2022	Kahui Ako Whanaungatanga (Connections) Day
Mon 31 Jan 2022	Anniversary Day (holiday)
<b>Tue 1 Feb</b>	<b>Course Confirmation Day (Years 11-13)</b>
Wed 2 Feb	<b>Powhiri for new students</b> (Year 13 in support) School starts for Year 9 Orientation for Year 9
<b>Thu 3 Feb</b>	<b>School starts for all Years 10-13</b>
Mon 7 Feb	Waitangi Day observed.
Tue 8 Feb	School term continues...
<b>Thu 14 Apr</b>	<b>End of Term 1</b>
Fri 15 Apr	Good Friday
Term 2:	Monday 2 May to Friday 8 July
Term 3:	Monday 25 July to Friday 30 September
Term 4:	Starts Monday 17 October, and ends <b>no later than Tuesday 20 December</b>

