

.....Term 4 2019 Update.....

Current Executive

Our current executive is made up of Andrew Murray, Colin MacLeod, Maria Fouhy, Andrea Craig, Tamar Aiono and Am-jad Ali. Linda Aitchison resigned at December's meeting. At present she will not be replaced as there will be an election in April 2020.

Charitable Trust Status

RSTAANZ was confirmed in September. The annual report was presented at the AGM in Palmerston North in August, where a number of stakeholders were informed. Considerable money, time and effort has been invested in this over the course of the year. This opportunity will open several doors and continue to make RSTAANZ visible to key communities. This comes at opportune time as the RSTAANZ had its books audited for the first time in 2019.

Achievement Standards Update

There has been a team of people working on the new Religious Studies achievement standards with specialized backgrounds to provide a variety of perspectives. The group is:

Paul Morris (Victoria University of Wellington), John Chote (Sacred Heart College, Lower Hutt) Andrew Murray (Sacred Heart Girls' College, New Plymouth), Lisa Jenkins (St Peters College, Auckland), Colin MacLeod (Catholic Institute of New Zealand) Joseph Bulbulia (Auckland University), Steve Autagavaia (Hato Paora College) and Tom Silverwood (St Joseph's Maori School for Girls).

Nothing has been decided on the format of the assessments. Material will be out for discussion and feedback soon. Many standards give scope to focus on a single religion or religious practice and some require focusing on more than one religion.

An example of change is that the word 'narrative' is being used to reflect sacred texts, scripture, and oral traditions. There is an increased focus on Aotearoa and Māori interaction with religious traditions. For further information go to this [link](#).

Trial and Pilots are LIVE! [Here](#) is the link. Go on in and search around

The proposed dates and roll-out of these new standards are:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Level 1	Drafting	Trialling	Transition	Compulsory		
Level 2		Drafting	Trialling	Transition	Compulsory	
Level 3			Drafting	Trialling	Transition	Compulsory

Religious Studies Scholarship

NZQA is developing Religious Studies Scholarship assessment. There is no cross-over between the Achievement standard working group and the Scholarship group. These are two separate entities.

We are aware that people have been appointed to the working/writing party, have met and begun the work. The aim is still to offer Scholarship assessment at the end of 2020. A circular was provided by NZQA outlining the first draft performance standard with a deadline shortly after, for feedback. This draft provided very little information regarding PLD time, resourcing, exemplars, timeline, clarification and accountability, as well as for preparation with students sitting scholarship in 2020.

RSTAANZ executive committee have corresponded with the National Assessment facilitator allocated to Religious Studies scholarship via phone and official letter, to consider timeframe and apparent lack of progress towards developing the Scholarship standard. As a result, the deadline for feedback has been extended to early February. We continue to look forward to seeing how this progress, provide the necessary support to NZQA and provide additional academic rigour to students' education. Our chairperson Andrew Murray is working with NZQA in this space.

Website and Facebook Communication

This term, discussion around the effectiveness and use of our online presence was evaluated. Considerations were made towards revamping the website and Facebook page. At a cost of \$400 per year for upkeep of [RSTAANZ website](#), RSTAANZ was appreciative to NCRS for footing the bill. Over the next 12 months, both these pages will be looked at, to create a refreshing space where members can interact. RSTAANZ have recognized a need to be more present on a social media platform by creating a current look. Watch this space.

2020 Election Year

Elections for key positions in the RSTAANZ executive committee will take place in April 2020. The elections will be for the positions of: Chairperson, Deputy chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The committee moved that Andrew Murray remain as Chair for 2020. Details will be provided closer to election time.

Remember we are your voice at the national table. If you have any questions or would like to become a member please contact us on: rstaanz@gmail.com

Yours in Religious Studies

Andrew Murray

