

# **Research on the development of national exemplars: implications for teacher education in New Zealand**

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## **Introduction**

An action research project on the national development of exemplars began in December 2000 and continues into 2003. The research is revealing information about professional development needs of teachers as well as the emergence of New Zealand national exemplars. Development of, and research on, national exemplars is an integral part of the Ministry of Education's assessment initiative (Ministry of Education, 2001) and reflects international trends, such as in the UK and Australia.

Alongside the development of national curriculum in many nations, concerns have arisen about assessment practices both in the classroom and at national level. To address these concerns, some countries imposed national testing, for example the UK with its 'standard assessment tasks' (SAT), despite the considerable criticism that has occurred over the validity and reliability of the testing (Broadfoot, 1996). Concerns about the validity and reliability of the SATs used in the UK fuelled ongoing debates about norm-referenced tests. Tests, like all assessments, can only sample behaviour at a specific period of time, and depending on the scoring schedules, may offer little to the teacher or student as to what has been learned, how much has been learned, or what to do next to improve learning for the student. Criticisms of norm-referenced tests have also centred on the value of what they test (perceived limited content validity), and whether in fact what is able to be tested represents important learning (Kohn, 2000). Compounding these problems have been the variables of classroom testing conditions and teacher judgement (Broadfoot, 1996). Dissatisfaction with formal tests led to a range of new assessment practices, one of which is exemplars. Freed from the constraints of formal testing, exemplars would be able to demonstrate effective learning in authentic learning situations.

What are exemplars? According to the New Zealand Ministry of Education (MOE), “An exemplar is an authentic example of student work annotated to illustrate learning, achievement, and quality in relation to the levels described in the relevant national curriculum statement. Each exemplar highlights significant features of that work and important aspects of students’ learning.” (MOE, February 2002:1)

Implicit in this definition is a shift away from formal testing conditions to detailed analysis of student work (“highlighting significant features of that work”), evaluation (“quality in relation to the [curriculum] levels”) and focus on indications that learning has occurred (“important aspects of students’ learning”).

The stated purposes of New Zealand national exemplars provide further insight into the form and role of exemplars. According to the Ministry of Education (2002:1) exemplars will:

- “Signal important features of student work to watch for, collect information about, and act on to support growth in learning
- Provide students, teachers and parents with a basis for discussing important qualities, aspects of indicators of learning
- Provide reference points that will support teachers’ professional judgements about the quality of their students’ work.”

The purpose statement clearly illustrates a broadening of the multi-functional role for exemplars. The use of exemplars is exhorted *to focus* teacher attention on *key aspects* of student learning *through observation and action* (implying the role of formative assessment – not summative assessment of standardised testing). This formative aspect is extended by the *involvement* of students, parents and teachers in *discussing learning* (another contrast from formal testing). Finally, teachers’ professional judgements are deemed to be central to the assessment, teaching and learning process.

What are the implications of these exemplars for teacher education in New Zealand? A national consultation on draft national exemplars in term one of 2002, provides insight into this question which this paper now addresses.

## **National consultation**

This section of the paper begins by briefly describing the methodology associated with the national consultation and then examines the data in three themes:

- a) teacher curriculum content knowledge
- b) learning and teaching strategies
- c) assessment issues.

## **National consultation methodology**

Draft national exemplars were developed during 2001 by five curriculum teams<sup>1</sup>: Mathematics, English, Science, Technology and the Arts (including the four disciplines of visual arts, music, drama and dance). In brief, the curriculum teams were nationally based teams of curriculum experts drawn from schools, School Support Services, Colleges of Education, Universities and private consultancy businesses.

A random sample of 500 schools<sup>2</sup> was invited to participate in the national consultation. A total of 225 schools participated during term one, 2002. Only 12 of these schools were secondary; other secondary schools cited limited time, a focus on NCEA implementation and other prior commitments as reasons for not becoming involved with the national exemplars. The participating schools were able to select their degree of involvement in the consultation:

Option A: read only (exemplars)

Option B: read and discuss in a staff meeting

Option C: read, discuss and use in the classroom

Option D: read, discuss, use and involve students in self-assessment and goal-setting.

The majority of schools selected options C and D (155/225). Schools were allocated two curriculum areas in which to trial the exemplars, ensuring that there was an even national coverage of each curriculum area. Draft exemplars were sent to the participating schools in the second week of February, with 8 weeks in which to trial

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<sup>1</sup> Maori medium curricula were involved in a separate consultation in term 2 of 2002. Information in this paper is based on only mainstream curriculum.

<sup>2</sup> Every fifth school on the MOE database were selected for invitation, apart from kura who were involved in a separate consultation on Maori medium exemplars.

the material. Schools received a pack of draft exemplars in each of the curriculum areas (English, Mathematics, Science, Technology and the Arts – dance, drama, music and visual arts), an information booklet, and a CD-Rom which contained video clips related to the dance, drama, music and Moving Images exemplars. Each school agreed to having three teachers complete a questionnaire at the end of term one. Facilitation support was offered to 75% of participating schools (from the Assess to Learn team), as a means of supporting the implementation of exemplars and gathering data related to the future professional development needs of teachers in the national implementation of exemplars.

In general, the facilitation support provided schools with an explanation of the exemplar development, the general framework and layout of the exemplars, encouragement in trying the exemplars in the classroom, and a vehicle for school-based professional discussions. Most of this facilitation was accomplished in one or two staff meetings (Poskitt *et al.*, 2002).

During February, 10% of participating schools were visited by researchers. Observational notes were recorded on staff meeting discussions – the purpose being to monitor the facilitation process, to hear first-hand teacher concerns/experiences of the national consultation and the draft exemplars, to ascertain trends to survey in the questionnaire, to validate data gained from other sources and to glean professional development needs of teachers. Some of these themes were explored in the teacher interviews as well as the questionnaire.

A 90% response rate was achieved with the questionnaires, partly due to advanced notification of the questionnaire, school's commitment to supplying feedback on draft exemplars, and the encouragement by facilitators for schools to respond. Facilitators also completed template sheets after schools visits, to record their observations and teachers' experiences with the draft exemplars. A total of 206 facilitator template sheets contributed to the research database. Data were triangulated amongst the various sources: shadowing observations, teacher interviews, teacher questionnaire, facilitator template sheets and facilitator interviews.

The focus of the national consultation was twofold: to seek teacher input and feedback on the draft national exemplars, and secondly, to ascertain the likely professional development needs of teachers when the exemplars are distributed nationally. This paper focuses on the arising professional development needs in terms of teacher content knowledge, learning and teaching strategies, and related assessment issues.

### **Teacher curriculum content knowledge**

Experiences with, and reactions to, the national draft exemplars revealed an underlying uncertainty and confusion with curriculum content knowledge for many participating primary teachers. Given that primary teachers teach multiple curriculum areas, most of which have been significantly modified in the last decade, it is not surprising that teachers have uncertainties in some curriculum areas. This was particularly the case for curriculum areas most recently gazetted (i.e., the Arts) and for those areas not taught daily (i.e., Science and Technology). Additionally, responses recorded during the observations, teacher interviews, facilitator template sheets and questionnaires indicated the need for increased curriculum content knowledge in each of the curriculum areas. Trends in each of the curriculum areas are presented below.

#### English

For some participating teachers, surface and deep features seemed to be a new concept. Consequently these teachers sought clarification and professional development on terminology related to deeper features and voice in English, using deeper features – such as how to model and talk about them in class when reading stories/children’s work/ and how to assist children in finding deep features. Some teachers were unsure of “What visual language included”, signalling lack of familiarity with some aspects of the curriculum documents. Particular aspects confused teachers, such as “What do you mean by writer’s ‘voice’? What do you mean by ‘impact on the reader’? How do you explain these to little kids (NE-Y2) when all I really want to do is get them writing.”

Teachers expressed uncertainty over how to encourage pupils to practise aspects, such as writing about a “small moment in time”, a dimension this paper considers in more

depth in the section on learning and teaching strategies. Underlying the teacher concerns were questions related to “how much time should we spend on this? Does it need to be in a full unit?” and “Can you show a sample full of errors that might confuse young children?” Teachers requested help in understanding the matrix and wanted assistance to understand that examples could be used to compare levels of writing for both poetic and expressive. Other specific information related to annotating and interpreting writing samples, wanting more information on where to go next or on “more specifics” such as “understanding what is a conclusion”.

These findings indicate a range of professional development needs of teachers, such as clarification of surface/deeper features, progression in learning English, strategies for assisting teachers in translating the theory into practice with students, the need for relevant supporting resource material, and periodic access to “experts” to ask ‘basic’ questions. Whilst much of this can be addressed in professional discussions amongst teaching staff in individual schools (Poskitt, 2001), the implications for pre-service and in-service professional development are evident.

### Science

Some teachers expressed uncertainty over fundamental concepts in science, for example, “confusion between changing state and dissolving”, and uncertainty over the extent to which scientific language terms should be used or encouraged (e.g., “hypothesis”). One facilitator thought that “teachers needed to get ‘into scientific investigations’ more, as they are not looking at the process”. Another facilitator thought that “the teachers needed more help putting it [science content] into context” and they “need greater familiarity with indicators across the science levels”. Planning across levels is compounded by teachers “not knowing where to go next as science topics are not usually revisited”.

Clearly for some teachers professional development is needed to address content knowledge, an awareness of the “big picture” of science, and how and when skills and concepts can be transferred or built upon from topic to topic.

## Maths

Significant mathematical issues for teachers were “problem-solving and knowledge”. Teachers believed they needed to review and teach problem-solving strategies and background knowledge to use the exemplars and that “they needed some knowledge/stages to accompany the strategy as a guide.” Teachers asked questions like, “What are we checking? Is it number understanding, problem-solving strategies, measurement concepts, prior knowledge, logic and reasoning, mathematical language or integration of all of the above? What knowledge are we expecting?” Teachers found that some children can measure but not problem-solve and that children’s mathematical language was also an issue. Children often used the equipment correctly but not the language (e.g., “width”). To what extent ought the use of common versus mathematical language determine the level allocation for the child’s work? How they could teach a probability unit without doing the sample shown? The management of practical aspects of the task in a class context also worried them. For other teachers, clarification of the maths continuum was a priority need, along with assigning levels to student samples.

The exemplars reinforce the ongoing concerns (Thomas & Ward, 2002) for concerns related to content knowledge and confidence in maths for teachers, understanding of progression of concepts and classroom management strategies to cater for the needs of individual students.

## Technology

A strong need was expressed for a matrix in technology in order to see progressions and steps, and clarification as to how processes and skills were related to the curriculum levels. Participating teachers needed help with a conceptual framework in technology as they were unsure how to change their initial plans or how to adapt technology L3/4 exemplars for younger children. Teachers also struggled with the amount of work required in technology: “There is too much to do [and it is] difficult doing it once a week [as there is] no continuity and [you] lose motivation of [the] kids.”

Many of the participating schools actually avoided teaching technology, claiming that they lacked time, the exemplar was not suited to the level of their children, a lack of

equipment, or the appearance and layout of the technology exemplars. Considerable professional development is needed on what makes technology a distinctive curriculum area. A sound knowledge of fundamental concepts, skills, processes and attitudes, and how to identify them in children and how to progress their work to higher levels are also areas of concern.

### Music

Teachers involved in the national consultation indicated that they needed exemplars at each level in music to show ‘stair-casing’—progression of knowledge and skills in music. Participating teachers requested examples of adapting knowledge to different levels using a range of activities and equipment (in instances where the school lacked equipment such as for teaching the pentatonic scale, suggested alternatives were sought).

Some confusion was expressed about the timing of comparing student work against the exemplar (such as middle, or end of year) and guidance within level one allocations. How music fitted into the whole school programme concerned other teachers, while for others their focus was on more specific resources. “Teachers were looking for the music – either a tape or chart so they could ‘do the test’. They needed assistance to see that the exemplars were a general expression of student ability that could be transferred to another activity or piece of music”.

Thus in music, concerns centred around equipment and school resources, whole school planning for music and the need for an understanding of progression.

### Drama

The most common experience here related to teacher “lack of familiarity with the curriculum” and hence in many instances schools avoided trialling the draft exemplars. Many teachers “were unsure about drama, as teachers had no background in it. They couldn’t tell who was achieving at level one, except for those children with whom the teacher worked individually.” Teachers were thought to need “more guidance – perhaps a sheet that tells teachers what to do for that exemplar and a need for more indicators in the drama matrix”.

This is a curriculum area that teachers express considerable need for increased content knowledge and understanding of progression.

#### Visual Arts

Difficulty was expressed by teachers in terms of specific terms, transfer of specific skills in one medium or topic to another, how to help students with specific techniques such as how to “use perspective and watercolour techniques” and the value of collecting extensive assessment data on a topic that may only be visited annually or twice in a child’s school career (such as with clay).

#### Dance

Like drama, this was a curriculum area that teachers in the national consultation tended to avoid trialling due to perceptions of inadequate knowledge or confidence in teaching dance. Some teachers sought specific “assistance with the dance exemplars in exploring the story lines, the topics and the examples.” Other teachers requested explanation of terms, reference to or supply of suitable music resources and development of strategies for teaching dance.

### **Implications for pre and in-service development for primary teachers**

Every teacher has areas of curriculum strength and areas in need of further development. Emerging trends across all the data related to trialling the draft national exemplars present some clear implications for pre-service teachers. Teachers need an encompassing framework for every curriculum area in which they are expected to teach. Such a framework needs to provide a coherent ‘map’ from which teachers can discern the relationship between specific skills, knowledge and concepts. In addition to specific topics in pre-service education, teachers would benefit from a more comprehensive understanding of the generic skills and concepts associated with each curriculum. A ‘big picture’ conceptual map will assist transfer of key concepts from one topic to another topic, or from one context to another for students. At present it seems that such new knowledge is “added on ad hoc” for teachers less familiar with a curriculum area.

A second and related need is for such a conceptual map to incorporate understanding of ‘typical’ progressions in conceptual knowledge. Acknowledging that students

learn in different ways, there are nevertheless some basic understandings in each curriculum area that frequently need to have particular prior experiences and concepts firmly established before foundational knowledge can be extended. Teachers seem to need assistance in understanding and ‘unpacking’ the generally accepted progressions, in order to guide subsequent learning.

For in-service teachers the implications are that unless they are specialist teachers in a particular curriculum area, they are likely to have ‘patchy’ curriculum content knowledge. Providing guidance in developing a conceptual framework on which to organise such knowledge is needed if teachers are to understand progression in student conceptual understanding and how to transfer concepts from one topic to another. Strategies on how to implement these notions were sought by teachers – the focus of the next section.

### **Learning and teaching strategies**

Teachers involved in the national consultation on exemplars indicated numerous professional development needs in relation to learning and teaching strategies. Areas of need included: guidance and professional discussions, ideas or references and sample lessons, assistance with planning, practical assistance, classroom strategies, as well as clarity and confirmation of levels allocation. Each of these needs is now discussed.<sup>3</sup>

#### Guidance and professional discussions

For those schools who received facilitation support, the majority appreciated it, but for a range of reasons. Guidance from a facilitator, or sharing and discussion of ideas, was valued, even if only to encourage and affirm what teachers were doing (Appendix One). It appears that relatively simple support can make a difference to teachers in terms of whether or not they implement changes, or the extent to which they adopt innovations.

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<sup>3</sup> Data most pertinent to this section comes from two questions in the questionnaire: Q30:What did you value from the facilitation you received? Q50:What support would you have liked to receive? Supplementing this data was the facilitator template sheets, Q3: On what aspects did teachers need assistance?

Many teachers (as indicated in other questionnaire responses and teacher interviews) cited the value of sustained discussions or dialogue with colleagues in helping them with learning and teaching matters, as well as exemplar implementation. While much of this discussion can occur at school-based level, benefits from outside facilitator input and chairing are well known (Poskitt, 2001). Often an outsider provides fresh insights and captures the interest of teachers more than a fellow teacher can, yet when time is provided to support a school colleague in presenting information to the staff, considerable benefit can accrue to the school. The value of professional discussions for influencing teacher practice needs to be highlighted in pre and in-service courses.

#### Ideas or references

Many teachers indicated their appreciation of, or interest in being supplied with more, references and ideas for planning, teaching and classroom management strategies (Appendix One). Whilst some teachers explored the Ministry of Education website, TKI, other teachers need guided support in accessing this resource.

The frequently expressed need for support may also be indicative of teachers' difficulties in transferring the knowledge gained from an exemplar to another context. As explored in the earlier section on curriculum content knowledge, teachers' often limited 'conceptual map' of a curriculum area prevented them from transferring knowledge or skills from one context to another, (let alone assisting learners in such processes). Professional development is needed in assisting teachers at pre and in-service levels to identify the fundamental concepts and skills in each curriculum area on which subsequent learning can be built.

#### Assistance with planning

It was somewhat surprising to learn that teachers sought assistance with planning (Appendix One). Underlying some requests was an uncertainty over the process of using exemplars and the national consultation itself, but also dimensions of time constraints and incorporating new developments into an already crowded curriculum proved challenging. For other teachers though, it may signal some fundamental insecurities with basic teaching requirements of planning. Greater attention to, and building of teacher confidence in planning may be required, especially in pre-service courses.

### Practical assistance in the classroom

Classroom management underlay some concerns during the trialling of the draft national exemplars (Appendix One). To what extent might this be revealing teacher overload, lack of confidence in classroom management generally, the need for greater ratios of adults to children in classrooms, or difficulties associated with more individualised programmes? Regardless of the source, classroom management appears to be undermining the confidence of some teachers and warrants greater attention at pre and in-service level. Professional sharing and discussions amongst colleagues as well as focused observations in classes where effective practice occurs, may address some of these concerns (ERO, 2002).

### Classroom strategies

Participating teachers also sought clarity and guidance on classroom strategies, associated with the use and integration of exemplars into existing programmes. Whilst this may indicate uncertainty in the assessment area in relation to conditions of assessment (that is, the extent to which exemplars can be compared in variable data gathering circumstances), the issue nevertheless remains of teachers seeking “step-by-step instructions” for implementing new learning and teaching strategies into the classroom. Perhaps this is an example of Apple’s (1988) and Codd’s (1998) warning about the technicist approach to teacher training and the subsequent eroding of professionalism. This raises the question for professional development providers, both pre and in-service: should teachers be provided with ‘recipe approaches’ to address their immediate concerns for classroom management, or ought they to be provided with more generic skills instead? Whatever the philosophical stance of the teacher educator, a balance between providing practical classroom strategies and theoretical frameworks seem to be desirable, particularly at pre-service levels.

### Clarity and confirmation of level allocation

One of the stated purposes of the national exemplars is to provide reference points for teacher judgements of student work against national curriculum levels. Naturally then teachers’ attention was directed to curriculum levels. However, teacher feedback implies some uncertainty about allocating curriculum levels to student work and they sought greater clarity through a wider range of exemplars and qualifying statements

(such as in the accompanying matrices and curriculum rationales). Implied also is teacher uncertainty about progressions in learning in curriculum areas. To some extent these difficulties may diminish in 2003-2004 when the national exemplars are implemented nation-wide, for there will be a range of exemplars across the various strands for each of the national curriculum levels (1-5), and a greater variety within the exemplars of each curriculum area.

In addition to concerns about curriculum content knowledge and effective classroom management strategies, one of the greatest challenges with the national consultation was for teachers to recognise the integral nature of assessment to effective learning and teaching. While part of the difficulty for teachers may have related to the new concept of exemplars, there nevertheless seemed to be variable levels of familiarity and confidence with assessment strategies in general.

### **Assessment issues**

Considerable information about assessment issues was gathered in the national consultation, particularly through the questionnaire data and facilitator template sheets. Several sub-themes emerged: gaining of assessment ideas, self-assessment, formative assessment, moderation considerations, and support in practical implementation.

#### Gaining of assessment ideas

Teachers commented on the assessment ideas they gained from the draft national exemplars. They mentioned new ideas demonstrated in various curriculum areas, the concrete examples of student work and the range of strategies displayed. It would seem that teachers may need greater emphasis in pre-service courses on assessment, particularly the range of strategies that can be used (more discussion occurs on this point below).

#### Self-assessment

Self-assessment was an area eliciting a wide range of teacher responses. For some teachers the opportunity to engage students in self-assessment and goal-setting appeared to be a completely new challenge and one on which they sought considerable guidance, practical assistance and classroom management strategies.

There are implications here for both pre and in-service teacher education to expose teachers to the theory of self-assessment, practical strategies to engage students, questioning skills and suggestions for classroom management to free time to interact meaningfully with students on an individual and group basis. Reference to Ministry of Education documents (such as *Assessment: Policy to Practice, 1994*) would be a worthwhile starting point as well as professional development kits (such as Bourke, McAlpine and Poskitt, 1997). Sharing of ideas and strategies amongst teaching staff would capitalise on the pockets of teacher expertise in utilising self-assessment strategies.

#### Formative assessment

Formative assessment was a significant theme in the assessment related data. Experiences with the draft national exemplars indicated that using exemplars encouraged teachers to engage in more stimulating discussion with students about their work, provide more specific feedback to students, clarify their expectations and success criteria with students (partly through the provision of models of other student work), pinpoint aspects on which students needed to improve and begin to identify ways of moving students forward. These themes are significant in the area of formative assessment. (Crooks (1988), Black and Wiliam, (1998), Sadler (1998), Torrance and Pryor (1998), Bell and Cowie (2001), and Clarke (2001)).

Exemplars also assisted teachers to convey to learners clear learning intentions, success criteria and to focus their attention on task-related matters. However, because exemplars are provided in a rich context, warnings by Clarke (2001) that teachers sometimes confuse students by including context within learning intentions and thus distract students towards the activity and away from the central learning idea are especially relevant.

Central to any feedback process is the discussion that occurs between teachers and students. As Bell and Cowie (2001: 114) state,

For formative assessment to occur, students and teachers have to disclose to each other the meanings that they are making in the lesson, and negotiate a shared meaning. The feedback that the student receives about the 'gap' between her constructed meaning and the teacher's, will enable her to take action to bridge the 'gap'.

Eliciting such information from students can be difficult, although observing students, listening to and questioning them—strategies that effective teachers use instinctively—may need to be used more deliberately in order to build on students’ responses. There is a wealth of information, both theoretical and practical in New Zealand and internationally, on promoting formative assessment with students (see for example, Crooks (1988), Bell and Cowie (1997), Hattie (1999), Hill (2000), Moreland and Jones (2000)). Considerable emphasis has been placed on formative assessment for in-service teachers in recent times by the *Assessment for Better Learning* (Ministry of Education professional development contracts), and more recently the *Assess to Learn* teams. However, for teachers in schools not involved in such contracts, returning to the teaching services after periods of absence, or pre-service teachers, significant gaps in their knowledge and practice are evident.

#### Support sought in practical implementation

Teachers involved in the national consultation stated the need for: guidelines for assessment, help in questioning students, assistance in annotating samples of work, recording and analysis of assessments, and ways to engage students in self-assessment and goal-setting. Strategies in overcoming common obstacles of limited time and catering for individual needs of students in larger classes were also sought.

#### **Conclusion**

Although this paper explored the three elements of curriculum content knowledge, learning and teaching strategies and assessment issues separately, it is evident that the three aspects are closely integrated in effective classrooms.

Formative assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. It is used to provide the student with feedback to enhance learning and to help the teacher understand students’ learning. It helps build a picture of a students’ progress, and informs decisions about the next steps in teaching and learning. (MOE, 1994:8)

The challenge in pre and in-service teacher education is to enhance the understanding and practice of formative assessment in classrooms and schools as an integral part of effective teaching and learning. As has been argued above however, before teachers can notice and respond effectively to students through formative assessment practice,

attention needs to focus on increasing teachers' curriculum content knowledge. Teachers are unable to recognise contradictions or gaps in student learning if they have an insufficient knowledge base themselves or are unable to interpret their knowledge in ways to assist students in their learning (Ball & Bass, 2000:94). Rather than cramming more into the prescribed courses for teacher education it is proposed in this paper that more attention needs to be focused on providing teachers with a conceptual framework of each curriculum area on to which broader content knowledge can be added throughout their teaching careers. Such a framework also needs to include understanding of the development (such as progressions) of fundamental skills, attitudes and knowledge of learners and the pedagogy of the curriculum area.

Closely allied to the curriculum content knowledge, needs to be a broader repertoire of teaching and learning strategies so that teachers can adjust programmes according to the changing needs of the learners (discovered through formative assessment strategies). The information gathered from teachers in 225 schools participating in the national consultation on exemplars suggests that teacher education for both pre and in-service teachers requires a change in emphasis to conceptual frameworks in each curriculum area, understandings of progressions in student learning, and greater time and attention to assessment issues.

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## Appendix One

Codes used

FT = facilitator template sheet

FT3.115 = facilitator template sheet, question number 3, sheet number 115

Q = questionnaire data

Q30.85 = questionnaire question 30, questionnaire number 85

### Learning and Teaching Strategies

#### Guidance and professional discussions

- More visits/facilitator time Q30.013, Q30.037, Q30.172, Q30.263
- Follow-up visits later in the year, after 'having a go' Q30.226, Q30.234, Q30.263, Q30.339
- Contact/discussion with others using it (and to share afterwards) Q30.104, Q30.239, Q30.242
- General encouragement and confirmation FT3.038, FT3.041, FT3.042
- Would have liked facilitator to help lead staff discussion into ways we could use them Q30.032
- In school advisor working with teachers and students Q30.148
- Working with someone to look at some exemplars and analyze in depth Q30.167
- Follow-up support Q30.094
- Want 'experts' to tell us what to do – "not have to interpret exemplars ourselves." FT3.016
- Sharing of ideas – being a sounding board FT3.038
- Further work/discussions on using exemplars in other curriculum areas Q30.217, Q30.316, Q30.332
- Follow-up discussions and guidance/ to answer queries Q30.233, Q30.265
- Being able to engage in dialogue Q30.296

#### More ideas/references

- Suggested resources to assist topic Q50.8, Q50.47, Q50.48, Q50.73
- Reference to suitable support material (e.g. support handbook for drama, authors and book titles, page numbers to other relevant English documents) Q50.90, Q50.148, Q50.156, Q50.298
- Ideas for further units/follow up activities and approaches Q50.47, Q50.133, Q50.167, Q50.169, Q50.188, Q50.299
- Clear lesson sequence for teaching concept Q50.14, Q50.187
- More exemplars Q30.236, Q30.265
- Show reference to and coverage of all 3 strands Q50.150
- Ideas for presenting results Q30.169
- Possible examples of suitable music to use Q50.225
- Some suggested lessons that fitted in with the exemplar Q30.008

- Needed greater familiarity with TKI FT3.076
- “I used ARB site frequently and find it excellent. Access to what I want in TKI site... I can never find it so I gave up on it. Shortage of time so I opt for the one I know.” Q16.085
- Not aware of a lot of MOE Support Materials for visual arts FT3.077
- Would like professional development in support material available FT3.089
- Teachers would appreciate seeing learning outcomes listed and some reference made to how the work and process is going to be assessed. FT3.122b (science)
- “Developing and planning programmes to meet or exceed national standards” FT3.142
- Planning sequences to utilise exemplars and ideas for modifying reporting systems to make good use of exemplars. FT3.143
- “Trying some exemplars to build my confidence. Sharing what others are doing and getting ideas.” FT3.144
- Suggestions on different useful, practical ways to use exemplars FT3.154
- Other aspects relevant to topic – only one aspect covered in examples Q50.192
- Big ideas identified for science Q50.194
- Warm ups/warm downs Q50.211
- Ideas for prior work to support unit e.g. a maths statistic unit prior with lots of graphing so students can graph experiment findings Q50.47
- Specific objectives that the teacher should work on for children working within each level FT3.103e
- A suggested lesson like the TKI Q50.8
- Teachers struggled to see that some skills etc could be applied to a variety of contexts. FT3.108

#### Assistance with planning

- Development with staff on unit planning to coincide with exemplar use Q30.050, Q30.132, Q30.181
- Help with/guidelines for classroom planning Q30.002, Q30.048, Q30.055, Q30.127, Q30.280, Q30.350, Q30.355
- Teachers needed help with planning of unit/learning experiences. FT3.014
- A unit plan so I did not have to write one Q50.60
- Planning template Q50.128
- How exemplars can be used in planning and in classroom programme FT3.007, FT3.012, FT3.013, FT3.051, FT3.071, FT3.072, FT3.073, FT3.100, FT3.141
- Fitting the use of exemplars in with their planned programme – to enhance rather than make more work. FT3.036
- How to plan an implementation lesson for L2 maths measurement Ft3.049

#### Practical assistance in the classroom

- Help in the classroom Q30.094, Q30.116, Q30.123, Q30.154, Q30.278

- Practical implementation/ how to use or modelling using one Q30.021, Q30.022, Q30.044, Q30.047, Q30.355
- Help with assessing some of my children's work Q30.047, Q30.304
- More in-class support to determine exactly what we were supposed to do in technology particularly. Q30.292, Q30.328
- Suggested music – where to get it? Q30.008
- How to manage exemplar and class at the same time Q30.042
- Assistance with syndicate/class programmes Q30.247
- How to document what you have assessed/observed Q30.290, Q30.355
- “I need someone to come in and help me with class management so that I could speak individually with each child”. FT3.048
- Needed another person to film the dance, and need help with making still shots from the digital video for their portfolios FT3.051
- Use of video camera and classroom management FT3.086
- Extent of teacher assistance and classroom aides for students when teachers are using exemplars FT3.096b
- How would you use exemplars when there are lots of different levels in your class FT3.087

#### Classroom Strategies

- Instructions on how to use the exemplars more effectively Q50.123, Q50.127
- More comprehensive progression of expectations – matrix/checklists Q50.191, Q50.195
- How to present the information found out – where to go next? Q50.169
- What would children be expected to do independently – e.g. read temperatures, complete recording? Q50.255
- Time frame for teaching Q50.280
- Teachers unsure about how to go about this and what it looked like in a classroom setting. FT3.014
- Teachers need instructions step-by-step for easy use. FT3.014
- How to question the students about their work FT3.034
- Recording of work at year 1 & 2 level FT3.034
- Fitting the use of exemplars in with their planned programme – to enhance rather than make more work. FT3.036
- Fitting them to their children's needs FT3.037
- Lesson and teaching sequence (technology). The how to process needs to be clearly outlined. This was also true of the art exemplars. Even experienced teachers were not able to do the printmaking and drawing exemplars without on-going in-class support. FT3.104
- “How do we actually use these exemplars with students?” FT3.085, FT3.108, FT3.120b, FT3.121, FT3.122b, FT3.145, FT3.155, FT3.157, FT3.158, FT3.172
- Manageability – being able to engage with the material without feeling overwhelmed, especially with “units” FT3.015, FT3.016
- How to implement in a multi-level class. FT3.018A
- Keeping it manageable as these teachers could see all sorts of possibilities and ways they will use them in the future FT3.038

- Many were concerned regarding the number of exemplars to come and the time to use or teach from in the classroom FT3.114b
- Understanding how to use with a multi-level class when levels are missing FT3.151
- More time to prepare/plan Q30.117, Q30.153, Q30.195, Q30.225, Q30.298, Q30.338 “How do we actually use these exemplars with students?” FT3.085, FT3.108, FT3.120b, FT3.121, FT3.122b, FT3.145, FT3.155, FT3.157, FT3.158, FT3.172
- Manageability – being able to engage with the material without feeling overwhelmed, especially with “units” FT3.015, FT3.016
- How to implement in a multi-level class. FT3.018A
- Keeping it manageable as these teachers could see all sorts of possibilities and ways they will use them in the future FT3.038
- Many were concerned regarding the number of exemplars to come and the time to use or teach from in the classroom FT3.114b
- Understanding how to use with a multi-level class when levels are missing FT3.151
- More time to prepare/plan Q30.117, Q30.153, Q30.195, Q30.225, Q30.298, Q30.338
- Some teachers felt they needed assistance with seeing the exemplar being used in a classroom situation as a modelled approach before they could use it with students FT3.114b

#### Clarity and confirmation of levels allocation

- A range (perhaps 3) examples of students’ work – upper, middle, lower examples Q50.34, Q50.38, Q50.40, Q50.42, Q50.44, Q50.55, Q50.95, Q50.202, Q50.220, Q50.307
- Progression: links to (expectations of) levels above and below, same activity shown at different levels Q50.182, Q50.252, Q50.288, Q50.292, Q50.297
- Where is the exemplar in that level – top, middle, bottom? Q50.36, Q50.72, Q50.229, Q50.328
- Clearer indication of the level of individual exemplars Q50.26
- Would like to see a clear indication of progressions at least from level 1-4 Q50.33
- Next level up – L5 to see where next step fits Q50.91
- Checklist of what constitutes a level (as in Gaye Byer’s level indicators) Q50.342
- Distracted by presentation and standard of written work rather than levels of scientific concepts FT3.081
- Teachers need help to understand how to use exemplars when comparing achievement levels. The ‘best fit’ concept needs to be clearly explained. FT3.098

## **Appendix Two      Assessment Issues**

### Gaining of assessment ideas

- Student/goal-setting guidelines/ideas/ Q30.125, Q30.171, Q30.173, Q30.196, Q30.200, Q30.279, Q30.280, Q30.303
- Assessment strategies/examples Q30.075, Q30.116, Q30.132, Q30.210, Q30.223
- Practice at analyzing results Q30.309
- Introductory facilitating of school-wide use of exemplars for assessment Q30.315
- School-wide uniform exemplars Q30.335
- More support in analyzing the exemplars and setting goals with students Q30.073
- More assessment examples Q50.152, Q50.261, Q50.290
- More detail on how to record (results) Q50.337, Q50.344
- Clear expectations (measurable) to be reached at end of each level 6, Q50.126
- New ideas on assessment introduced. FT4.004, FT4.038, FT4.046, FT4.153, FT4.160, FT4.165, FT4.171
- Gave us some expectations of what children could perform like Q19.152, Q19.355
- Facilitation helped explanation of assessment criteria Q29.226, Q29.273
- Facilitation clarified process related to exemplar assessment Q29.233
- Facilitation encouraged discussion of what other teachers found – looking at results across the levels/benchmark Q29.169, Q29.201, Q29.209
- Facilitation encouraged debate about assessment in general Q29.141, Q29.327
- Facilitation enabled us to work with other staff to assess what level a piece of writing was at Q29.112
- Facilitation provided us with ideas for assessment Q29.048
- Confirmed we were on the right track with our school benchmarking Q29.288, Q29.298
- It gave me ideas on what to assess. Q48.042, Q48.130, Q48.061, Q48.074, Q48.165, Q48.243
- Gave me an idea of what to get students to record for assessment purposes. Q48.328

### Self-assessment

- Students found it helpful seeing other children's work. " I didn't have to figure it out myself". – Student FT4.149, FT4.150, FT4.151, FT4.155, FT4.157, FT4.158, FT4.159, FT4.161, FT4.163, FT4.164\*, FT4.202
- Students involved in goal setting FT 4.014, FT4.014, FT4.092, FT4.099b, FT4.103e, FT4.114b, FT4.127, FT4.129, FT4.130, FT4.146
- CD Rom could be used as a model for student expectations/ establishing criteria. Q25.154, Q25.165, Q25.228, Q25.265
- Children could view it to assess their own performance. Q25.083, Q25.108
- Showing students – goal setting – Inspirations, Expectations Q25.046, Q25.058

- As a teaching and assessment resource. Q25.333, Q25.339
- To help teacher and pupils assess achievement. Q25.315

#### Formative assessment

- Stimulating discussion between teacher/teacher and teacher/students. FT4.067, FT4.075, FT4.078, FT4.087, FT4.196, FT4.197
- Teachers are beginning to identify ways of moving children forward. FT4.037\*, FT4.071, FT4.171, FT4.179
- Share with parents. FT4.078, FT4.112, FT4.131, FT4.142, FT4.165
- Learned a lot – need to use skilled questioning with students. FT4.018b, FT4.021b FT4.018b, FT4.021b
- Increase interactions between teachers and students – more specific feedback FT4.019\*, FT.021b, FT4.143, FT4.148, FT4.149\*
- Involving students in goal setting and responding to children’s samples in the exemplars FT3.012, FT3.014
- Using exemplars formatively FT3.014\*, FT3.030, FT3.078, FT3.082, FT3.084, FT3.108
- Helping kids know at beginning of unit the criteria/expectations FT3.180
- Seeing what the children had achieved/ where they are at. Q48.010, Q48.014, Q48.035, Q48.044, Q48.235, Q48.273, Q48.317

#### Moderation

- Validate teaching process and importance of moderation. FT4.027, FT4.117, FT4.155, FT4.202
- Moderation – an important exercise Q29.027
- Guiding consistency in judging children’s work. Q48.035

#### Support needed in practical implementation

- Benchmark/reference points Q50.6, Q50.145
- Checklists for help in leveling child’s progress Q50.300
- Ways to self-evaluate Q50.125
- Observational assessment comments by teacher Q50.143
- Pretest/mastery test ideas Q50.303
- Involving students in goal setting and responding to children’s samples in the exemplars FT3.012, FT3.014
- Where to take the work from here FT3.013 (formative assessment)
- Reluctant to share outcomes with pupils and involve pupils in own goal setting. Thought this would be too much for pupils and it was better that they identified the goal for each pupil to work on. FT3.024
- Unsure of how to use exemplars with pupils, especially when school has no portfolio system or an emphasis on pupil’s goal setting. FT3.026
- Going the next step and using their own children’s work to exemplify learning steps FT3.037
- Setting expectations and purpose with children FT3.075
- Reluctant to share outcomes with pupils and involve pupils in own goal setting. Thought this would be too much for pupils and it was better that they identified the goal for each pupil to work on. FT3.024

- Unsure of how to use exemplars with pupils, especially when school has no portfolio system or an emphasis on pupil's goal setting. FT3.026
- How to assess class work against exemplars as the criteria are not clear enough for this FT3.179, FT3.180
- Support in the annotating process. A matrix in science would be helpful but the guidance offered by the processes, which the exemplar made transparent, was acknowledged as helpful. FT3.041
- I suggested they use the material gathered to make an exemplar folio of their own. FT3.042
- Moderation within syndicates and across levels FT3.050
- Getting around each child for their feedback FT3.051
- Some teachers only saw exemplars as assessment tool – hadn't thought about using them with students to goal set before learning experiences. They were excited to see the possibilities when discussed with them. FT3.112
- To understand the background to the exemplars and to distinguish them from other NCEA and NZQA initiatives (did not know about assessment strategy). Need assistance with 'big picture' understanding of how tools can be integrated into assessment practice in classrooms and across the secondary school. FT3.115b
- On how they might use exemplars as an assessment tool – they wanted to use them as a lesson plan FT3.189
- Most saw exemplar as a test activity and wanted to know what the unit plan looked like so they could replicate it. One teacher wanted more information about the unit and even thought it would be good to supply a kit with the necessary resources in order to replicate the assessment activities. Facilitator had to repeat what an exemplar is and its purposes. FT3.204
- It seemed that they would use the English exemplar as a formative tool, even include children in its use, but treated the maths exemplars as a test (rather than a descriptor of children's achievement. FT3.196
- More explanation for schools who are not used to specific goal-setting and diagnostic teaching Q10.078
- How to use for self evaluation (children) Q10.125
- Needed more help with self-assessment/goal-setting guidelines/ideas Q30.125, Q30.171, Q30.173, Q30.196, Q30.200, Q30.279, Q30.280, Q30.303
- Need more assessment strategies/examples Q30.075, Q30.116, Q30.132, Q30.210, Q30.223
- Practice at analyzing results Q30.309
- Indicators criteria/ guideline for assessment. Q48.017, Q48.027, Q48.034, Q48.121, Q48.136, Q48.154, Q48.353, Q48.355
- Not practical assessment with 28 children. Q49.085
- Time- how do you accurately assess 30 children during a maths lesson? Other children observe what is happening etc. unless you have release? This is a major hurdle in these assessments. Q49.084
- Amount of assessing, recording to do. Q49.335
- Not clear how to use as an assessment tool. Q49.236, Q49.296, Q49.327