

# Terms of Reference

## ICT Qualifications Review Steering Group

### Background

The NZ Qualifications Authority (NZQA) is currently overseeing the *Mandatory Review of Qualifications*, a review of all qualifications on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) that meet specific criteria.

The criteria include the review of all qualifications at levels 1-6 on the NZQF, excluding qualifications offered by the University sector. The review aims to reduce the duplication and proliferation of qualifications; to ensure the qualifications meet the overall needs of the particular sector and are useful, relevant and fit for purpose; and meet the new requirements for listing qualifications on the NZQF.

Qualifications are grouped into separate reviews. These reviews are then planned and undertaken in conjunction with industry, education providers and existing qualification owners, with the review governed by a Board or Steering Group generally led by a relevant third party organisation in partnership with NZQA.

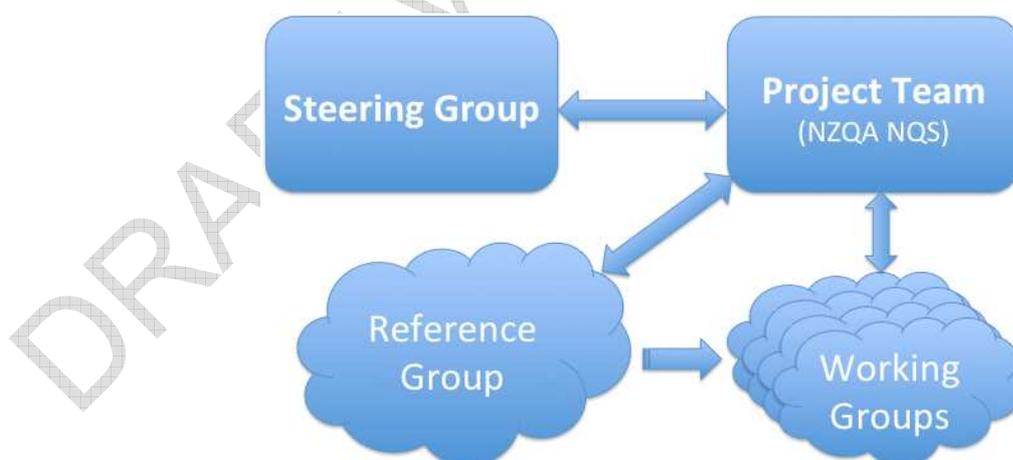
In the case of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) including computing, the review will be led by NZQA's National Qualifications Service (NQS) in partnership with the Institute of IT Professionals NZ (IITP). IITP is the independent professional body of the ICT sector.

NQS will lead and operate the project team running the consultation and development process and IITP will lead and organise the Steering Group providing governance to the process. A broad cross-section of stakeholder organisations from industry and education providers will be asked to nominate the members of the Steering Group to ensure broad sector engagement.

This document outlines how the Steering Group will operate and work with the Project Team.

### Structure of the Review

The ICT Qualifications Review will be structured as follows:



- The **Steering Group** will provide governance and will be led and operated by IITP.
- The **Project Team** will manage the project, and will be led and operated by NZQA's National Qualifications Service (NQS).
- The **Stakeholder Reference Group** will be made up of all stakeholders including education providers, qualification owners, community groups, industry representatives and others.
- **Working Groups** will be formulated from the Reference Group for specific review areas.

## Purpose

The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Qualifications Review Steering Group (“the Steering Group”) will provide leadership and direction for the development of cohesive New Zealand ICT-related qualifications which are strategically relevant to New Zealand’s IT industry, business in general, students, people and communities and their aspirations.

The work of the Steering Group will be in accordance with *Requirements for listing and maintaining qualifications on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework*.

The Steering Group will be expected to provide high-level strategic governance during the review of the qualifications and to communicate progress to key stakeholders and other interested parties and provide final endorsement of the qualifications.

The output of the review will be a proposal for a suite of ICT qualifications formally submitted to NZQA’s Quality Assurance Division for approval to develop and list on the NZQF.

## Key roles

With regard to the purpose, the Steering Group will:

1. Set “rules of engagement” for the review.
2. Establish and implement the strategic direction with an underlying project plan.
3. In conjunction with the project team, scope and develop an initial map for qualifications with a model for communication and consultation.
4. In conjunction with the project team, establish and liaise with workgroups and critically analyse developments.
5. Govern the ICT review, including overseeing the *process* of the review and ensuring that it is in keeping with the rules of engagement and outcomes set at the start of the review.
6. Determine and establish a decision-making process to enable outcomes to be achieved.
7. Endorse and make submissions (including qualifications) to Quality Assurance Division, NZQA, following recommendation from the Project Team.

## Scope

The primary scope of the Steering Group is restricted to governing the process and outcomes of:

- The review of qualifications that fall within the criteria for this review.
- Oversight and governance of the review plan and process.
- Oversight and governance of the development of a new set of relevant qualifications for ICT.
- Ensuring appropriate consultation mechanisms are in place and that all stakeholders have the opportunity to input into the review and outcomes and that this input is appropriately considered.
- Ensuring a good process is in place to enable successful completion of the project with a broadly acceptable, good quality and defensible outcome.

The Steering Group may consider matters outside this primary scope, but only for the purpose of achieving the purpose of the review within the primary scope.

For example:

- Impact of in-scope qualifications on educational entry pathways to the qualifications, for instance from secondary education.
- Educational exit pathways from the qualifications under review, for instance the impact on qualifications above Level 6 on the NZQF (such as Bachelor Degrees) and other industry qualifications.
- Other matters that the Steering Group reasonably believes are absolutely necessary to be considered when reviewing the qualifications within the criteria of this review.

## Knowledge and expertise of Steering Group members

Collectively, the Steering Group will have understanding and knowledge of:

- The NZQF and ICT education and training programmes;
- ICT sector developments and future focus needs;
- ICT profession labour market trends (both within the ICT industry and in relation to ICT skills requirements of general business and community);
- Mātauranga Māori, Pasifika education, international education, distance education and workplace learning.

Each member will:

- Have credibility with NZQA and national stakeholder groups;
- Have depth of sector knowledge and breadth of experience;
- Be willing to be an effective voice and to achieve consensus;
- Demonstrate leadership capability;
- Be considered experts in the subject matter, understand the purpose for the Review and be committed to successful implementation of the Review;
- Act as independent professionals and not act as representatives of the organisation that has appointed or elected them to the Group, their employer or any other body. Full and formal representation shall be through the Reference Group, not the Steering Group which is a governance vehicle;
- Be able to travel to Wellington for any face-to-face Steering Group meetings or workshops. Travel is expected to be covered by their sponsoring organisation, however there may be room within the budget to contribute to some travel costs in some circumstances;
- Be free from organisational politics and be in a position to give their time freely.

Other IITP or NQS staff (such as the Project Coordinator) or contractors (such as the QAD appointed Professional Advisor) may attend Steering Group meetings in a non-voting capacity; and other people may attend when invited by the Group.

## Selection process

A range of ICT-related groups will be asked to nominate individuals for the Steering Group.

Aside from the Chair of the group (appointed by IITP), nominations will be requested from:

- 1 IITPNZ Nominee (Chair)
- 1 NZQA NQS Nominee
- 4 Industry Nominees (2 from industry bodies such as NZICT, NZRise or SoftwareNZ, and 1 each from tertiary provider groups CITRENTZ and NZAPEP)
- 3 Educational Provider Nominees (from CITRENTZ, NZAPEP and Te Wananga)
- 1 ICT Teacher Nominee (from NZACDITT)

While in most circumstances those nominated will be appointed, specific consideration will be given to the individual and overall requirements of members as per the previous section. Other than the Chair position, the final decision on Steering Group membership shall be made by the Chief Executive of IITP and NZQA Qualification Services, following recommendation from the Steering Group Chair.

Should any group above not formally notify the Steering Group Chair of their nominee for appointment by a specified date, the invitation will lapse and the Institute will make whatever arrangements it deems appropriate to fill the vacant position.

## **Tenure**

Appointments are for the period of the Review. Any additional on-going Board or Group will be constituted separately.

## **Responsibilities of members**

Members:

- Commit to the pan-sector purpose of the review
- Contribute constructively and openly to the work of the group
- Commit to a 12-18 month process
- Maintain regular attendance at meetings, expected to be monthly
- Confirm minutes
- Respond to communications
- Be prepared and informed

Appointing organisations (or other stakeholders such as education providers or employers) will be expected to cover the cost of travel for their Steering Group appointee (a total of approximately four face-to-face meetings is expected in the pre-approval development phase). Some funds may be available to assist with travel costs in some circumstances when no other option is available.

The first face-to-face meeting will be in Wellington. At this stage it is intended to hold most meetings in Wellington, however if a sufficient proportion of Steering Group members come from other parts of New Zealand some subsequent meetings may be rotated around the main centres.

The balance of monthly meetings is intended to be via teleconference.

## **Meeting protocols and behaviour**

Meetings are:

- Semi-formal
- Interactive
- Outcome focused
- Consensus driven
- Constructive
- Open and honest

Discussion will be under Chatham House rules. This means that while discussion may be reported and minuted, these will not be attributed to any one individual except where explicitly requested.

All members of the Steering Group accept that all participants are professionals and will actively work to ensure a safe environment for all.

All participants will receive equal treatment regardless of their age, gender, race, cultural beliefs, educational background, employment status, or any other factor and will always be afforded the opportunity to speak without fear of ridicule or retribution.

Any member who feels bullied or intimidated whilst carrying out their tasks may speak with the Chair in absolute confidence. Any member who, in the opinion of the Chair, has acted inappropriately may be suspended from the Steering Group.

Should the issue be in relation to the Steering Group Chair, or not adequately dealt with by the Steering Group Chair, it may be taken up with the NZQA Qualifications Assurance Division which may suspend any Steering Group member accordingly.

## **Quorum and voting**

Attendance of half the Steering Group members is required to constitute a quorum.

Each Steering Group member shall be afforded one vote. In the event of a tie of votes, the Chair may exercise an additional casting vote.

## **Meeting Documentation**

Meetings of the Steering Group should be documented appropriately and minutes kept. All Minutes (other than where declared confidential by the Steering Group) will be made available and dispersed to the Stakeholder Reference Group following meetings of the Steering Group.

Minutes and other documentation shall be retained by the Chair or a delegated member and kept on record by NZQA following termination of the Steering Group.

## **Confidentiality**

Whilst operating openly and transparently, the Steering Group will ensure that information confidential to the review or any participant or stakeholder is kept confidential to members of the Steering Group.

All Steering Group meetings or other consultative meetings shall operate under Chatham House Rules unless explicitly stated otherwise.

## **Media Comment**

Being a member of the Steering Group does not provide an implicit or explicit right to speak on behalf of the Review, Steering Group, NZQA or IITP, and no Steering Group member other than the Chair may make comment as a representative of the Steering Group.

All media enquiries related to the Steering Group work must be redirected to the Chair as per established and normal Board practice. All Steering Group members agree to refrain from public comment regarding the work of this Group unless comment is made in conjunction with the above.

This is not intended as an instrument to “gag” Steering Group members, but rather to ensure that the message being presented by the Review and Steering Group is consistent. This shall not bind any organisation, including IITP or NZQA, from commenting independently from the Steering Group however it must be made clear that this isn’t on behalf of the Steering Group.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

All Steering Group members agree to abide by the IITP Conflict of Interest Policy, including:

- Completing a formal Conflict of Interest Declaration to be provided to the Steering Group Chair and made known to all group members;
- Notifying the Steering Group Chair immediately should any additional Conflict of Interest arise during the time the Steering Group is operational.

Steering Group members accept that failure to declare a Conflict of Interest where one exists, whether it be actual or perceived, may result in immediate removal from the Steering Group.

Conflict of Interest declarations will be shared with all Steering Group members and are made on the basis that they will be disclosed in meeting minutes where appropriate.

## **Sub-groups and Working Groups**

The Steering Group may establish a specialist short-term Sub-group or panel to carry out specific qualification review tasks as required, or to conduct research for the Steering Group, at their discretion.

All Working Groups related to the review process will be formally constituted by the Steering Group on the recommendation of the Project Team. When constituting a Working Group, the Steering Group will give consideration to ensuring appropriate engagement and consultation in relation to the purpose of the Working Group, an appropriate scope and terms of reference will be defined with clear outcome expectations, and an appropriate process will be in place to appoint Working Group members with the requisite skills, knowledge and engagement needed. Working group members will be expected to contribute to the cost of attending work groups. (e.g. their time)

The Project Team may appoint specialist consultants, contractors or employees to conduct parts of the review, consultation or qualifications construction process. It is for the Project Team to manage their resources and, other than to the extent of ensuring good governance of and that the credibility of the Review process is not threatened, how staffing resources are allocated or managed is outside the scope of the Steering Group.

## **External working relationships**

The Steering Group members will ensure the Review engages with:

- NZQA Quality Assurance team
- Current owners of ICT qualifications
- Wananga and other key Māori stakeholders
- Key Pasifika stakeholders
- ICT qualification providers
- Employers and other end-users
- National associations, other advisory networks and peak bodies
- Government agencies

## **Disestablishment and resignation**

### *Disestablishment of the Steering Group*

NZQA Quality Assurance Division may disestablish the Steering Group if it has become inactive or ineffective in meeting its terms of reference in accordance with the criteria listed in the *Guidelines for the review of qualifications at levels 1 to 6 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework*.

### *Resignation/Release of members*

The Chair of the Steering Group may agree to release an individual from membership as a result of resignation or failure to meet the stated responsibilities, and may take whatever steps are necessary to ensure an appropriate replacement in approximate keeping with the establishment process.

## **Administration**

IITP is responsible for the operation of the Steering Group, including:

- Ensuring Steering Group meetings are organised and facilitated effectively
- Preparing and disseminating: agenda and related papers, schedule of meetings and meeting records; documents required for approval to develop and approval to list qualifications; consultation documents and collated feedback from consultation
- Logistics around meeting venues and catering

The Project Team may provide some of these services for the Steering Group.

The NZQA NQS Project Team is responsible for:

- Project management
- Operation of Working Groups, ensuring Working Group meetings are organised and facilitated effectively
- Preparing documents required for approval to develop and approval to list qualifications, for endorsement by the Steering Group
- Maintaining web pages for information and consultation
- Communication with the Stakeholder Reference Group, in partnership with the Steering Group Chair
- Completing administrative tasks associated with the review, not including the Steering Group, including arranging:
  - meeting venue and catering
  - travel and accommodation
- Monitoring expenditure and advising of any constraints related to the budget for the review, except where related to the Steering Group

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## Agreement

Steering Group members agree to abide by these Terms of Reference at all times and that the clauses related to confidentiality survive termination of their involvement in the Steering Group.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_