

28 April 2017

## New Zealand Qualifications Authority

By email - [uereview@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:uereview@nzqa.govt.nz)

### Feedback on the Discussion Document - University Entrance Review 2016-2017

Dear sir/madam,

Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the University Entrance Review 2016-2017.

#### Introduction

1. TIA is the peak body for the tourism industry in New Zealand. With over 1,500 members, TIA represents a range of tourism-related activities including hospitality, accommodation, adventure and other activities, attractions and retail, airports and airlines, as well as related tourism services.
2. The primary role of TIA is to be the voice of the tourism industry. This includes working for members on advocacy, policy, communication, events, membership and business capability. The team is based in Wellington and is led by Chief Executive, Chris Roberts.
3. Tourism is one of New Zealand's biggest export industries, earning \$14.5 billion or 20.7% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2016).
4. The tourism industry directly and indirectly supports 13.2% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand. That means 332,322 people are working in the visitor economy.

#### Tourism & University Entrance

5. In 2015, TIA undertook a review of people and skills issues in the tourism industry. The subsequent report, [People & Skills 2025](#), resulted in a strategic framework for identifying the main influences on people and skill needs. It also established a set of actions to respond to the issues. One of these actions is seeking policy changes where necessary. Tourism becoming an approved subject for University Entrance (UE) was seen as a priority area for policy review at the time.
6. This prompted our early engagement in February 2016 with NZQA on the UE review process. We met with NZQA on the matter and maintained contact via email and phone calls during the year.

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Strategic Partners  
supporting TIA and the  
tourism industry



7. There are a number of drivers from TIA's perspective in having tourism acknowledged as an approved UE subject:
  - i) TIA often receives feedback that school students are deterred from taking tourism subjects at school because the associated credits do not contribute to their UE. Courses that provide only unit standards as opposed to achievement standards are commonly perceived by parents, students and some teachers as being only for the less academically capable.
  - ii) The industry requires bright, university-qualified people. There are many roles in the industry linked to higher skill levels of Australian & NZ Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). Employers in the industry look for university-educated staff in a number of roles including management, sales and marketing, reservations, events and conferencing.
  - iii) Because tourism is not an approved UE subject, it adds to the myth that a career in tourism is not an attractive option. The opposite is true and there are many career paths and opportunities in the tourism industry.
8. We acknowledge that school students can still enter University and undertake tourism-related programmes without undertaking tourism subjects at school. For example, Victoria University in its Bachelor of Tourism Management advise a range of 'useful secondary school subjects' to support entry into their programme including Economics, Statistics, Geography, English and Accounting.
9. However, the perverse situation currently is that someone intending to study tourism at University may be best to not take tourism at school, to ensure they get enough UE credits in other subjects.
10. We believe that having a set of achievement standards in tourism that contribute to UE, will be a significant enabler in raising the profile and perception of opportunities in the tourism industry.

### **Discussion Document**

11. In regards to section 6.6.2, we agree that a regular review process for the approved subjects list should be instigated. Every three years seems a reasonable timeframe for the review periods.
12. In the case of tourism to be considered as an UE subject, we acknowledge there is a significant piece of work yet to be done in developing a set of achievement standards at the appropriate NCEA Levels. This would require coordination and leadership by the relevant sectors.
13. It would be important that NZQA works with stakeholders to develop criteria for subjects becoming UE approved. We are not aware if any criteria currently exist for this purpose. Industry/employer requirements and feedback should be included in these criteria.

14. We were surprised to see an overall lack of engagement with industry sectors on this review work. The External Advisory Group consists of representatives solely from the education sector, though we acknowledge there was some engagement with Business NZ outside of the External Advisory Group. In our view, it is unusual for a government agency to have such a narrow view of its stakeholders. Many industries, including tourism, value UE qualified graduates. It seems an opportunity to strengthen engagement with industry has been lost and it reflects poorly on NZQA's stakeholder engagement processes.
15. TIA wishes to participate further in any follow-up process, including any formal meetings, to ensure that the potential impacts on the tourism industry are adequately represented.

Any enquiries relating to this paper should in the first instance be referred to Steve Hanrahan, TIA Advocacy Manager at [steve.hanrahan@tia.org.nz](mailto:steve.hanrahan@tia.org.nz) or by phone on 027 912 2624.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. m. Hanrahan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Steve Hanrahan, Advocacy Manager  
Tourism Industry Aotearoa**

