

Qualification levels



- The eight cities combined have more students leaving school with qualifications than the rest of New Zealand.
- The number of people with qualifications has increased across all eight cities.
- There are significant differences in the level of post-school attainment between the eight cities.

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT

Individual and community levels of education have a strong positive association with a range of economic and social benefits²⁷ Measuring the qualification levels of a city's population aged 15 years and over helps to identify the job readiness of the future labour force. An educated population adds to the vibrancy and creativity of a city and is needed to remain competitive in the global economy. Measures used to assess this are:

- School leavers without qualifications
- Highest level of qualification gained.

WHAT DID WE FIND?

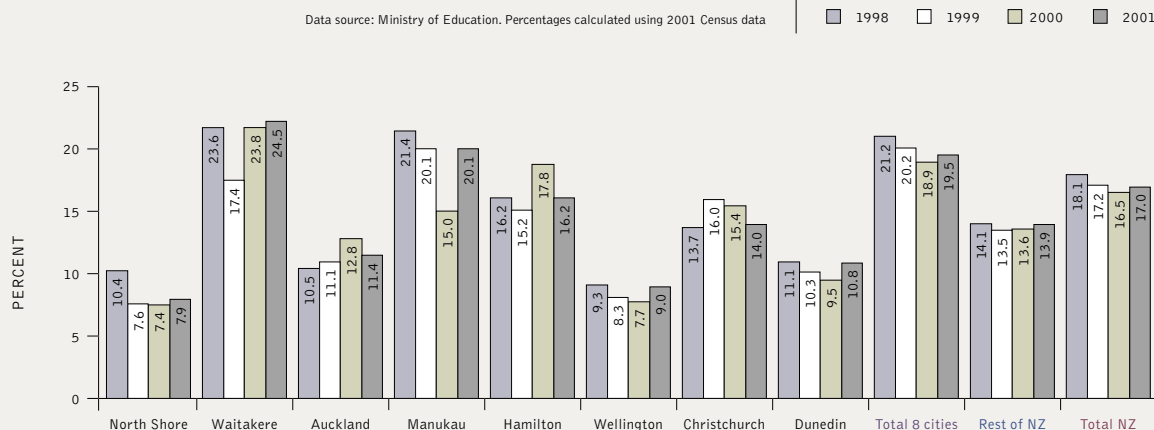
School leavers without qualifications

This measure shows the number of school leavers without qualifications as a percentage of all school leavers. In 2001 across the eight cities combined, the percentage of school leavers without a qualification was lower than the rest of New Zealand (13.9% and 19.5% respectively).

North Shore, Wellington, Dunedin, and Auckland had the lowest proportion of school leavers with no qualifications between 1998 and 2001. Waitakere and Manukau had the highest percentages of school leavers with no qualifications over this period. Although Manukau has shown some improvement, the percentage of students leaving school without qualifications in Waitakere has continued to increase.

In 2001, 17% of all school leavers across New Zealand left school without qualifications. Maori and Pacific Islands students were over-represented amongst this group - 33% of all Maori school leavers and 25% of Pacific Islands school leavers left without qualifications.

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL LEAVERS WITH NO QUALIFICATIONS (1998 TO 2001)



²⁷ The Treasury (2001) Human Capital and The Inclusive Economy. Wellington, page 24.

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In Manukau in 2001, 41.3% of Maori school leavers left school without a qualification. In Waitakere this percentage was 39.9%. For Pacific Islands students the percentages were 29.3% in Manukau and 29.9% in Waitakere.

The attainment of school leavers can be correlated to the decile ranking of a school. Across New Zealand in 2001, 42% of high decile (deciles 8-10) school leavers left with at least Entrance to University qualifications compared to 10.2% in low decile schools (deciles 1-3). Conversely, only 7.4% of students from high decile schools left school with no formal qualification or less than 12 credits at level one on the National Qualifications Framework, compared to 30.1% of students from low decile schools.²⁸

North Shore and Wellington (which have a lower proportion of the population in low decile schools) continue to have lower levels of school leavers without qualifications, while Waitakere and Manukau (with a higher proportion of students in low decile schools) have a higher percentage of school leavers without qualifications.

There is a lack of information regarding those who leave school without a qualification and simply 'fall through the cracks'. This group includes young people who might not enrol in training or further education, or qualify for any welfare benefits, or register as unemployed.

Highest level of qualification gained

This measure shows the highest level of qualification gained within the population aged 15 years and over. Highest qualification refers to school qualifications, post-school qualifications (degree and vocational) and no qualification (including still at school).²⁹

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER WITHIN HIGHEST QUALIFICATION CATEGORIES (1996, 2001) ³⁰										
	No Qualification		School		Vocational		Degree		Not Incl. Elsewhere	
	1996	2001	1996	2001	1996	2001	1996	2001	1996	2001
North Shore	22.4	14.7	30.6	41.6	20.4	19.3	11.1	14.6	15.5	9.9
Waitakere	31.6	22.6	27.8	37.9	17.7	16.5	5.9	8.1	17.1	14.9
Auckland	23.1	14.7	25.9	35.7	16.4	15.8	15.4	19.5	19.2	14.3
Manukau	35.0	24.4	25.9	36.6	15.3	15.1	5.5	7.4	18.4	16.5
Hamilton	28.3	21.8	29.2	35.5	18.5	18.7	10.2	12.5	13.9	11.4
Wellington	17.3	11.6	28.0	34.8	18.0	17.4	23.2	26.7	13.5	9.6
Christchurch	30.1	22.9	28.7	36.1	18.0	17.7	9.2	11.1	14.1	12.1
Dunedin	28.8	21.5	30.1	36.1	17.2	17.5	11.0	13.2	12.9	11.8
Total 8 cities	27.1	19.1	27.9	36.7	17.4	17.0	11.5	14.3	16.1	13.0
Rest of NZ	36.5	27.8	25.3	32.5	17.9	18.1	5.1	6.5	15.1	15.1
Total NZ	32.2	23.7	26.5	34.5	17.7	17.6	8.0	10.1	15.5	14.1

Data source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 1996, 2001

²⁸ Ministry of Education, 2001. www.minedu.govt.nz

²⁹ Highest post-school qualification is the highest qualification gained, apart from school qualifications, and is collected for people aged 15 years and over. Included are qualifications awarded by training and educational institutions as well as on the job training. A qualification is a formally recognised award for attainment resulting from a full-time (20 hours per week) learning course of at least three months, or from part-time study for an equivalent period of time or from on the job training. Levels of qualification; Degree - Higher and Bachelor degree; Vocational - Advanced Vocational, Intermediate Vocation, Skilled Vocational, Basic Vocational Qualifications; School - Higher school, Sixth form, Fifth form; None - No Qualification (including still at school), and Not Elsewhere Included.

³⁰ The categories of qualification were updated between the 1996 and 2001 Censuses. They have been grouped into similar qualification types to allow clearer reporting. For 1996, Not Elsewhere Included category includes Post-school Qualification Not Applicable, Post-school Qualification Unidentifiable, Post-school Qualification Not Specified, School Qualification Not Applicable, School Qualification Unidentifiable, School Qualification Not Specified and Not Specified. For 2001, Not Elsewhere Included category includes Highest Qualification Unidentifiable and Not Stated.

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There has been considerable growth throughout New Zealand in the percentage of people that hold an educational qualification. While there has been some increase in the percentage of those gaining post-school qualifications, most of the increase has been in those gaining school qualifications. Within the post-school field the apparent decline in the number of people with skilled vocational qualifications (e.g. trade certificates and apprenticeships), has been offset by increases in the numbers of people with degree level qualifications.

The proportion of people with qualifications in the eight largest cities is higher than for the rest of New Zealand. Among the eight cities however, Manukau, Waitakere, and Christchurch have higher levels than other cities of people aged 15 years and over who have no qualifications. There are significant disparities between the eight cities when comparing degree or higher attainment levels. In Wellington, 26.7% of the population 15 years and over hold a degree or higher qualification compared to 7.4% in Manukau.

Nationally, due to a large increase in enrolment figures between 1996 and 2001, Maori are now participating in formal post-school education and training at a higher rate than non-Maori. However, 78% of those Maori students enrolled in post-school education are enrolled in sub-degree level study (certificates and diplomas). The growth in Maori participation is mainly concentrated in private providers and 'wananga', part-time and extramural study, and certificate programmes.^{31, 32}

The associated positive economic benefits from higher levels of education are well documented. Cities with a highly educated population are more likely to have a population on higher levels of income compared to those cities with a less educated population. For example Wellington, which has the highest percentage of people with post-school qualifications, also has the highest average hourly earnings of any city in New Zealand. This is consistent with the make up of the Wellington workforce being concentrated on the higher paying business and financial services sectors.

³¹ Wananga is a public tertiary institution that provides programmes with an emphasis on the application of knowledge regarding ahuatanga Maori (Maori tradition) according to tikanga Maori (Maori custom). www.minedu.govt.nz

³² Ministry of Education. Briefing for the Incoming Minister of Education, August 2002.