

## Report on the Alignment Process for the Sciences: Jenny Pollock (Oct 2009)

To date the following have happened:

- Matrices for Levels One - Three have been written
- Standards for Levels One and Two have been written
- Tasks for Levels One and Two internally assessed standards have been mostly written for standards that have significantly changed
- The Level One matrix and standards have been consulted on
- The Level One standards and consequently the internally assessed tasks have been tweaked according to feedback from consultation and the moderators

The next stages are:

- The Level Two standards will be available in December in pre-consultation draft form on TKI so that teachers can see the stage development is at.
- The Level Two standards and consequently the tasks will be tweaked according to feedback from consultation and the moderators
- Level Three standards will be written, probably in January 2010
- Level Three internally assessed tasks will be written in the first part of 2010
- Level Three standards and tasks will be consulted on
- The Level Three standards and consequently the tasks will be tweaked according to feedback from consultation and the moderators
- Level One internally assessed tasks will be trialled term 1 next year
- Level Two tasks will be trialled in terms 1-2 next year
- Official consultation on the draft Level 2 standards is planned for term 3 next year and the draft assessment resources will hopefully accompany these. This will enable teachers to digest the changes before making their feedback.

I am not sure when the various standards will be registered and when the tasks will be available on the web for use.

As well as the Standards Alignment Project, Teaching and Learning Guidelines are being developed starting with the Nature of Science (NoS) strand. Input for this is coming from Ministry of Education officials, some of the Standards Writing Group and curriculum developers (to ensure continuity) and practicing teachers who have strengths in teaching with a NoS focus. This group has had two meetings so far and they meet again in November.

## Unanswered questions:

### **The 189xx group of Unit Standards:**

At the moment, I am not sure. The writing group has presented many submissions asking that they be kept but have not had any definite answers yet. NZQA and MoE are consulting on a proposal that 20 credits towards Level One NCEA can come from standards at below curriculum level 6 (just as 20 credits for Level Two and Three NCEA). There will be literacy and numeracy standards developed for this purpose, but these may not include the 189xx standards.

NZASE is worried that these will be removed so are planning for this eventuality. We have made a commitment that the Certificate of Science will continue and a small group will be facilitating the development of achievement level tasks for the new internal standards. If a student passes these they will not only contribute towards the Certificate in Science but also NCEA Level One.

### **Human Biology standards:**

I am not sure about these either. The biologists and the writing group have been working very hard to retain Human Biology standards at Level 1 and to ask that they be developed at Levels 2 and 3. Again we haven't had much success from our numerous submissions.

However, all matrices can now have up to 30 credits so the biologists have developed a suite of standards at Level 1, many of which can be assessed in a Human Biology context. Schools can still run both Biology and Human Biology courses concurrently if they wish.

### **What is happening to Science standards at Levels 2 and 3?**

Sciences were given a special dispensation from the strict "no duplication" requirement at Level 1 only. Most of the current Science Level 2 and 3 standards overlap with standards from Physics, Chemistry and Biology and are also not at the correct curriculum level, except for the Planet Earth and Beyond ones.

Because of this the writing group was asked to develop standards for the Planet Earth and Beyond strand with the same credit value as standards for the other Sciences. This means that Planet Earth and Beyond standards now have plenty of substance in them. It was proposed that they form the basis of a new subject called Earth and Space Science.

However, there is a call for Science to be kept as a subject at Levels 2 and 3 so more standards have been added to the matrix so that this can happen. Many of these are new because there is still the strict "no duplication" requirement. However, they are interesting standards and the standing committee SCIPEP (Science/Planet Earth and Beyond) is committed to helping resource these new standards.

**It is very important that teachers give feedback when the Level Two standards are put out for consultation if they wish for Science to be kept as a subject.**