

# Student academic records go digital!

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## What is changing?

As of April this year, University of Auckland students and graduates can now access certified digital copies of their academic records (transcripts, certificates and official letters) online.

The University of Auckland is proud to be the first New Zealand university to implement [My eQuals](#), a secure online credentials service.

My eQuals will replace current paper documents with certified digital documents, managed through a secure and trusted source. Giving students and graduates the ability to access and share their certified digital documents online, with anyone they choose e.g. potential employers or other institutions.

## What does this mean for you?

You will no longer receive hardcopies of a student or graduate's academic record(s). These documents will be shared with you securely online making it easier and quicker to verify their authenticity. Look out for the 'blue ribbon certification' which signifies the documents' validity – refer to the Quick Reference Guide for further information.

## How will this work?

To view a student or graduate's certified digital document; ask them to share it with you through My eQuals. This can be done in 2 ways:

### 1. Directly from the My eQuals system

A student/graduate can email a link directly from My eQuals to a third party, or paste the link into the third party's application/process form.

**Note: This method is recommended for a number of reasons:**

- The digital document is viewed directly in the My eQuals system. Documents in My eQuals can only be produced by the participating Universities. Students and graduates cannot upload or modify documents in My eQuals. They can only view and share. For further information on the security of a digital document go to *How can I trust a My eQuals document?* - page 2
- If a document needs to be updated, or on rare occasions revoked by the university, this can be done online and verified by a third party, unlike paper where we may be unable to remove the physical artefact.

## 2. A PDF format

A student/graduate can download their digital document in a pdf format and attach it in an email to a third party.

PDF documents produced through My eEquals contain cryptographic digital signatures to ensure their authenticity and integrity. These signatures are automatically verified when the document is opened in Adobe Reader version 9 or later. In Adobe Reader, you will see the "blue ribbon" digital signature at the top of the document that indicates its validity.

**Note: Please refer to the third party quick reference guide for further information.**

### What are the benefits?

- Certified digital documents give you peace of mind by greatly reducing opportunities for fraudulent documents.
- My eEquals saves you time in manually verifying scanned or hardcopy qualifications. Digital documents received through My eEquals are verified by the University of Auckland, meaning you can be assured that you're hiring an authentic University of Auckland graduate.
- Verified online documents protect our environment, saving as many as 13,000 pieces of paper annually in academic record hard copies

### How can I trust a My eEquals document?

My eEquals is built on the concept of "privacy by design", an approach that embeds privacy controls into the technical architecture of the system. My eEquals documents are authentic, tamper-proof and legally valid. The underlying systems have been independently tested by security experts and documents contain digital signatures that meet the legal requirements set by the European Union for authentic electronic documents, which exceed New Zealand requirements.

The "blue ribbon" digital signature at the top of the document indicates its validity.

### Who is involved?

47 universities, across Australia and New Zealand (including the 8 New Zealand universities) are currently participating in the Digital Student Data project, which will implement My eEquals. Please see the rollout plan on the My eEquals website for details of when the remaining Universities will implement Digital Student Data.

The initiative is endorsed by both Universities New Zealand and Universities Australia.

This leading edge project is managed by [Higher Ed Services](#), and is linked to the [Groningen Declaration](#) a global commitment to enhance student mobility and provide credential integrity and security for digital student academic data globally.

### How can you help support the change?

- As the education sector across Australia and New Zealand incorporates digital academic records, you may need to review your processes and systems to take advantage of the benefits certified online documents provide.
- Communicate the change to relevant department/groups within your organisation e.g. HR/Recruitment and IT
- Request a digital document instead of a paper copy from the student or graduate you are dealing with.
- If your organisation's current business processes and systems do not support the acceptance of digital academic records, please contact the project team to discuss further – see contact details below
- If your organisation would like a demo of My eQuals, let us know and we can arrange it.

### Want to know more?

If you would like to discuss how this impacts your organisation please contact Raewyn Knight, Records, Enrolment and Fees Manager. Phone: +64 9 923 2598  
[raewyn.knight@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:raewyn.knight@auckland.ac.nz)

### Further references

Watch the [My eQuals](#) video

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/ED1705/S00073/university-of-auckland-pioneers-online-credentials.htm>

<https://educators.co.nz/story/digital-university-credentials-enhance-student-mobility/>

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/digital-student-data-project-equals-safe-repository/news-story/5bfb425ba19f64aae0c19887f2a228c5>

<http://www.monash.edu/news/internal/the-insider/3-nov-2016/academic-credentials-go-digital>

<http://www.groningendeclaration.org/>