**NZQA MEDIA STATEMENT – EMBARGOED UNTIL 10AM WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH,**

***NZQA welcomes findings of independent review***

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) has welcomed the findings and the recommendations made by an independent review panel set up to look into an error in one examination paper and discrepancies in four other papers last year.

‘The panel’s findings have given us a clear and objective view of the causes of the error. We are moving ahead to implement these recommendations to ensure they are fully embedded in our quality assurance processes ahead of the next examination round,’ said Deputy Chief Executive Kristine Kilkelly.

NZQA commissioned the review in November after an error was identified in one part of a question in the Level 3 Statistics achievement standard, 91585, and concerns were raised about discrepancies in four other external Mathematics and Statistics standards. NZQA prepares between 600 and 700 examination materials each year, including examination papers, resource booklets, formula sheets and audio files.

Ms Kilkelly acknowledged the stress and confusion the error in the Level 3 Statistics achievement standard could have caused the students who sat the examination.

‘We apologise for that and assure students, teachers and schools that we will work hard to prevent such an error from happening again.’

After NZQA became aware of the error in question 3(b) in the Level 3 Statistics achievement standard, markers were issued with new instructions for marking the standard to take account of the error.

‘NZQA’s overriding concern is for the interests of students. As soon as the problems with the Level 3 Statistics examination was detected, we put processes in place to minimise any potential disadvantage to students.

‘NZQA is committed to ensuring the quality of our examination processes. We’re very grateful to the review panel for the work it has done, and we will be implementing the panel’s recommendations immediately as part of our work for the 2017 examinations.’

Achievement results for the Level 3 Statistics achievement standard were consistent with those of previous years, indicating that the error did not impact on student achievement. The distribution of candidates across the possible grades – Not Achieved, Achieved, Merit and Excellence – for the Level 3 Statistics achievement standard was similar to recent years, with a slight increase in the rate of Excellence grades in this standard.

**ENDS**

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