

Aide-Memoire: 2019 Digital Assessment Upcoming Communications to Schools

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education
From:	Dr Karen Poutasi, Chief Executive
Date:	7 February 2019
Reference:	CR18731

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to outline the upcoming communications to schools about the 2019 digital examinations.
2. NZQA proposes to proactively release this briefing as part of the publication of documents in March 2019.

Situation

3. After four years, digital examinations are now becoming part of the regular process for external assessment and a facility schools are beginning to expect, with the 35 examinations across 14 subjects being offered this year. We are now moving from the terminology of "Trials and Pilots". Schools and students will continue to be offered a high level of support to prepare for the examinations and backup arrangements will continue to be in place.

Background

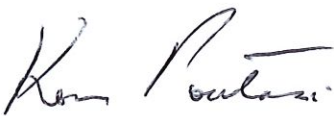
4. In December 2018 we formally advised schools and made a public announcement about the examination subjects and levels to be offered digitally in 2019. We provided you with this information in advance¹.
5. Shortly NZQA will be commencing its Managing National Assessment Seminars for Principal Nominees and other curriculum and school leaders. These are held around the country over a period of several weeks and are attended by all schools.
6. As has been the case in previous years, this is an opportunity for NZQA to set out its intentions as well as being a further means of hearing from schools.

¹ 2019 Plans for Digital Assessment, 26 November 2019, CR18386

7. This seminar will re-communicate the digital examination subjects and levels to be offered.
8. We will also communicate that as digital examinations are becoming regular practice, we are moving from the terminology of "Trials and Pilots", while retaining a strong focus on school and student-centred preparation and backup.
9. NZQA will be supporting schools and students to prepare for the digital examinations on the new platform. This support includes:
 - a. Digitising the 2018 examinations in the 2019 digital examination range of subjects so that schools can use them as practice exercises
 - b. Providing familiarisation exercises on features of the new digital platform
 - c. Comprehensive training for Examination Centre Managers (ECMs) and supervisors
 - d. Ongoing co-design with schools (Principal Nominees), ECMs and students
10. Schools will be able to use 2018 digitised examinations at any time to support NZQA and schools' learning about the implementation of digital examinations. Because they are not new examinations, they are not able to be used as evidence towards Derived Grades, and schools will continue to use their usual evidence gathering practices. Last year's Trials were new examinations, offered for use in a specific timeframe.
11. To support the transition, we will also be providing a personalised paper examination for each student choosing to undertake a digital examination.
12. These preparatory and backup plans will enable schools to be confident that NZQA is continuing with its planned, staged, managed approach to the introduction of digital examinations.

Next steps

13. It is recommended you:
 - a. **note** the plans to communicate further details about the 2019 digital examinations to schools.



Karen Poutasi
Chief Executive (Dr)
7 February 2019

NOTED/APPROVED

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister Education

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