

Aide-Memoire: development of operational policy and rules to support the implementation of RoVE

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education
From:	Dr Karen Poutasi, Chief Executive
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Purpose

1. This aide memoire advises you that NZQA will be providing you with six revised rule sets in early March for your approval and for you to table in the House. It also updates you more broadly on NZQA's progress in the development of operational policy to support the intent of the Reform of Vocational Education (RoVE), taking into account other legislative changes that are proposed for 2020.
2. NZQA proposes to proactively release this briefing as part of the next publication of documents.

Background

3. NZQA is responsible for Project 7 (NZQA rules) in the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and Ministry of Education RoVE wider work programme. NZQA's project comprises three workstreams:
 - Workstream 1: Ensuring the smooth transition of statuses, approvals and accreditations to the new entities as required.
 - Workstream 2: The development of operational policy and the revised rules that are required to implement the new system in 2020.
 - Workstream 3: This workstream includes the arrangements for External Evaluative Reviews (EERs) over the transitional period and the development of new external quality assurance arrangements for NZIST and the Workforce Development Councils (WDCs). This development of a new approach is likely to impact across the non-university tertiary sector. We are planning to start this work in early 2021.
4. This briefing focuses on workstream two and the work we are doing on the operational policy and rule changes for 2020.

Discussion

5. The draft legislation sets out the expectation for a unified and collaborative vocational education system, which meets the needs of learners and employers. The legislation is purposefully high level and allows for some co-design of the detail of education products (such as qualifications, programmes and micro-credentials) and how they will fit together to meet learner and employer needs in the new system.
6. NZQA has committed to a co-design process with the sector and other stakeholders. We held two workshops in December 2019:
 - the first workshop focused on qualifications, training packages, capstone assessments and skills standards
 - the second workshop focused on programmes, training schemes and micro-credentials, and the role of each type of organisation in the new system.
7. Both workshops were well-attended and participants fully engaged. We are planning a third wider workshop in mid-March. This wider workshop will also include members of NZIST Establishment Unit's working groups and more employers.
8. NZQA has 17 sets of rules. We anticipate that there are likely to be a large number of changes across multiple rule sets this year. The drivers for these changes are set out below.

Technical changes

9. NZQA needs to amend six rule sets to reflect the establishment of NZIST and the Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) and the changes in the legal status of the current Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs), which will become subsidiaries of NZIST, and the Industry Training Organisations (ITOs), which will become Transitional ITOs. There will be a significant number of these minor amendments. These technical rule changes will also incorporate the WDCs' legislated functions as appropriate, such as their role in programme endorsement.
10. These technical rule changes will need to come into effect on 1 April in order to maintain our quality assurance functions and to enable the new organisations' functions (in so far as these are covered by our rules). As the RoVE policy changes and the subsequent legislative process have been extensively consulted upon, and as the proposed changes will reflect the legislative amendments, we are holding a shortened and targeted consultation process with the sector. The consultation process will run from 3 – 24 February.
11. We anticipate providing you with these amended rules in early March for you to consider and, if you approve the proposed changes, table them in the House later that month.

Substantive RoVE changes

12. As noted above, we are undertaking more detailed planning with stakeholders to consider the design of existing and new education products (such as training packages) and how they can best fit together. For example, we are considering the current design of qualifications and programmes, and how these could be reconfigured to better meet industry and employer needs and learner pathways. Similarly, we are considering how skills standards might be re-imagined and how we can encourage the development of more micro-credentials.
13. The development of new operational policy on education products will require full consultation with the sector. We will seek a discussion with you on our thinking before we consult on changes in operational policy. We currently anticipate consulting with the sector by mid-year, which would allow for substantive revisions to the rules later in 2020.

Other non-RoVE changes

14. In addition to the amendments required to implement RoVE, the pace of change within tertiary education is such that other non-RoVE rule amendments to rules are likely to be needed in 2020. For example, consideration of a broader qualifications and credentials

framework to replace the current New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) and changes to training schemes and micro-credentials could be considered as part of further amendments to the Education Act in 2020. Any such legislative changes would require changes to our rules. There may also be some business-as-usual necessary amendments to the rules.

15. We will seek to minimise the number of amendments to any one set of rules by bundling rule changes wherever possible. We will also proactively communicate the expected consultation processes with the sector.

Next steps

16. We expect to provide you with the technical changes to the six rule sets in early March 2020 for your consideration and for tabling in the House later in March.
17. We will brief you on the outcomes of our third workshop with stakeholders. We will discuss with you our thinking about the future of educational products and how they could best fit together before we consult with the sector later this year.



Karen Poutasi (Dr)
Chief Executive, NZQA

5 / 2 / 2020

Chris Hipkins
Minister Education

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