



SPANZ

SECONDARY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.

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President
Peter Gall
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President's Comment 31

Dear Colleagues

The majority of us will be pleased with the decision by NZQA to retain the starting date of NCEA exams in 2008 (17 November) rather than the proposal to bring the date forward by a week. A bigger debate is raised by the dilemma that NZQA faces around the timing of these exams, timelines for marking completion and marker availability; and that is the issue about the amount of external assessment that exists under NCEA. It is a debate that has both philosophical and pragmatic aspects to it and one that needs to take place in the context of ongoing development of the qualifications framework. Are we over-assessing our senior school students?

The changes to NCEA that were announced earlier this year are at various stages of planning, although the subject endorsement implementation has now been delayed until 2010. You will soon receive correspondence from NZQA relating to data analysis for external standards as it applies to the profiles of expected performance. An NZQA circular will also come across your desk within the next month that will contain important details on the reporting of 'not achieved' results for internally assessed standards that will be implemented next year. This may impact on assessment timelines for some courses.

Most of the new full-time moderator positions for 2008 have been confirmed, although five positions have been re-advertised. It is extremely disappointing that the senior subject advisor pilot has been abandoned and one hopes that this decision was not a trade-off against the creation of extra full-time moderators. The pity is that although the positions (SSAs and moderators) are quite different, if both had been able to co-exist then the benefits to classroom teachers would have been obvious and enabled them to receive high quality, subject specific feedback on their practice. An opportunity has been missed here.

I have personally thanked Steve Maharey for his work in his time as Minister of Education. Our executive met with him on a number of occasions and appreciated his willingness to listen to our concerns, to bounce ideas around and to test our thoughts on various proposals.

Peter Gall
President