

CHEMISTRY EDUCATION IN NZ

The NZ Institute of Chemistry (NZIC) Education Specialist Group co-ordinates a number of activities to promote chemistry education in New Zealand primary schools, high schools and universities.

Specific activities include:

- A creative writing competition for primary school students during 'primary science week' using *nanoart* images provided by the MacDiarmid Institute
- A national quiz for high school students – these students compete in regional competitions and then represent their region at the national quiz. This was an International Year of Chemistry initiative which has now become an annual event.
- The provision of 'practice' exams for the National Certificate of Education Achievement.
- An annual symposium for University Chemistry Educators. This provides an opportunity for teachers from all the universities to share ideas and resources. Guest speakers are often invited and we have enjoyed hearing from our colleagues in Australia on a number of occasions.
- Representation on government working parties for science and chemistry education
- The publication of CHEMEDNZ four times a year. This magazine is provided free of charge to all secondary schools in NZ
- Support for a biennial Chemistry Education Conference for Secondary School teachers
- Resources and professional development opportunities for new initiatives in chemistry education especially when there are curriculum changes
- International visiting speakers who help makes connections between chemical principles and processes and the way chemistry is used in society

Recent changes to chemistry in senior high schools include the introduction of a basic spectroscopy unit using mass, IR and ^{13}C NMR spectroscopy, and a unit that links understanding of chemical principles with the way chemistry is used in society. These changes will be supported and resourced through NZIC.

Dr Suzanne Boniface, the national representative for NZ, is chairperson of the NZIC Education Group. She is a Senior Fellow responsible for first year chemistry programmes

at Victoria University of Wellington. She has previous experience as a high school teacher.