ICT Advisory Committee meeting minutes for regional distribution

Date: Thursday 23 April 2026
Location: PPTA National Office, 9.00am to 3.30pm

Day of AI | New Zealand / Aotearoa - Susana Tomaz

Susana works at the intersection of artificial intelligence, curriculum design, and future-focused education and is the Day of AI Aotearoa | NZ Programme Lead and Director of Futures and AI Strategy at Westlake Girls' High School. Susana provided background information and an update on the Day of AI initiative.

Day of AI started as an MIT initiative in the USA. The initiative targets Years 5-10, and an important part for NZ schools has been its localisation (with TENZ input), and it is aligned to the curriculum. The 2025 Pilot results were independently assessed by NZCER. What did we learn?

- Student confidence uplift - from 50% to 82% at secondary.
- Stronger recognition of bias, mistakes and risk.
- "You can't put that into AI – it's personal data" - Year 8 student.
- Disproportionate impact on those who need it the most.
- Teachers are also more confident, better equipped.
- Cultural grounding and relevance, data sovereignty explored.

In 2026, the initiative launched nationwide on 9th March. Day of AI starts with a whole ecosystem approach and has two parts: education with AI; education about AI (strengthening learning, mastery, and cognitive agency. Four concepts are covered:

- What is AI?
- How do machines learn?
- How do people use machines to create things?
- Ethics and the responsible use of AI

The student challenge is using AI to tackle the challenge of Predator-Free Aotearoa NZ by 2050 and teaching materials can be found on the dayofainewzealand.com website.

The use of AI in our classrooms needs thought. Cognitive outsourcing is a serious risk. Other countries have frameworks for AI; we don't. This programme is assessed, scalable and free.

GenAI in classrooms (Shane Fairhall)

Shane led a discussion about the limited direction from the Ministry of Education on the risks and benefits of GenAI to learning. There are concerns with the adoption of GenAI in classrooms without a real understanding of its potential impacts on learning. There's a report linked here, an early study that shows potential harm may outweigh benefits (the summary report is only 7 pages) - https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-new-direction-for-students-in-an-ai-world-prosper-prepare-protect/

NZQA discussion – Digital First, update qualifications and AI work (Amanda Picken)

Digital by exception – NZQA is developing policy, needs to engage with the sector – PPTA voice through SQAG, survey to schools – pulse check, leading national assessment seminars, extensive consultation. Good feedback to inform next steps. NZQA does not have a firm policy straight away for this year, recommending that go digital by exception, guidelines, mixed feedback from sector – ready/ not ready reluctant teachers, diverse responses, wanting to set direction, but not mandatory for this year.

Some stats

- 93% of schools are well-prepared for digital exams (from 82%). For Digital by design, the level of confidence is mixed – 65% ready, subject/ teacher reluctance.
- Maths, some sciences, Geography, some not able to be done by digital means.
- 2025 – 72% of all students took at least one end-of-year assessment digitally, 76% at Level 1, but growth in other levels - 54 to 70% L2 and 53 to 75% L3.

Other issues –

- The exception criteria are about what is best for the student. It is a struggle when the teacher decides for the student.
- Range of concerns raised – device access and availability, connectivity (N4L around that), platform resiliency, subject-specific usability, digital fluency of students, teacher readiness, SAC.
- Platform resiliency – looking at vendors, local (large scale unworkable being able to deal with offline), Screen recording pilot – better monitoring of student behaviour (in background), one of the tools shown to NZQA is a browser to do this.
- Schools need to have free, secure areas to place internal assessments. NZQA is looking at alternative ways to provide a secure site. This is slow-moving work.

AI proof of marking - NZQA employs a data science team (AI specialists), and they are looking at how NZQA can use AI in its work: co-requisite marking speed improved, 36% still involves human marking. NZQA is aiming for this % going forward. NZQA does want to keep that level up, and needs stakeholder trust in the marking.

- More proof-of-concept work happening;
- Moderation and AI – want it to do better than humans do, train the machine to provide more in-depth, granular feedback for the assessor, so it is more useful.

MOE Updates - Qualifications and MOE Digital work (Henry Collette and Vaughan Couillault)

Qualifications update – curriculum should drive assessment, work in Y0-8, Phase 1-4 finishes Friday, targeted engagements with peak bodies, Subject Associations working in this space.

- MOE is assimilating feedback. Health and PE work has started due to feedback, getting ahead of things where they can.
- Phase 5 feedback split into 3 tranches – 26 subjects live in May.
- There is currently trading of content, e.g., what could be done Industry-led, resources, for clarity - a good place to look is Tāhurangi, or you can email.
- Tranche 2 – imminent, number of papers to the Minister for consideration, decisions then from the Cabinet paper (early May).
- Already in public – grades (A-E) will be used, not marks out of 100, work with TAG and PAG continues, Curriculum Senior Assessment group looking at overall umbrella?

CAAs and transitional arrangements
Foundational award – not yet known if it is a corequisite, or how it will be assessed, within NZQA/ SMART; however, yet to be decided. Qualification cliff? A 1-year transition arrangement may be needed.

- Current Y9s – intent is not to sit both quals. Nationally, 4% get CAAs in Y9, could choose not to get them to do it if you think they will be unsuccessful.
- Want students to experience one qualification, not mix. Year 9 will be unable to access NCEA. Year 10 last cohort to experience NCEA.
- The aim is not to disadvantage students.
- CAAs set at OECD functional and Foundational will be set at the curriculum level.
- Likely to need to be transitional stuff, peak body advice, etc. Don't want to disadvantage a cohort due to their year.

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Henry GenAI – Design assessment with GenAI

The MOE advises schools to talk about using GenAI and have clarity about when to use it or not. The policy must have something on GenAI and when/ when not.
Risk and benefits need to be understood, opportunities, recent research – cognitive offloading, positive offloading and negative offloading, when it should be hard and made easy (by GenAI). MIT research showing AI use is not good for learning. Every use of Gen AI in class should be useful. Pedagogy does need clear guidance

PLD – Angela Roberts (Co-ordinator Pūtea Whakawhanake Pouako | PPTA Learning and Development Centre gave an overview of what was delivered by the PLD fund 2023-2025 - Subject Association Grants: Micro-credentials: National Leadership Summit: Provisionally Certificated Teachers' Conference
The current contract has $3.44m, with the work to be delivered by December 2027. Current projects are - Subject Association Grants, PCT Conference (13-14 July Ōtautahi Christchurch) and micro-credentials.

Classifications Office - Kate Whittaker - Senior Advisor at the Office of Film and Literature Classification gave an overview of the work of the Classification Office:

- 26 staff in the Classifications Office (CO). Forensics mahi/ films, series, streaming service and games/ research, education and outreach;
- 1993 legislation guides the work – objectionable material – sex, violence, horror, crime, cruelty – has to be injurious to the public good. These ideas evolve, e.g., Life of Brian reclassified from R18, the CO is ideologically agnostic;
- Kate can offer workshops to schools and communities on Rangatahi and Content Harm.