

Aide-Memoire: New Zealand Qualifications Framework Review

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education
From:	Dr Karen Poutasi, Chief Executive
Date:	12 October 2018
Reference:	CR18176

Purpose

1. This paper advises you that the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) intends to commence public consultation on proposed changes to the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF).
2. NZQA proposes to proactively release this briefing as part of the next publication of documents.

Situation

3. NZQA has previously updated you on progress with the review of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF)¹. The review provides an opportunity to assess how best to strengthen the NZQF to make it more flexible and adaptive to the changing world of work.
4. Several drivers for change have been identified. These include the rapidly changing nature of work, the impact of digital technologies, an increasingly global workforce, demand from employers for 21st Century skills, and expectations that people will need to learn and acquire new skills throughout their lives and careers.
5. Changes to the way education is accessed and provided means a new range of education products will be needed, alongside qualifications. Learners increasingly expect to access learning anytime, anywhere, and on demand, with an individualised learning programme tailored to meet their specific needs.

Proposed changes to the NZQF

6. The consultation document (Appendix A) seeks views on four high-level proposals:
 - o including a wider range of education products on the NZQF e.g. micro-credentials, international qualifications, professional credentials and assessment standards;
 - o including four new competencies on the NZQF – critical thinking, communication, collaboration and citizenship;

¹ New Zealand Qualifications Framework review, 28 November 2017 [CR16912]

- addressing some technical issues which can cause issues in our referencing process with other jurisdictions. These issues can impact on the recognition of individual's qualifications and the mobility of the workforce; and
 - making the NZQF more accessible and relevant to all stakeholders e.g. Māori and Pasifika learners, employers, iwi and communities.
7. These proposed changes have been informed by six targeted workshops with stakeholders and by the NZQF Advisory Group, which was established to support this review.
 8. Subject to any feedback that you may have on the consultation document, we intend to consult for a period of six weeks, from 23 October – 3 December 2018.

How this review relates to other reviews underway

9. A qualifications framework provides a standardised mechanism for designing, cataloguing and comparing a country's qualifications. The NZQF is the definitive source of all quality assured qualifications in New Zealand. It is designed to be an enduring document that is foundational to the education and training system. Historically, it has been reviewed every eight years or so.
10. The proposed changes cover how domains of learning across each level of the framework are described, what types of qualifications are recognised and how the framework is given greater visibility. Some of the changes proposed are relevant to the same drivers for the ITP, VET and NCEA reforms. These include the need for training and education to be more responsive to the changing world of work and for a wider range of competencies to be promoted through the education and training system.
11. The proposed changes will be enabling of the type of changes being progressed through the education reviews currently underway. NZQA does not believe that the proposed changes to the NZQF will in any way limit options or approaches in the other reviews.
12. The stakeholders that have informed the proposals in this document include the same stakeholders that are informing the review of the NCEA, including employers and tertiary education organisations. The NCEA review has also noted the same themes around learners needing the skills to navigate a technology-rich world and the need for transferable skills alongside subject-specific knowledge.
13. NZQA is working closely with our partner agencies on this review. The Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission are key members of the Advisory Group, which also includes other stakeholders common to our partner agencies' reviews.

Next steps

14. The NZQF review is staged in two phases:
 - a. Phase One included extensive consultation with a diverse range of stakeholders and other government agencies at a strategic level on changes required to the NZQF to ensure the framework is future-proof.
 - b. Phase Two is the detailed technical work required to revise the framework. This is now planned for April and May 2019.
15. This consultation marks the end of Phase One. Phase Two will be informed by the response to this consultation. It is expected that there will be a wide range of groups interested in commenting on the proposals in this consultation document. NZQA expects to consult again on any specific changes to the NZQF in mid-2019. Final decisions are expected to be made by July 2019.
16. We will continue to keep you informed on the progress of the review.

Recommendations

17. It is recommended that you:
- a. **note** the contents of this paper and provide NZQA with any comments that you may have on the consultation document.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Poutasi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Karen Poutasi (Dr)
Chief Executive
12 October 2018

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

...../...../.....