

Position Description

Position Title:	Team Leader, Communications
Business Unit:	Office of the Chief Executive
Grade:	M2
Last Review Date:	January 2018

Overview – NZQA’s Role

NZQA ensures that New Zealand qualifications are valued as credible and robust both nationally and internationally.

We are accountable for managing the New Zealand Qualifications Framework, administering the secondary school assessment system, independent quality assurance of non-university education providers, qualifications recognition and standard setting for some specified unit standards.

We have a significant “Future State” programme of work which addresses the impact of services we deliver from being in a global digital and connected world. The banner associated with this work is “Qualify for the Future World: Kia noho takatū kit ō amua ao.

More information can be found on our website at www.nzqa.govt.nz.

Business Unit Overview

The Office of the Chief Executive exists to manage Administrative Support Services to the Chief Executive and Board Chair. The Office provides Ministerial Services, Communications, and Board Services, ensuring these functions are aligned and agreed outcomes are achieved and delivered in a proactive, cohesive, integrated manner and are tightly focussed on NZQA’s key strategic objectives.

The Communications Unit is responsible for production and approval of external and internal communications on behalf of NZQA. This includes:

- Interaction with news media
- Preparation of communication strategies and plans
- Identifying and managing communications risks
- Production of communications material about NZQA and its activities
- Internal communications
- Implementing NZQA’s social media plan
- Providing communications advice and support to NZQA business units
- Contributing to the organisation’s business continuity planning and incident management
- Providing Chief Executive and Ministerial services including parliamentary questions, select committee requests and Official Information Act requests.

Purpose of Position

The Team Leader, Communications is responsible for overseeing all activities of the Communications Team and the Chief Executive and Ministerial Services team, to ensure correct processes are followed and exceptional service is provided to NZQA's divisions and external stakeholders.

The Team Leader, Communications is a key expert contributor to Strategic Management Team meetings, provides advice to the Chief Executive, leads the development of NZQA's overall communications strategy and, along with other members of the Team, identifies reputational risks and opportunity. The Team Leader is also required to provide advice on issues regarding NZQA's programme of work and any education issues that are currently concerning the media.

The Team Leader, Communications has oversight of all of NZQA's interaction with the news media. The Team Leader is the key point of contact for all media inquiries, supported by the Senior Communications Advisor, and will either draft the final response or delegate that task to a member of the Communications Team. The Team Leader is responsible for ensuring sign-off processes are followed before media responses are released. The Team Leader also manages media conferences and requests for interviews, supported by the Senior Communications Advisor as needed. The Team Leader is also responsible for proactive communications with stakeholders regarding the Future State portfolio of work, through the work of the Senior Communications Advisor, (Future State).

As a key member of NZQA's Editorial Board, the Team Leader has a quality assurance role regarding written and presentation material produced throughout the organisation.

The Communications team requires a sound understanding of the diverse backgrounds of NZQA clients and NZQA's commitment to both our Māori strategy and our Pasifika strategy.

All team members are expected to work collaboratively to meet the operational needs of the work programme, particularly at peak times, and to ensure back-up cover is available for all roles – including as part of NZQA's incident management response processes and business continuity planning.

Working Relationships

Responsible to: Chief Executive

Responsible for:

- Senior Communications Advisor
- Communications & Publications Advisor
- Senior Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Advisor (Future State)
- Senior Advisor Chief Executive & Ministerial Services

Functional relationships:

Internal:

- Chief Executive
- SMT as a collective
- Deputy Chief Executives (5)
- Board Secretary/EA to the CE
- Staff and Managers in all business units

External:

- Ministers' offices and their media staff
- Education agencies and their media staff
- The news media and especially education reporters

Key Accountabilities

Corporate Communications

- Provide advice on development of appropriate communication and media strategies or plans, and how these should be implemented as part of NZQA's wider strategies and risk management.
- Maintain oversight of all NZQA's interaction with the news media and provide advice on media management.
- Provide advice to project sponsors for the work streams of the Future State portfolio of work and ensure the total programme is well understood and positioned.
- Contribute to the deliberations of the Strategic Management Team on issues management, reputational risk, and promotional opportunities.
- Provide media advice and assistance to NZQA business units as required and assist with other communications projects, as necessary.
- Lead the Editorial Board in quality assuring written and presentation material developed throughout NZQA for print and online channels.
- Contribute to the ongoing improvement of NZQA's website and other stakeholder engagement activities.

Media Management

- Act as a first point of contact for media inquiries and interview requests; develop and implementing responses in accordance with NZQA sign-off procedures.
- With the Senior Communications Advisor, develop and maintain a close relationship with education reporters and others in the media who have an impact on NZQA.
- Draft and issue media statements, in accordance with sign-off procedure.
- Manage interviews between NZQA spokespeople and reporters and/or media conferences.
- Draft and implement media plans where required.
- Monitor media coverage of NZQA and identify opportunities to gain positive media coverage for NZQA or act in response to inaccurate or uninformed reporting.

Ministerial Services

Provide leadership to and oversight of the Senior Advisor Chief Executive and Ministerial Services, responsible for the provision of monitoring, quality assurance and co-ordination of responses to:

- Ministerials
- Parliamentary Questions
- Submissions
- Official Information requests
- Select Committee requests
- NZQA comment and advice.

Team Leadership and Performance

- Work with the Board Secretary/EA to the CE to create a team environment in the Office of the Chief Executive that fosters and develops effective working relationships and opportunities for high performance.
- Monitor and review team systems to provide effective and efficient services.

- Report to the Chief Executive, against delegated areas of responsibility in the business and operational plan.
- Report on anticipated problems and areas of risk and prepare strategies to solve them.
- Lead, coach and motivate the team to achieve business unit deliverables and NZQA goals.
- Allocate activities and monitor the performance and workload of team members.
- Ensure that the team works collaboratively, in an integrated manner, with other teams and business units within NZQA, and that team members demonstrate NZQA's values in all their interactions with internal and external stakeholders.
- Co-ordinate appropriate professional development opportunities for team members.
- Ensure a customer centric service focus in team operations consistent with the NZQA customer charter.
- Lead the team's contribution to the achievement of NZQA's policies and strategies including the Future State programme.

Financial and Audit Reporting

- Manage the Communications Unit budget, including budgeting, forecasting and monthly financial reporting.
- Meet audit reporting requirements, including monthly and quarterly reporting against the Statement of Performance Expectations.

Relationship Management

- Develop effective working relationships with NZQA business unit managers to ensure a thorough understanding of business needs and how the Communications Team can support these, and to transfer communications knowledge and learning.
- Contribute and collaborate as a team member to achieve common goals and objectives.
- Develop and maintain an appropriate network of contacts both in NZQA and with other Communications leaders in the government / education sector.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with key staff in Ministers' offices.

NZQA Priorities

The following areas are priorities for NZQA. Support and guidance will be provided to ensure these priorities are able to be met by all staff.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

- Ensuring that all work is carried out in a safe and responsible manner that does not compromise the health and safety of self or others in the workplace.
- Complying with policies, procedures and directives issued by NZQA on health and safety matters.

Privacy & Security

- Acting in accordance with privacy and security policies and procedures.
- Maintaining the strictest confidentiality when dealing with any personal or sensitive information.
- Ensuring documents containing personal information are always kept secure.

- Maintaining a 'clear desk' in accordance with policy.

Knowledge / Records Management

- Working collaboratively and creating a learning environment by ensuring all business documents and information are made accessible for staff to use
- Ensuring that all business records, created and received, are maintained and disposed of according to the requirements of the NZQA information and records management policy, guides and processes.

Person Specification

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Essential:

- Proven strategic communications experience.
- Extensive experience as a media advisor and/or in issues management. Previous journalism / media liaison experience to a senior level.
- Substantial skills, knowledge and experience in all aspects of media and issues management.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- An understanding of and commitment to, the Treaty of Waitangi, and sensitivity to equity issues.
- Self-motivation, decisiveness, flexibility and the ability to work independently and to take the initiative in high-profile, high-risk situations.
- Sound judgement, particularly with regard to public and political issues impacting on NZQA, and risk management.
- Ability to write and edit to high standard.
- The capacity to establish and meet short and long-term deadlines.
- The ability to analyse technical and complex information under pressure.

Desirable:

- Experience in management of a team.
- Understanding of NZQA's business and the ability to contribute to its communications strategies.
- Understanding of the New Zealand political environment and previous experience working with Ministers' offices.

Qualifications

Desirable:

A qualification at level 7 of the NZ Qualifications Framework preferably in journalism, communications and / or public relations or equivalent experience.

Development Competencies

NZQA has the following Management and Leadership Competencies for the purpose of development planning:

Client responsiveness - Honouring NZQA's commitments to all external and internal clients by providing helpful, courteous, accessible, responsive and knowledgeable service.

Leading and developing people and teams – Understanding people and teams and creating a culture where they can be the best they can.

Self awareness – Understanding own strengths and weaknesses, being open to feedback, and acting with honesty and integrity.

Technical expertise – Technical specialist knowledge that enables high quality results.

Intellectual drive – Applying experience, wisdom and judgement to think through problems or issues that involve varied levels of complexity, ambiguity and risk to achieve the most appropriate outcomes.

Getting required results – Managing people and other resources consistent with NZQA's values, corporate policies and delegations to achieve the required results.

Influencing for outcomes – Building quality relationships and alliance to advance the objectives of NZQA.

Leading and enabling change – Identifying opportunities for improvement, leading change and engaging others to make their transition.

Job Description Scope of Duties

The job holder is expected to perform such other duties as can reasonably be regarded as incidental to the job description, and such other duties reasonably within their experience and capabilities as may be from time to time assigned following consultation.