



STUDENT SUBJECT SELECTION GUIDE

Helpful Information When Choosing Subjects

What to think about when choosing school subjects?

There are a few things you'll need to weigh up when choosing your school subjects. It's not just about what you enjoy – this is important to consider, as you're likely to put more effort into the subjects you enjoy - but also about what subjects will be useful to you in the future. What are the subjects that are needed in the areas of work I am interested in?

Here are some tips to help with your decision making:

Step 1. Don't rush your decision.

It is important to take time, do the work and get it right, as it may be difficult to change subjects later.

Step 2. Know your options.

Look through the subject choices either online or get a hard copy. Highlight the subjects you are interested in taking and take note of what you need to study those subjects (pre-requisites) – do I have these, or will I achieve them?

Step 3. Think about your abilities and interests at school.

When you are deciding on what subjects to take, think about things like:

- What subjects are you good at or not so good at? What do others say you are good at?
- What does this tell you about yourself?
- What are your strengths? Are you a good writer, good with numbers, a practical person?
- Which subjects have you enjoyed studying?
- Which do you dislike and why?

Thinking about these sorts of things will help you figure out what subjects you could do, and what jobs you might want to pursue in the future.

Step 4. Think about jobs that have opportunities and that might be in demand.

Here are some of the ways you can find out about what jobs might be in demand in the future.

Immigration New Zealand produce a skill shortage list that helps to identify where the skill shortages are in New Zealand: [NZ Long Term Skill Shortage List](#)

No-one can say with certainty what the future work environment will look like. But experts predict that the following seven career areas have the most promising future. There are hands-on pathways into some of these careers:

- Medicine and Healthcare
- Renewable Energy and Green jobs
- Information Technology
- International and Environmental Law
- Content Creation and Marketing
- Data Science
- Financial Analysis

Find out more by visiting the Career NZ link: [7 Careers with a promising future](#)

The world of work is changing, so we need to think about what affect technology may have on the areas of work we are interested in, and think about what skills are needed for the future.

Step 5. How will your choices affect your future?

When making subject choices, you need to think about how your choices will affect your future career options, and/or your future tertiary training options - University, polytechnics, other training providers, apprenticeships and the Defence Force.

List the careers that interest you, and then research the secondary school subjects that are recommended.

Complete the following "Action Plan on Choosing Subjects": [Subject Selection Action Plan](#)

Researching your career options and understanding the subjects that are relevant are important. Here are some other links and tools you can use to help you research more about your career options. Possible sources of information for job research:

- Careers New Zealand Career Quest: [Career Quest](#)
- Industry Training Organisations: [Link to information about the ITO's in NZ](#)
- Services websites E.g. Police, Fire Service, Defence Force
- Got a trade: [Link to information on a huge variety of apprenticeships](#)
- Newspaper and magazine articles
- Career Videos: [Just the Job](#) [Kiwis at Work](#) [Dream Catchers](#) [Oompher](#)
- People with experience of the job
- People who offer training in the area
- Your own work experiences

Step 6. Keep your career options open.

Most people change their minds about what they want to do in the future. Your interests and abilities will change over time, or you might find out about new careers that you had never heard of before.

If you're unsure about what job you want to do, try to study a wide range of subjects at school. This will give you more options later on. Doing as well as you can in Maths and English is important, as literacy and numeracy are important in most careers. Think carefully before giving up any Science subjects.

Here is a process for deciding on subjects for NCEA:

- How well do you think you are going with your NCEA Level 1 or 2 subjects?
- What are your expectations of achievement?
- Do you know what you need for NCEA Level 1/2/3/UE (have you chosen University approved subjects?)
- Have you spoken with your teachers about doing Level 2 (or 3) in the subject?
- Are you aware of the expectations for the subjects you have chosen?
- Are there any other subjects that you have considered? Have you considered options through Gateway, Trades Academy or HarbourNet?
- Are you intending to return for Year 13?
- What job and training ideas do you currently have for beyond school?
- Do you know what the pre-requisites are for these choices beyond school? Do you know what career directions they might offer?
- Have you checked your job and training ideas with someone in that area?
- Have you talked over your choices with your parents, whānau, teachers?
- Need more help? Make an appointment to talk with your Career Advisor at school.

Subjects recommended by each of the Universities for different degree programmes: -

[University of Auckland School Subject Guide 2021](#)

[AUT Subject Choices](#)

[University of Waikato School Subjects Recommendations](#)

[Massey University Prospectus with school subject recommendations](#)

[Victoria University of Wellington School Subject Guide](#)

[Lincoln University School Subject Guide](#)

[University of Canterbury School Subject Guide](#)

[University of Otago School Subject Guide](#)