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THE FUTURE OF ART HISTORY

NZAHTA MEETING : 15 FEBRUARY 2017

BARBARA ORMOND

ASPECTS TO CONSIDER

- **How can Art History in schools can be improved? – what would make the subject a more viable and attractive choice for students?**
- **How can Art History in schools be promoted?**

CONTEXT

- 1. Student numbers**
- 2. Pressure on students to do STEM and 'future proofed' employment subjects**
- 3. Credit hunting**
- 4. Pressure on teachers to teach almost exclusively to meet requirements of NCEA**

STUDENT NUMBERS

- Perception of decline – certainly hard to retain Level 2 classes in many schools

| Standard | 2012 | 2015 |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Level 2 2.1 External | 997 | 321 |
| 2.5 Internal | 817 | 493 |
| Level 3 3.1 External | 998 | 1005 |
| Context Standard External | 998 | 650 |
| Media Standard Internal | 999 | 1201 |

STEM

- **Worldwide decline in numbers of students doing arts subjects at tertiary level and governments focus funding on STEM subjects.**
- **How can we mitigate the effects of the preference for subjects which are perceived to more directly lead to jobs?**

CREDIT HUNTING

- **To what extent are students selecting other subjects because credits are viewed as easier to acquire in some other subjects?**
 - **Knowing the answer to this may enable us to consider changes to the way the subject is assessed or the way it is presented.**

THE FOCUS ON ASSESSMENT

- **The high accountability for grades appears to have led to an almost exclusive focus on aspects which are assessed - ‘*Assessment as Learning*’**
 - Has this impacted on the appeal of the subject?
 - Is the focus on a single area of study for external assessment (and the expectation of detailed knowledge) a factor which has reduced student selection and engagement in the subject?
 - What could alleviate these effects?

THE ASSOCIATION AND OUR VOICE

- Number of members has an almost direct correlation with the number of schools offering Art History.
- The number of students taking Art History also may have some impact on the strength of our voice in matters of consultation with the Ministry and NZQA.
- This is a critical time – we have the opportunity to make changes. Some changes in examiners, a new national moderator and a NAF who appears willing to listen.

MY VIEWS

- Retain some level of prescription (art history guidelines)
- Provide more flexibility in the application of those guidelines e.g. the opportunity to address more than one area of study but not do every artist, style and medium that is listed
- Retain plate questions (to avoid pre-preparation of answers)
- More attention given to equity across the areas of study in examinations

DISCUSSION

- 1. What direction should the subject take? What changes would you like to see?**
- 2. How can Art History in schools be promoted? How can numbers be improved?**