



NEW ZEALAND **QUALIFICATIONS** AUTHORITY
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Teacher Survey - Digital Trials 2016

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Information on the Survey and Participants

The teacher survey was designed to measure teachers' self-reported experience of managing digital trial examinations in their schools.

Of the 322 teachers who managed digital trial examinations, 63 (20%) completed the online survey. Just under half of the respondents were from either Auckland or Wellington schools.

The respondents did not all answer all the questions in the survey.

The survey consisted of 24 questions. Some of them were open ended questions.

Limitations

The response rate was 20%, which is very low. Those who chose not to take the survey may have greater or lower levels of satisfaction than those who responded.

Below is a summary of the main findings. Appendix 1 contains a count of responses for each closed ended question. Appendix 2 is a full list of the survey questions.

Main findings

Overall assessment of participating in the digital Trials

30 out of 48 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Trials helped them identify gaps in their students' knowledge.

31 out of 47 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Trials are a good preparation for NCEA examinations.

31 out of 56 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Trials should be extended to Pilots.

28 out of 56 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would encourage their students to sit the digital trial or digital Pilot examinations in 2017.

20 out of 55 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the 2016 digital examinations encouraged them to use more digital tools in their teaching.

Communications and support

Communications and support (sufficiency, simplicity, timing), helpline

44 out of 61 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that NZQA provided sufficient information to schools ahead of the Trials. However only 30 out of 61 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that communications were well-timed.

38 out of 61 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the information provided was easy to understand.

Most of the comments made by respondents who found the communications and support provided by NZQA to be less than satisfactory were focused on four areas:

- Communications were not directed to the correct persons in the school, particularly to the teachers involved
- Communications were drip fed instead of being given all at once
- Communications could have been simpler and clearer, and
- Communications were needed earlier than they were given.

“The information is confusing and not straight forward. There are a lot of different people involved at a school and it was confusing who had to do what. It was also time consuming sorting out all of the information a lot which was in confusing jargon and teachers had to figure it out. If you are wanting a range of people to be able to use this in the future it needs to be clearer.”

“The information was not complete for some subjects. It was also hard to find.”

“Longer lead up time to examination session to read and understand and ask questions about the information provided. Marking schedule all ready to go well in advance. Clearer and simpler instructions on how to deliver the examination session.”

Of those respondents who used the helpline, 89% agreed or strongly agreed that the help and support they received was useful.

Preparation activities

Usefulness of student familiarisation activities, student preparation time

31 out of 49 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the familiarisation activities provided by NZQA prepared their students for the digital trial examination.

24 out of 53 respondents set aside less than one hour for students to familiarise themselves with the materials NZQA provided to help students prepare for the digital trial examination, and 22 out of 53 set aside one to two hours. The remaining 7 out of 53 respondents set aside two or more hours.

The digital trial examination

Administration

Overall satisfaction, support, set up, technical issues, supervision, improvements

Although two thirds of respondents (35 out of 53) agreed or strongly agreed that overall, the administration of the digital trial examinations was easy, three quarters of respondents (37 out of 49) reported that they experienced technical issues, and just under half (22 out of 51) reported that they experienced issues supervising the digital trial examinations.

Respondents provided detailed feedback on technical issues. Technical issues reported included logging in problems, issues with the loading of resources, e.g. video and audio clips and photos and device issues.

The main issues reported in relation to supervising the digital trial examinations were that students could access the internet and could view each other's screens.

“There was no way to monitor all the students during the digital assessment since we cannot see all the screen activity at once. Students can open different browsers and cheat if they had wished to.”

79% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were provided with enough information to administer the digital trial examination.

65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy to set up a digital examination room.

Respondents suggested a range of administrative improvements, including improvements to the software and platform, and to timeliness and content of communications to teachers.

Content

Alignment with standards

42 out of 50 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the content of the digital trial examinations aligned with the relevant standards that were being assessed.

Marking experience

Overall fairness of process, Instructions, marking systems, online experience, suggestions about additional marking features, student results

36 out of 49 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that overall, the marking process produced fair outcomes for students.

31 out of 49 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the marking instructions provided were easy to follow.

32 out of 49 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the grade score marking system was easy to work with.

Only 17 out of 49 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that marking online took less time than marking on paper.

When asked to comment about whether there were any additional marking features respondents would like the software to include to support markers, respondents said they would like to be able to annotate students' work to provide feedback, and commented critically on aspects of how the software worked.

"Marking online took considerably longer than usually. Not only due to the fact that papers could not be annotated but also the pages took longer than it should to load. I felt that this mock exam has almost been a waste of time and effort for students, as they are not able to access their papers, still. Generally marking for mocks I will focus on annotating all papers to show students where they have gone wrong and what they need to work on. Marking online this is not possible. For NCEA externals I see this not as a problem however for mocks in my opinion it is not adequate and puts students at a disadvantage as they can't physically see what they have done and what they need to work on. Being able to write on the paper would help a lot."

Respondents were almost evenly split in their views about whether students' results were affected by their computer literacy, with 52% agreeing or strongly agreeing that their students' results were affected by their computer literacy, and 48% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Suggestions/feedback

There were many suggestions and detailed feedback given by teachers, and some of the responses were quite lengthy. Responses included feedback about the timeliness of advice and communications to schools about the assessment and the marking process, the quality of the digital examination software, and the limitations of the digital format for certain types of assessment.

"I feel that the skills exam especially was limited by the digital format. The students could not construct maps or diagrams and found it difficult to consider several resources at once. The more traditional written paragraph answers were more suited to this form of assessment. We already use digital devices in our teaching and this would not increase our use of this."

"I will use more digital tools in my teaching if the external examination is digital; otherwise, I will continue with the same balance of digital and paper based resources. This is because the graphing skills need to be practised in the format they will be examined in."

I would like to see less clunky graphing tools, especially the labelling of axes and plotting points.

The thought processes and pathways developed in the brain when drawing economic models on paper are very different to the skills and thinking the students need to do the same model digitally. The students alluded to this and overall, their results were lower compared to the paper based school exam.”

“Longer lead up time to examination session to read and understand and ask questions about the information provided. Marking schedule all ready to go well in advance. clearer and simpler instructions on how to deliver the examination session.”

“The information is confusing and not straight forward. There are a lot of different people involved at a school and it was confusing who had to do what. It was also time consuming sorting out all of the information a lot which was in confusing jargon and teachers had to figure it out. If you are wanting a range of people to be able to use this in the future it needs to be clearer.”

“Everything seemed quite last minute. We had scheduled the exam in one of the earlier time slots and it felt like we had to ask for everything. Also - because we were quick to start, we had to wait almost a full working week before we could begin the marking due to marking instructions not being available or glitches in the system. Obviously, these problems won’t happen in future exams, but this was quite a major for our school!”

“It took us 20 minutes to get everyone signed into the assessment. There needs to be a better system for students logging in. It took a while to share the pass words with the students. It is an administrative burden for the teacher, especially when a whole school will be sitting digital external exams. The holding screen worked well.”

“Compared to their handwritten tests that I have marked, the students seemed to fall into writing big blocks of text, and many had no structure when they typed their answer, so I would prep them better on this in the future. But the entry system could also be designed to encourage them to structure their answers.”

“My biggest concern was 91003: Interpret Historical Sources. I liked the idea of the range of sources you can use digitally, including videos and audio. However, many of my students were turned-off of doing this paper digitally. Students like to be able to annotate, highlight and write over the source booklet that they get in the exam. They need to engage with the sources provided. Doing this digitally is difficult. Students need to either have the source booklet in paper format so that they can engage with the sources, or the ability to have a separate page to take notes on it would work better. Writing essays digitally is great and highly recommend it for this 91005: Causes and Consequences.”

Appendix 1

Summarised responses by question

Question 1. The communications received about the digital trial examinations provided sufficient information.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	0.08
Agree	39	0.64
Disagree	13	0.21

	Count	Percentage
Strongly disagree	4	0.07
Total	61	1

Question 1. The communications received about the digital trial examinations were easy to understand.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	0.08
Agree	33	0.54
Disagree	17	0.28
Strongly disagree	6	0.1
Total	61	1

Question 1. The communications received about the digital trial examinations were well timed.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	0.08
Agree	25	0.41
Disagree	22	0.36
Strongly disagree	9	0.15
Total	61	1

Question 3: I received useful help and support over the helpline.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	0.42
Agree	17	0.47
Disagree	2	0.06
Strongly disagree	2	0.06
Total	36	1.01

Administration

Question 4. I was provided with enough information to administer the digital trial examinations.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	0.09
Agree	40	0.7
Disagree	11	0.19
Strongly disagree	1	0.02
Total	57	1

Question 5. It was easy to set up a digital examination room.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	7	0.13
Agree	28	0.52
Disagree	17	0.31
Strongly disagree	2	0.04
Total	54	1

Question 6. Were there any technical problems that arose during the administration of the assessments?

	Count	Percentage
No	12	0.24
Yes	37	0.76
Total	49	1

Question 7. Were there any issues supervising the digital trial examinations?

	Count	Percentage
No	29	0.57
Yes	22	0.43
Total	51	1

Question 8. Overall, I found administering the digital trial examinations easy.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	0.09
Agree	30	0.57
Disagree	13	0.25
Strongly disagree	5	0.09
Total	53	1

Marking experience

Question 10. I found the marking instructions easy to follow.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	4	0.08
Agree	27	0.55
Disagree	13	0.27
Strongly disagree	5	0.1
Total	49	1

Question 11. I found the grade score marking system easy to work with.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	0.12
Agree	26	0.53
Disagree	13	0.27
Strongly disagree	4	0.08
Total	49	1

Question 12. Marking online took less time than marking on paper.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	0.1
Agree	12	0.24
Disagree	21	0.43
Strongly disagree	11	0.22
Total	49	0.99

Question 13. Overall, the marking process produced fair outcomes for students.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	0.04
Agree	34	0.69

	Count	Percentage
Disagree	9	0.18
Strongly disagree	4	0.08
Total	49	0.99

Question 15. How many hours did you set aside for students to familiarise themselves with the materials NZQA provided to help them prepare for the digital trial examinations?

	Count	Percentage
1 to 2 hours	22	0.42
2 to 3 hours	5	0.09
3 to 4 hours	2	0.04
Less Than 1 hour	24	0.45
Total	53	1

Question 16. I found the familiarisation activities prepared my students for the digital trial examinations.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	3	0.06
Agree	28	0.57
Disagree	15	0.31
Strongly disagree	3	0.06
Total	49	1

Question 17. I found the content of the assessments was well aligned with the standards.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	0.2
Agree	32	0.64
Disagree	3	0.06
Strongly disagree	5	0.1
Total	50	1

Question 18. The Trials helped me to identify gaps in my students' knowledge.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	3	0.06
Agree	27	0.56
Disagree	12	0.25
Strongly disagree	6	0.12
Total	48	0.99

Question 19. I believe students' results were affected by their computer literacy.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	0.16
Agree	18	0.36
Disagree	20	0.4
Strongly disagree	4	0.08
Total	50	1

Question 20. Sitting the digital Trials are a good preparation for NCEA examinations.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	1	0.02
Agree	30	0.64
Disagree	14	0.3
Strongly disagree	2	0.04
Total	47	1

Perception of digital assessment

Question 21. I think digital Trials should be extended to pilots.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	3	0.05
Agree	28	0.5
Disagree	20	0.36
Strongly disagree	5	0.09
Total	56	1

Question 22. I would encourage my students to sit the digital Trial examinations or digital Pilot examinations in 2017.

	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	0.09
Agree	23	0.41
Disagree	22	0.39

	Count	Percentage
Strongly disagree	6	0.11
Total	56	1

Question 23. Experiencing the 2016 digital trial examination have encouraged me to use more digital tools in my teaching.

	count	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	0.04
Agree	18	0.33
Disagree	29	0.53
Strongly disagree	6	0.11
total	55	1.01

Teacher survey questions

Question 1. The communications received about the digital trial examinations provided sufficient information.

Question 1. The communications received about the digital trial examinations were easy to understand.

Question 1: The communications received about the digital trial examinations were well timed.

Question 2. If you disagree with any of the statements above, how can we improve in the future?

Question 3. I received useful help and support over the helpline.

Administration

Question 4. I was provided with enough information to administer the digital trial examinations.

Question 5. It was easy to set up a digital examination room.

Question 6. Were there any technical problems that arose during the administration of the assessments? If yes, provide details.

Question 7. Were there any issues supervising the digital trial examinations? If yes, what issues did you encounter?

Question 8. Overall, I found administering the digital trial examinations easy.

Question 9. What administrative improvements would you like to see?

Marking experience

Question 10. I found the marking instructions easy to follow.

Question 11. I found the grade score marking system easy to work with.

Question 12. Marking online took less time than marking on paper.

Question 13. Overall, the marking process produced fair outcomes for students.

Question 14. Are there any additional marking features you would like the software to include to support markers?

Question 15. How many hours did you set aside for students to familiarise themselves with the materials NZQA provided to help them prepare for the digital trial examination?

Question 16. I found the familiarisation activities prepared my students for the digital trial examinations.

Question 17. I found the content of the assessments was well aligned with the standards.

Question 18. The Trials helped me to identify gaps in my students' knowledge.

Question 19. I believe students' results were affected by their computer literacy.

Question 20. Sitting the digital Trials are a good preparation for NCEA examinations.

Perception of Digital Assessment

Question 21. I think digital Trials should be extended to Pilots.

Question 22. I would encourage my students to sit the digital Trial examinations or digital Pilot examinations in 2017.

Question 23. Experiencing the 2016 digital Trial examination have encouraged me to use more digital tools in my teaching.

Question 24: Any further comments or suggestions about the 2016 digital Trials?