

**Religious Studies Achievement Standards  
in New Zealand state secondary schools:  
philosophy, pedagogy and policy.**

**By  
John Chote**

A thesis submitted to Victoria University of Wellington in  
fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS in RELIGIOUS STUDIES 591

**Victoria University of Wellington**

**2018**



## Contents

### **Religious Studies Achievement Standards in New Zealand state secondary schools: philosophy, pedagogy and policy.**

Acknowledgements.....	3
Abstract.....	4
Abbreviations and Figures.....	5
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter 1.</b>	
Rationale, methodology and theory - NCEA RS AS state participation statistics introduced, research rationale and methodology outlined, questionnaire and interview questions explained, and RS teaching theory discussed.....	11
<b>Chapter 2.</b>	
History - relevant legislative, curricular and societal historical background in NZ outlined, with NCEA and RS ASs explained.....	23
<b>Chapter 3.</b>	
Field work – data on state schools’ use of RS ASs presented and analysed.....	43
<b>Chapter 4.</b>	
Comparisons – data on NZ faith schools’ use of RS ASs presented and analysed against state use with three comparison countries introduced and discussed .....	78
<b>Chapter 5.</b>	
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>103</b>
Appendix - Questionnaire, Interview, Grids .....	115
Bibliography.....	118

## **Acknowledgements**

I thank my supervisor Paul Morris for his insight, clarity, honesty and patience, and the many hours of discussion we have had, sharing stories about religion and life.

I thank all the teachers who took part in my research, giving generously of their time filling out the Questionnaires and taking part in the Interviews. You all inspired me with your passion for teaching, excitement in using the RS ASs and honesty about issues that have an impact on your teaching.

I have many people to thank from the education sector, who gave generously of their time. Thanks to Bronwyn Wood from Victoria University Education Department for discussions about the thesis as it related to the current NCEA context. Catholic educators and leaders, Patrick Lynch, Gary Finlay, Susan Apathy, Lyn Smith, Kevin Wanden, Philomena Clare and Colin MacLeod, thank you for your insights into different parts of the history of RS development and current practice. Thanks also to Jocelyn Armstrong of RDC, Peter Lineham for readings and encouragement, Veronica Young from NZQA and Jack Boyle from PPTA.

Thank you to my colleagues at Sacred Heart College and Victoria University for your support and input. All the feedback helped with my clarity of argument. Thank you to others I have not named who took an interest, listened and made valuable comments.

Thanks to Gaylene, my wife, for her unending support and belief in me.

I also acknowledge the study grant I received from TeachNZ and PPTA that gave me time off school to complete the research.

## **Abstract**

This thesis outlines and examines the factors that account for the post-2009 growth in the adoption and use of the NCEA Religious Studies Achievement Standards by state secondary school teachers in New Zealand.

My specific focus is on identifying differences in philosophy, pedagogy and policy in RS use between the state schools and: 1. other subjects, 2. NZ faith schools and 3. developments in a selection of countries and explaining the significance of these differences.

The context for this development is set out in an historical outline that draws in factors that have led up to the seeming anomaly of a set of national RS assessments appearing in 2009. This outline pulls together relevant legal, curricular and societal developments since the late Nineteenth Century, that might help explain the state schools taking up this new opportunity.

The most substantial weight of the thesis comes from the field work involving in-depth questionnaires and interviews with a census of state school teachers using the RS assessments. This provides clear patterns of difference in philosophy, pedagogy and policy in the state schools' adoption and use of the RS ASs compared to other subjects, faith schools and three comparison countries. It is the teachers' voices that are heard strongly here. This analysis was backed up with my access to extensive NZQA data files of every student entry in RS ASs in New Zealand since 2009.

The state school teachers' use of the RS assessments is then viewed against comparison schools and countries. A comparison with a cross-section selection of local New Zealand faith school teachers using the RS assessments (who also took part in the questionnaire and interview research) and a literature review of the issues and development of RS teaching in the UK, Canada and Australia, helped accentuate and explain the differences in this new development in state schools.

## Abbreviations

BIS	Bible in Schools
CEC	Churches Education Commission
NCEA	New Zealand Certificate of Educational Achievement
NAG	National Administration Guidelines
NEG	National Education Guidelines
NZC	New Zealand Curriculum
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
RS	Religious Studies
RS AS	Religious Studies Achievement Standard
RS US	Religious Studies Unit Standard
TKI	Te Kete Ipurangi
UE	University Entrance

State schools – in this thesis refers to the non-integrated state schools.

Faith schools – in this thesis refers to both state-integrated and private schools, all of which have a special character definition of a religious tradition.

## Figures

- 1 The NCEA Religious Studies Achievement Standards, 41
- 2 The Providers: the increase in the number of state schools that are entering students in the RS ASs, 44
- 3 The Students: the increase in the numbers of students being assessed by RS ASs in state schools, 44
- 4 Cohort numbers of state schools with 8 or more students sitting RS ASs, 46
- 5 State schools in census (with numbers of students entered by level), 46
- 6 State school student entries by level (all state schools), 47
- 7 Average number of ASs sat per student in state schools (all state schools), 48
- 8 The RS Standards being used in state schools by numbers of students, 49

- 9 RS topics used in state schools, 53
- 10 RS teaching “type”, 72
- 11 RS teaching “type” and decile, 73
- 12 RS teaching “type”, decile and ethnicity, 73
- 13 RS teaching “type”, decile and subject, 74
- 14 Method of RS introduction by decile and subject, 75
- 15 Reasons for RS introduction, 76
- 16 The Providers: the increase in the number of all schools entering students, 79
- 17 Students: the increase in the numbers of all students entered in RS ASs, 80
- 18 2016 students entered by State / Faith / Catholic, 82
- 19 Average RS ASs sat per student , 83
- 20 Faith schools in sample, 84
- 21 Summary of state and faith by philosophy, pedagogy and policy, 92
- 22 The Questionnaire
- 23 The Interview questions
- 24 RS ASs used with corresponding topics in state schools
- 25 Major topics taken in each standard in faith schools

*“Secondary schools should be encouraged to include objective discussion upon comparative religion in their programme of senior studies.”<sup>1</sup>*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Despite Currie’s wish, from over fifty years ago, there has never been an official inclusion of Religious Studies (RS) in the New Zealand state school secondary curriculum, not even in the latest New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) edition of 2007. There was a second-tier RS Unit Standard (US) cache introduced and used from the late 90s as part of the concession to faith schools using RS USs as a local, as opposed to national, 6<sup>th</sup> Form Certificate subject. But RS in this case was not on the national curriculum, only a part of local faith schools’ curricula. Social Science teachers following the NZC 2007 have the option of choosing the “perspectives” that they teach to, and some teachers do choose to teach religious perspectives. But this is also localised and not mandated, and will have a Social Science philosophy in its approach to understanding religion.

Over the decades there have been the occasional background educational discussions, political debates and interested groups’ recommendations on RS in state secondary schools. There has been substantial dialogue in official publications like Education Reports and the Education Gazette around cultural heritage, civic duty, growing diversity and taha wairua (spiritual development), but little about the objective study of world religions.

Until 2009, that was, with the appearance of a set of national RS Achievement Standards (ASs), equal in status to other NCEA subjects. The RS ASs were placed under the Social Science banner on the Ministry of Education’s official website, TKI, but without curriculum content to support the assessments nor backed up by a RS Position Paper, as Social Studies and other subjects have. One might ask if the appearance of the RS ASs counts as an official curriculum

---

<sup>1</sup> “Currie Report”, 1962, 687



endorsement of RS or is just an anomaly of an assessment cache. How did they come to appear at all? Whatever the answers, state schools have increased their use of the RS ASs substantially since their introduction in 2009.

This is the focus of this thesis, with the research question being, “What factors account for the post-2009 growth of RS AS use in New Zealand state secondary schools?” Looking for differences (and the significance of the differences) in RS use in the state schools’ philosophy, pedagogy and policy against other subjects, faith schools and a selection of overseas comparators, will be the subsidiary questions that substantiate this research.

I need to clarify my use of the terms philosophy, pedagogy and policy first off. While policy and philosophy would fall under pedagogy, if pedagogy was used as a comprehensive umbrella covering all teaching theory and practice, in this thesis pedagogy is used in a more focused way and has mostly to do with the course of study and its delivery. The philosophy focus is around “why” the RS ASs have been accessed and the teachers’ philosophy of RS teaching. The pedagogy focus is mostly on “what” is taught. The policy focus is on “how” schools have used their school systems and procedures to justify the introduction of RS ASs.

With these RS ASs being placed in the Social Science domain without content support, there is an unanswered question about what sort of RS is to be taught to be able to assess using RS ASs. One would assume that if you were assessing using RS ASs that you were teaching some form of RS, like objective comparative religion. There is an oddity here, in that what was introduced was only a set of assessments, without a background curriculum spot, philosophy or content, which has led to a wide range of use of the RS ASs. This is the kind of difference this thesis explores and attempts to explain in terms of the “why” (philosophy), the “what” (pedagogy) and the “how” (policy) of RS AS use in state schools.

Now into their eighth year of existence, the RS ASs have been used not only mostly by faith schools (state-integrated and private) but also by (non-integrated) state schools. The thought of researching the way a small group of state school teachers have introduced and used the RS ASs in state schools spiked my interest and gave me a focus: to find hard data to be able to describe and explain this development, to attempt to characterise the state school approach in terms of their philosophy, pedagogy and policy.

This project has coincided with developments in my own RS teaching experiences. I returned from teaching RS in a multi-religious international school in India excited to do the same in New Zealand. My best opportunity at first was in the Catholic sector in New Zealand, who were teaching to the RS USs, backed up by *Understanding Faith*, the Catholic schools' RS curriculum.

In a Catholic school there is an established curriculum, with extensive resourcing, and the RS ASs were easily adapted to fit this. It fitted perfectly with the special character of faith schools. It was only a few years into the RS AS roll out that I became aware of the state schools' use of RS ASs and became fascinated by what appeared to be an anomaly of a development. The use of RS ASs in the state secondary school sector looked like a take-up with real differences.

### **The structure of the thesis**

In chapter one I have laid out what first interested me in this project, and briefly introduced the initial evidence that gave me the grounds to pursue the project as a thesis. I have then outlined my rationale and methodology, and given an overview of the purpose and focus of the Questionnaire and Interview. Finally, I open up a discussion around RS teaching theory with questions like, "who gets to decide what is religious?"

In chapter two I have drawn together relevant historical developments, focusing on legislative, curricular and societal issues that may have had an influence on the eventual roll out of the RS ASs. In this history there are

changing lines of demarcation between competing and complementary groups who have had a stake or have wanted a stake in education. Part of this exploration of history is to look for possible reasons behind the roll out of the RS ASs in 2009, but it is also to highlight areas of debate and contention that have arisen around religion in education in New Zealand. For instance, is there a tangible secular zeitgeist operating in state secondary schools? Finally, I have introduced the NCEA system itself, explained its philosophy, and introduced the actual set of RS ASs with an explanation of their wording, nature and use.

In chapter three I have laid out the most substantive fieldwork of the thesis. It is totally focused on the state school teachers and gives them the chance to describe and explain their own use of the RS ASs in their settings and in their own words. I was able to acquire rich data to support my quantitative and qualitative analysis, with a focused Questionnaire followed up by a focused but open Interview. This analysis was backed up with my access to extensive NZQA data files of every student entry in RS ASs in New Zealand since 2009. This is a new story in New Zealand's educational history with marked differences to other subjects and other contexts.

In chapter four I have introduced comparison schools and countries. The comparison schools are a cross-section selection of the local New Zealand faith schools using the RS ASs. Teachers from these schools also completed the Questionnaires and Interviews. I have then completed a literature review of some of the relevant issues and developments of RS teaching in the UK, Australia and Canada. This has really helped "place" the nature of the new developments in RS AS use in New Zealand.

In chapter five I have pulled all the research work together to show that I have substantiated my thesis. I finish with some recommendations for where further research is needed around the development and use of RS ASs in NZ.

*“Schools should teach an understanding of different religious and spiritual traditions in a manner that reflects the diversity of their national and local community.”<sup>2</sup>*

## **CHAPTER 1. Rationale, methodology and theory**

### **The germ of the idea for this thesis**

“Religious Studies is being taught and assessed in New Zealand state schools.”

“Really?!”

The Statement on Religious Diversity preceded the introduction of the NCEA RS ASs by two years. That within two years of the Statement on Religious Diversity publication, the NCEA RS assessment cache was up and running, would have pleasingly surprised the group who had contributed to it, though they would not have known about the full range of factors that had to come together to see the RS ASs introduced at all.

In this chapter I outline the beginning stages of the research, where the germ of the idea came from, the initial findings that made this thesis worthwhile, and some of my own experience relevant to the research. I then introduce the research question and subsidiary questions, define some of my terms and clarify the rationale for the thesis. Following that I describe the methodology used and introduce the focus of the questions used for my fieldwork. Finally, I open up a discussion around the theoretical framework of RS teaching, which will be essential, particularly in understanding any differences in the state school philosophy in using the RS ASs against other subjects and users.

The idea of this thesis began in mid-2014 with word of mouth indications in my RS teacher circles in state-integrated schools that there were significant numbers of state schools in New Zealand entering students in the NCEA RS ASs and that some state schools had classes with enough students to warrant a teacher able to teach to these RS ASs. If this was indeed the case, it looked like a scenario and development with significant differences to the faith school teaching of RS. That RS had never had a place in the state secondary curriculum, but now seemed to, warranted investigation.

---

<sup>2</sup> Statement on Religious Diversity, 2007, 3

The actual availability of the set of RS ASs introduced in 2009, seven years after the new NCEA assessment system was introduced, is of high significance too. Explaining how a set of RS ASs became available for assessment when there is no mention of RS in the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC), 2007, or any previous editions of it, is of real interest. It is possibly more significant that they have been introduced in state schools than if it had just been faith schools. The set of RS standards are included (Figure 1, page 40) and will be explained and referenced in the next chapter.

To establish that the word of mouth indications, that RS ASs were being used in state schools, had any substance, I first applied to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for a summary spreadsheet of all school entries and results in RS ASs from 2009 up to the latest set available then, 2014. I saw straight away that there was a considerable take up of this subject with the number of state secondary school providers of RS ASs more than doubling from 33, in 2009, to 86, in 2014, an increase of 154%. This looked even more dramatic in terms of students entered, from 44 in 2009 to 757 in 2014, an increase of 1720%. This indicated that there should be a good number of teachers to contact. Accessing the teachers who taught to the RS ASs would be a way into telling this story, I thought.

“Religious Studies is being taught and assessed in New Zealand state schools.”

“Really?!” “Yes, really! State schools are entering students in RS ASs.”

## **Research Question**

Given that there were enough students entered into RS ASs in state schools, the research focus could then be zoned in on. The research question chosen was: **What factors account for the post-2009 growth of RS AS use in New Zealand state secondary schools?**

Questions that came to mind in initial discussions that might have directed the research to finding out about the state school take up of RS ASs were: How did the teachers in these schools find out about RS ASs? What motivated them to begin using RS ASs? How did they actually manage to introduce RS ASs? What and how do they teach in RS? Can the schools’ characteristics combined with the teacher profiles and

RS delivery give an overall picture that will be able to show up any particular differences in the state schools' RS teaching?

On reflection, these questions naturally fell into three general areas of philosophy, pedagogy and policy. This looked like it would make comparison points easier to summarise when looking for differences in the state school adoption and use of RS ASs, and finally contribute to an overall understanding of the factors that accounted for the post-2009 growth of RS AS use in New Zealand state secondary schools. Indeed, how did its introduction and use take place in an assumed secular secondary environment?

## **Rationale**

After discussions with my supervisor and some searching it appeared that this development had not been researched as a thesis up to this point. There was a gap to be filled. So, part of the rationale of the research project was straightforward, that no one had studied this field and so there was no analysed data to be able to answer these questions, amongst others: What are the teachers' philosophies of RS teaching? Why have the RS ASs been accessed in state schools? What is taught? How is it taught? How did RS ASs become a part of the delivered curriculum?

This research project has given me the chance to fill a gap in the literature about this recent development which is very relevant across different fields like RS and education. The last international mention of the place of RS in NZ secondary schools was in an article by Wanden and Smith in the 2007 *International Handbook of Inter-religious Education*. This was before the introduction of the NZ RS ASs in 2009, and was an article with hopeful propositions of what kind of RS should be introduced in NZ. (Some discussion of this article comes up on page 22.) While there has been research about the public's attitude to RS teaching in primary schools, there has only been a little public debate in the press about religion in secondary schools. There needs to be solid data gathering and explanation of what is now available and being accessed by some state schools.

Reporting on and analysing the raw data provided by NZQA on the actual schools teaching RS and which RS ASs they use has been an integral part of the overall

research project. As the data provided also includes faith-based schools' use of RS ASs, comparative work of schools without a set curriculum (state) and schools with a set curriculum (faith), was an essential part of discovering and describing differences in the way the state schools have adopted and used the RS ASs. There are also established RS settings overseas that have well developed curriculum and assessment histories and concurrent educational and political debates, which were chosen to compare the New Zealand state school setting and recent developments against. The small selection of the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia was based on them being English speaking countries with a Christian heritage with a history of educational discussions around the nature of RS in their schools.

Right from the outset, what has happened in New Zealand state schools showed up clear differences in the adoption and use of RS ASs, even before analysis of the data began. RS, like most subjects, is usually taught from a set curriculum, with a given philosophy, in an established context by qualified RS teachers. But RS is not (and never has been) a subject in the New Zealand secondary school curriculum, so there is no set philosophy around its teaching, yet there is now a national assessment cache of RS ASs available to all New Zealand secondary schools.

From early contact with half a dozen teachers who used RS ASs in state schools it looked like the RS ASs had been selectively accessed as part of other subject domains. These teachers were Social Science teachers, not qualified RS teachers. This may prove to be a good example of a difference between RS and other NCEA subjects. Normally to teach a major subject it is expected that the teacher has at least 100 level papers in the subject to teach junior classes and at least 200 levels papers in the subject to teach senior classes.

The preceding three paragraphs have pointed to the areas of discussion around the use of the RS ASs in different contexts. The focus on these differences can be succinctly summarised with the subsidiary questions to the major research question.

- 1. Are there differences in the RS philosophy, pedagogy and policy in state schools compared with other NCEA subjects?**
- 2. Are there differences in the RS philosophy, pedagogy and policy between state and faith schools in NZ?**
- 3. Are there differences in the RS philosophy, pedagogy and policy in NZ compared with other countries?**

Looking for differences and the significance of the differences identified will give a strong characterisation to the state schools' use of the RS ASs. The differences alone will not tell the whole story because there will also be many common aspects to the state school teachers' use of RS ASs. But it is the differences in the mix of the whole that will delineate the state school use in terms of philosophy, pedagogy and policy.

## **Methodology**

With this being a research project into a new development in New Zealand education, as yet unanalysed, a mix of methodologies was seen to be the right choice. I thought I needed to gather data from more than one source and to analyse it in more than one way to claim I had presented a holistic and balanced picture. I was "after breadth and depth of understanding and partnerships."<sup>3</sup> A mixed methodology, with appreciable cross-germination, seemed to be the best approach as it would open up the possibility of amplification and divergence. The three main data gathering sources were the NZQA statistics of all RS ASs entries since 2009, the Questionnaire responses and the follow up Interviews with set questions. Each of these three data gathering tools have a methodology of their own in data gathering and analysis processes, but in this study also have the added amplification from the mix of methodologies used.

### **The NZQA data set**

I applied for and received a full set of results from NZQA on every secondary school's RS AS entries from 2009 to 2014, with updates over the last two years. The results were delivered with a number of requested variables like: school type (private, state, state-integrated), decile, RS ASs sat and at what level, ethnicity, pass rates and more.

---

<sup>3</sup> Johnson and Onwuebusie, 2004, 14



The methodology that I used with the NZQA data set was essentially a quantitative search for patterns that characterised the introduction of RS ASs into state schools firstly (conducted in chapter 3), and then in a comparative way against all schools (conducted in chapter four). This “quantitative” survey set out facts and numerical trends, and opened up questions to get behind the data, which then complemented the “qualitative” research of the Questionnaires and Interviews which found reasons for the changes and gave substance to the facts.

### **The Questionnaire and Interview**

These were developed to find out why and how RS ASs use was introduced into state schools and what is taught with an evaluation of its introduction and philosophy of use by teachers. There was an exploratory aspect to these data gathering tools in that the teachers got to tell their own stories in their own distinct ways. The methodology used was survey research, which came out with findings that described and interpreted aspects of the current reality from the teachers’ professional responses.<sup>4</sup> The findings do rest with the beliefs and intentions of the “actors” and accept the meanings which they attribute to the situation. Honouring each teacher’s individual story and explanation has been an important part of the process. The questions have allowed them to answer in a way that is meaningful for them. This allows the researcher to discover and understand the described reality of the teachers in a holistic way.

The specific areas that were focused on in the Questionnaires and Interviews were around philosophy, pedagogy and policy. Various questions were focused on these areas, with questions like, why and how RS was introduced, what and how RS is taught, how RS connects with the NZC, what the status of RS is and the demographic of the students taking RS. This is the most substantial research section of this thesis and required human ethics approval for the questionnaire and interview process.

---

<sup>4</sup> Davies and Hughes, 2014, 51

The Questionnaire was a combination of straightforward “quantitative” questions, both to double check what the NZQA data indicated about the school and to gather comparative facts, and “qualitative” questions that required the teachers to explain the why, what and how of RS AS introduction and use at their school.

The Interview questions were more open than the Questionnaire questions but were still designed to focus in on the why, what and how. Also conducting the Interviews after the NZQA data and the Questionnaires had been collated and analysed allowed for follow up questions to clarify the findings to date. A final part of the data analysis was the coding and running of variables across the answers to see if this could deepen the richness of the data. The questions that provided this added depth were reported on.

The Questionnaire responses and Interviews scripts of the teachers who used NCEA RS ASs were expected to qualify their underlying objectives, give characterisation to the nature of the RS delivery in their schools and provide an understanding of how RS was introduced in the first place. The gathered data was analysed in various ways, but the texts of the responses from the Questionnaires and Interviews themselves were used as stand-alone texts for analysis as well to add to the full picture.

The mixed method design strategy that seemed to fit my purpose best was Creswell’s Sequential Explanatory Method.<sup>5</sup> This approach features the collection of quantitative data followed by a collection and analysis of qualitative data. With the rich data sets of numerical and narrative data being integrated, particularly in my summaries and conclusion, I expected to gain a fuller picture. This is a perceived advantage of the mixed methodology strategy in that it tends to gain more nuance and perspective from the data.

Limitations of this mixed methodology approach, though, could potentially include: difficulty integrating the different data sets; missing patterns in the quantitative data; allowing the teachers’ stories to overshadow or twist the objective data; some bias in the researcher’s background of teaching RS in other teaching settings; key findings

---

<sup>5</sup> Plano Clark and Creswell, 2008, 178

being missed in the exploratory direction of the thesis. Being aware of strengths and weaknesses is important. To attempt to mitigate any bias from my experience of teaching RS in other settings, I focused the first round of data gathering totally on the state school data and state school teachers' voices. This was in preference to beginning with a comparative perspective which might have characterised the state school usage too narrowly. So, for the state schools the collation and analysis of the Questionnaires and Interviews is in chapter three, whereas for the comparison faith schools it is in chapter four.

For a valid comparison set from faith schools using RS ASs, the same Questionnaire and follow up Interview were used for a selection of teachers from Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Evangelical, Seventh-day Adventist and Muslim schools. The choice of these schools was made randomly with the objective of getting a similar number of respondents to the state school cohort.

Part of the comparative analysis approach I used is called "keyhole" comparison.<sup>6</sup> This has reinforced the weight of focus on the state school teachers throughout. So, in chapter two the historical perspective is a lens through which I viewed the development of RS AS use by state schools, focusing in on factors that might have been relevant to the growth of RS AS use in state schools post-2009. Likewise, in chapter four as I introduced the set of NZ faith school teachers and the overseas samples of RS development and delivery, I used them as a lens to focus on and bring out differences in the traits of the state school development and delivery.

---

<sup>6</sup> Walk, 1998

## The Questionnaire and the Interview

The design of the questions for the Questionnaire and Interview were developed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. In particular, the questions were developed to gather data that could not be gleaned just from the NZQA spreadsheets. They were designed to find out from the teachers what their objectives for introducing the RS ASs were, what pedagogical choices and delivery they chose, what policies they had to follow and the impact the use of RS ASs had had on their classes and schools.

The full Questionnaire and Interview questions are in the appendix. The questions that focused on philosophy had to do with the teachers' perception of the distinctness of RS AS use in state schools and how RS was viewed in the school and community. The questions that focused on pedagogy were around the RS ASs used and topics chosen, along with their NZC alignment understanding. The questions that focused on policy were around how the teachers introduced the RS AS and if there were any prerequisites around qualifications and experience to teach RS.

The Interview questions were more open than the Questionnaire questions so that it gave the teachers the chance to describe their thinking and practices in more depth. The objective was to bring out their story, to let each actor speak to their situation "the meanings which those actors themselves attribute to them".<sup>7</sup> The interviewees had the parameters of the Questionnaire to know what to expect and also were apprised of the findings to date from NZQA data and some of my historical findings. The interviews were conducted either in person or by Skype or telephone.

An application for Human Ethics Approval was applied for and approved, so the Questionnaires could be sent out and the Interviews set up.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Davidson and Tolich, 1999, 25

<sup>8</sup> Ethics Approval: 22852

## **Theoretical framework around RS teaching theory discussed**

I will end this chapter with a discussion around academic and teacher debates about the nature of RS teaching practice and theory. Driving questions include: who gets to decide what is religious? Does religion have an essence? From McCutcheon, who sees RS as Social Science, to Jensen, who queries categories of religion, or Smart's older phenomenological approach in his pioneering the secular study of religion, the nature and validity of the teaching RS is a contestable field.

New Zealand has its own range of voices. "Religion is far more than the worship and charity of the devotee. A person's religion is the scale of values that motivates his daily acts.....Religion need no longer be a matter of church affiliation, nor a conscious allegiance to a code received from any one of the churches."<sup>9</sup> Barber here is stretching what is traditionally circumscribed as one's religion, and would certainly find contestation from those of faith, who would see him diminishing religious commitment, and those of a secular persuasion, who would not want their way of life and values system to be called religious.

The nature of RS teaching itself is a contested field. In the New Zealand setting RS teaching in different forms takes place in university RS departments, in faith schools, in state secondary schools and in state primary schools (when the school is "closed" for Religious Instruction run by the CEC and other providers).

Understanding the nature of RS teaching in faith schools in New Zealand will take note of the responses of the faith school teachers sampled into consideration. In general, it is expected that faith schools will include aspects of faith development in the home tradition as well as some teaching about world religions, a combination of the traditional Religious Instruction model and the general Religious Education approach of secondary schools. This model will be needed as a comparator against which to help "place" the nature of the RS teaching in New Zealand state secondary schools.

---

<sup>9</sup> Barber, 1980, 27

So how does one talk about the different approaches to RS teaching? At the tertiary level, the traditional approach has been to allow the religious players to tell their lived reality phenomenologically; looking for the given essence of religion, often seen as the experience of the holy. Such an approach was championed by Ninian Smart in books like *The Phenomenon of Religion*, 1973. This “sui generis” argument no longer stands alone. Rather, there is something like a free translation scenario going on, where there is nothing to stop you from translating religious things into sociological things, for instance.

This is contentious because it challenges ways of thinking and believing about one’s religious inheritance. For those comfortably living within a religious tradition made real by their communication with a “higher power” there is no way they would want their reality to be translated into sociological behaviour. It would seem to them to deny a reality they know. On the other hand, as an example of someone who debunks the “higher power” necessity in religion, Lloyd Geering quite happily cuts out the holy and spiritual essence and accepts a “secular” understanding of his religious practice.

At university, a bit of historiography is essential to critique the category religion itself. The concept of religion is a categorisation construct. A straightforward example of this is the western categorisation that the people of the Indus valley all follow a religion called Hinduism, which is not the case. Another example is closer to home. I was asked by four visiting French scholars about why people did not talk about Māori religion much. I suggested to them that it is partly because Māori beliefs and practices are fuller than the categorisation of religion that the Western approach had constructed for them. On marae, denominational allegiance is generally dethroned for the kaupapa of the marae. It makes sense then that in the 2013 census Māori had the biggest percentage of their people saying they had no religion – 48% in fact. One talks of Māori culture and their spiritual world view, but not their religion. This example is significant in the bigger background picture of religion not having a comfortable place in the public sphere in New Zealand.

But what about at the chalk face of a secondary school? The more straightforward spectrum is the one that goes from Religious Instruction to Religious Studies. On this spectrum, at one end is the faith based, confessional, teaching of a faith, and at the

other a secular, totally academic analysis of studying the history, philosophy and experience of world religions. Schreiner (2002) talks about “education into religion”, which is focused on bringing one into one’s personal faith tradition, “education about religion”, which is focused on trying to understand what religion means for believers in other faiths, and “education from religion”, which is more of a comparative approach which explores moral and religious questions in general, with a view to clarifying and developing one’s own personal view.<sup>10</sup>

Where one sits on this spectrum will dictate the content of the curriculum and philosophy of teaching. Also, Schreiner’s three categories are not exclusive sets. What is quite clear from this short discussion though, is that the “secular” understanding of religion is quite different to the religious understanding of religion. This will be brought out in chapter two as I focus on key historical developments in New Zealand. Likewise, the data I gather and analyse in chapters three and four will bring out differences in the state schools’ use of RS ASs.

In the *International Handbook of Inter-religious Education*, Wanden and Smith, two significant and influential New Zealand Catholic educators of the last decades, envision New Zealand schools taking up inter-religious education fully. They argue that “for students to effectively participate in inter-religious education, they will need to recover their religious heritage.”<sup>11</sup> If interreligious education is being mooted with student self-connection with their (now disconnected) religious tradition posited as important, is this actually an appropriate dream or realistic goal in state schools? It could be a goal within a faith school, because they have a faith tradition that defines their mission, but this could not be an approach pushed in a secular environment. The call in the NZC 2007 (unpacked more fully in the next chapter) certainly gives weight to the goal of appreciating diversity, but not with a requirement to identify and affirm one’s faith tradition. What this thesis will be able to show empirically, is what is actually taught when state school teachers teach to RS ASs, and the differences of that delivery to faith schools and in the comparison countries used.

---

<sup>10</sup> Schreiner, 2002, 5

<sup>11</sup> Wanden and Smith, 2010, 461

*“The Religious Studies standards have been **developed for a diverse Aotearoa New Zealand** ..... This is viewed as important in the context of globalisation and of the migration of people of different faiths and cultures to Aotearoa New Zealand. Understanding religions **contributes to understanding how belief systems function** in societies and to **the fostering of an inclusive society** in Aotearoa New Zealand that reflects the histories and traditions of all its people.”<sup>12</sup>*

## **CHAPTER 2. History**

From this official promotion of the use of the RS ASs (less than a decade old) it appears that all New Zealand secondary schools are being encouraged by the Ministry of Education to teach about religions in an acknowledgement of the country’s increasing cultural and religious diversity and with a view to fostering an inclusive society. This applies to state schools as well as faith schools. From the Statement on Religious Diversity to this Ministry of Education promotion of RS, both recent developments, who can take credit for this bold statement and has it gained much traction state-wide? Is this a factor in the state school take up of RS ASs?

In this chapter I cover legal, curricular and societal developments in New Zealand’s history that are relevant to understanding the context into which the RS ASs of 2009 appeared and were taken up and used by state schools. Trying to understand the background context into which the RS ASs appeared is the focus here and I will particularly be looking to identify significant factors that that might account for and explain this.

The current curricular imperative from the NZC 2007 is that teaching about diversity should be a significant part of a school’s programme. The current legislative imperative is that schools should fulfil their NEG and NAGs, providing a successful

---

<sup>12</sup> Te Kete Ipurangi / Social Sciences / Religious Studies, 1. TKI is the official New Zealand online curriculum site maintained by the Ministry of Education, in its Social Sciences section, explaining the nature of the Religious Studies Achievement Standards.



learning environment for all students by linking back requirements to the NZC 2007. The current societal make up may be decidedly more ethnically and religiously diverse but how much consciousness-raising or commitment to understanding religious diversity is of interest to New Zealand society or schools? Are these imperatives being picked up by the state schools using RS ASs?

In secondary schools, the NCEA RS ASs are a recent and fledgling assessment cache for all schools without a specific RS curriculum to back them up, though the wording of the TKI support for the use of RS ASs, inserted under the Social Science umbrella, fits very neatly with key themes in the NZC, 2007. For instance, there are the Principles that emphasise inclusion and tolerance of cultural diversity. So, one aspect of the state schools' use of RS ASs could well have the makings of a decidedly different approach to RS teaching comparatively, with them running RS assessments without an RS syllabus. One would have thought it could be assumed, that if a teacher assesses their students against a RS AS, that they have taught some RS content and skills. Whether that RS content and skill are acknowledged or transparent and clear to everyone is another issue to be explored with the teachers.

The fact that there has never been a RS component in New Zealand state secondary schools up until the introduction of the RS USs option from the late 90s and the RS ASs since 2009, calls for the current situation to be put into an historical context looking for possible contributing factors to understand its reception and use in recent years.

A range of possible reasons for the recent addition of the RS ASs to the array of secondary subjects will be explored. The list of reasons is not exhaustive of course but comes from my personal professional reading and academic study over more than three decades of teaching. These may include to varying degrees of significance: the significant increase in New Zealand's religious diversity; the vision of a few leaders connected with education, who are in touch with societal trends and have lobbied variously to affirm diversity in schools; schools having more freedom to choose what range of subjects they offer, as a combination of educational and assessment reform (Tomorrow's Schools and NCEA); the full vision of the NZ Curriculum with its emphasis

on diversity being implemented; strong players like the Catholic schools who have a strong RE curriculum and well placed lobbyists; a long history of discussion about the spiritual, moral and cultural dimension in New Zealand schools. The teachers in my research will tell their own stories about the reasons they introduced RS ASs themselves and will then be able to be placed in this layered story.

### **The ‘secular clause’ legally applies only to primary schools and intermediates**

The pre-1980’s legislative background, will be outlined firstly. This is still very relevant to the state secondary school situation today. The 1877 Education Act, Section 84, was passed, not to affirm secularism as a philosophy of education, but rather it came about essentially because three groups cancelled each other out. The Catholics and ‘secularists’ did not want Protestant dominance. The Protestants and ‘secularists’ did not want allowances made for the Catholics. So, according to Snook, what came about was a kind of secular safety from any proselytising and no state support for church schools.<sup>13</sup> The ‘secular clause’ was not however popular in Christian New Zealand. There were 42 bills tabled in parliament between 1877 to 1937 to amend or reverse the ‘secular clause’.<sup>14</sup> These were tabled by Catholics who opposed Protestant Christian observances in state schools and the BIS league who were opposed to state support for “popery”.

The ‘secular clause’ of the 1877 Act, Section 84, excluded religious teaching from schools. It provided for a “free, compulsory and secular education”, and it only applied to the schools of the time, which went up to Form 2 (now Year 8), and therefore could not apply to secondary schools which were not yet in existence. Secondary schools were set up later with separate Acts of Parliament, so were not beholden to the Department of Education’s Education Act preamble. However, the public perception is that all schooling, including Years 9 to 13, is bound by the ‘secular clause’. It is not.

---

<sup>13</sup> McGeorge and Snook, 81, 8

<sup>14</sup> Barber, 1980, 12

If there had been a RS curriculum in 1877 it would have been Christian Education, probably in the Religious Instruction model. But what actually happened in its absence was a strongly Christian dynamic across the education sector, with teachers' Christian profession and practice as given prerequisites, and "the schools continued to operate in a professedly Christian, predominantly Protestant 'milieu', which saw nothing odd or illegal in a certain amount of traffic between secular schooling and revealed religion."<sup>15</sup> The long term development of this 'milieu' can be seen in reports like the "Currie Report" of 1960, which reemphasized that no teaching of the tenets of any sect or religion should be a part of the official syllabus, yet made it clear that "the Commission's belief that the role of the school in religious matters is a secondary one and that, in any case, the school's most valuable contribution in this field is already being made in the transmission of Christian ethical values."<sup>16</sup>

### **Beeby's legacy and Education Reports from Thomas (1942) to Johnson (1977)**

The influence of Clarence Beeby is strongly felt from the late 1930s onwards. "We teachers were not simply passive agents commissioned to hand on the unchanging torch. We had no right to proselytise the students committed to our care but, if we could broaden their interests, understanding and sympathies by a wider and more meaningful curriculum than we ourselves had known, surely they would produce a better and more rational society...." <sup>17</sup> The Beeby influence was towards a more child-centred education away from the duty ethic of the Victorian era inheritance. But also in Beeby, there is a strong agenda across these decades for schools to foster a school culture that reflects the best of society's ideals. That combination of a meaningful curriculum and reflecting the best of society's ideals has a central place, particularly in Social Sciences teaching in secondary schools, from the "Thomas Report" onwards.

The "Thomas Report" of 1942, (the Post-Primary report of the committee appointed by the Minister of Education) signalled a need for schools to encourage active

---

<sup>15</sup> McGeorge, 87, 167

<sup>16</sup> "Currie Report", 1960, 685

<sup>17</sup> Openshaw, 92, 133

citizenship. The “...’effective citizen’ – one who has a lively sense of responsibility towards civilised values, who can make firm social judgements, and who acts intelligently and in the common interest.”<sup>18</sup> Social Studies teaching was criticized for not being totally focused on developing these “effective citizens”. The philosophy of the “Thomas Report” was foundational in the long-term development of New Zealand Social Studies. It was probably not until the publication of the 1977, Department of Education’s *Social Studies Syllabus Guidelines, Forms 1-4*, though, that Social Studies gained a strong unity in curriculum and delivery.

The “Currie Report” of 1962 strongly commends teachers as being exemplars of moral rectitude. “The ethical values and attitudes of what is best in our society are for the most part identical with the ethical values and attitudes of Christianity. These are inevitably reflected in the teachers in our schools.”<sup>19</sup> The values of respect for others, self-discipline and mutual tolerance were high on the agenda. It also introduced the concept of schools being “the ‘residuary legatees’ of the inadequacies of unstable homes and of the evils of society.”<sup>20</sup> This opened the way for schools to deal with any area of knowledge, practice or behaviour that they perceived to have been inadequately covered by families or society.

The “Currie Report” made it clear that the secular clause and “teaching about religion”<sup>21</sup> were compatible in secondary schools. Though the very strong Christian lens of the time makes it look more like Christian Education rather than world religion education was being proposed. “Knowledge about religion as a part of our cultural heritage, of the Bible, of Christian standards and values as the unifying ethical basis of our community life and of the Church as a moulding force in our history, can be justly claimed to come within the purview of a complete education.”<sup>22</sup> Currie’s recommendation “that secondary schools be encouraged to include objective

---

<sup>18</sup> “Thomas Report”, 42, 27

<sup>19</sup> “Currie Report”, 1962, 688

<sup>20</sup> Ibid 655

<sup>21</sup> Ibid 675

<sup>22</sup> Ibid 687

discussion upon comparative religion in their programmes of senior studies”,<sup>23</sup> fits so well with the Statement on Religious Diversity, 2007, but it may not have been as open-ended as it seemed to read.

The “Ross Report” of 1973 made suggestions that would have schools venturing into the realm of the family domain. The furore over this report, which suggested sex education should be a compulsory core subject, engendered strong objections from the Christian lobby. So, while educators, as ‘residuary legatees might try to correct what they saw as lax teenage sexual awareness and practice, they still did not have the full support of parts of society to venture into sensitive areas. However, now, the Health curriculum includes full coverage of every aspect of sexuality and well-being.

The “McCombs Report” of 1976 was an attempt to encourage schools to establish closer relationships between themselves and their communities. Along with a strong emphasis on reviewing the school’s aims in consultation with its community, there is an emphasis on schools providing an education that is culturally appropriate for all students, that “ensures that cultural differences are understood, accepted and respected by student and teacher alike”.<sup>24</sup> The McCombs’ committee made it essential that schools clarify their moral values. This was a strongly humanitarian agenda where the quality of human interaction was high, and teenagers were to be treated as whole people. “The development of a feeling for other people and the ability to live and work in harmony”<sup>25</sup> was the most ranked top value of the secondary school by teachers, principals and inspectors.

The “McCombs Report” made note that schools could not avoid religion because adolescents were wont to ask ultimate questions. “Religions and ideologies are significant studies in their own right; they are a part of human experience and they make claims which, if true, have important consequences.”<sup>26</sup> The opinion and

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid 697

<sup>24</sup> “McCombs Report”, 1976, 100

<sup>25</sup> Ibid 14

<sup>26</sup> Ibid 74

recommendations of the committee on these matters in many ways counted as nothing, in that little of RS significance made it into the school curriculum.

There is a strong values' dimension coming through in these reports and a focus on making meaningful connection with the schools' contributing communities. It will be seen more clearly how important this backdrop is, and how strong the values' base of the NZC 2007 is, when the teachers surveyed talk about why they came to use the RS ASs and their philosophy of teaching when they use them. Back again to the 1970s, there were Department of Education discussions with various interest groups, particularly church representatives and university lecturers, focused on moral education.

The "Johnson Report" of 1977, was a report that addressed social concerns. The report sought to "equip parents and teachers to promote the positive physical and mental health of themselves and their children, to equip children to grow more and more responsible for their own health and to act morally towards other people."<sup>27</sup> A part of the furore over this report was concerned with a five-page section on moral, spiritual and values education. It became obvious from this section that there was an underlying Christian agenda to the Johnson Report for which the committee had no brief. The committee noted that "several submissions have sought to have our state education system incorporate within it some of the basic spiritual values of society, and they see these values as being mainly derived from the Judeo-Christian tradition."

<sup>28</sup>

Ivan Snook summarised the immediate outfall of the Johnson Report succinctly as he commented on Johnson's push for a non-sectarian spiritual dimension in the curriculum. "The idea of a 'spiritual dimension' was almost universally rejected; by secularists because it sounded too religious and by Christians because it seemed too secular!"<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> "Johnson Report", 1977, 12

<sup>28</sup> Ibid 35

<sup>29</sup> Snook, 2005, 3

There had been no official RS curriculum in New Zealand at all up to this point, rather a background Christian-values ethos in place in the maintenance of school values. The key foci of these reports around the macro values of schools in their reflection of society's highest ideals, is still significant and very relevant to how the introduction of RS ASs might be promoted to help all schools help their students develop an understanding of religions.

It is interesting to note from these reports where the areas of morality, values and religious instruction are seen to sit. While there is discussion about the importance of understanding religions as part of one's cultural heritage and the importance of religions and ideologies as part of human experience, mostly there is reference to a school's climate and behavioural expectations adequately fulfilling this role. Indeed, there has been no problem with civics and well-being education, which have found a permanent place in both Social Science and Health curriculums. This has an interesting application in the current RS AS scenario.

When the RS ASs were introduced in 2009 there was an issue of where to place them on TKI, the official Ministry of Education curriculum website. Initially they were going to be placed under the Health umbrella, where they might be appropriately included as an aspect of hauora. But they ended up being placed under the Social Science umbrella, particularly because Social Science allows for different perspectives (religious perspectives included if chosen by a school) in its approach.

### **1975 Integration Act**

Moving back to a legislative development, the passing of the Private Schools Integration Act of 1975 is very significant in the eventual introduction of RS into secondary assessment. In his term, as Prime Minister from 1972-75, Norman Kirk set out to heal the century old "running sore" of education. What he saw as the "running sore" was that Catholic schools had been denied state funding.

He was from a devout Salvation Army background, but strongly empathized with other denominations, particularly Catholics. It is not that Kirk can take all the credit. Working

parties brought about this act in a surprisingly quiet way. Unlike the 19<sup>th</sup> Century distrust between Protestants, Catholics and secularists, there was now an ecumenical movement that saw Protestants and Catholics joining forces to petition the government in their favour.

There was debate around the Integration Act at the time and it resurfaces in pockets, particularly when wealthier integrated schools are still charging high fees or do not seem to be fulfilling their “special character” obligations. The questioning of the state supporting indoctrination by passing the Integration Act was highlighted by educators such as Marshall and Hoff. Ivan Snook notes some of the concern around the possibility of indoctrination, “It is surely a major irony that the Act which was to heal at last the wounds of 1877, should have succeeded to open them anew.”<sup>30</sup> This fear of indoctrination by both religious groups and secularists alike is part of the development of a de facto “secular” zeitgeist that teachers in the 2010s feel quite strongly.

Back in the early 1980s, however, there was obviously some hope in pockets that comparative religion could now be taught (if Currie’s statements were taken openly). Teacher trainees at Christchurch Teachers College at the time could take the Catholic Catechetical studies course ready for teaching RS in Catholic schools or take a RS course taken by teachers’ college lecturers for academic pursuit or just personal interest. This was not a lasting situation, though the Catholic Catechetical studies are still an optional extra for trainees throughout the country.

At the time of the first school integrations the RE model in Catholic schools was strongly Religious Instruction mostly taken by nuns, priests and brothers. But as lay teachers took over, the RE model developed. The first Catholic RE curriculum, “The Way the Truth and the Life”, was introduced in the late 70s, which went up to the Fifth Form. In the mid-1980s the Department of Education had Catholic school educators like Gary Finlay amongst others in a forum that was discussing the importance of RS as a subject of wide-ranging importance, both in the skills it developed and the content it

---

<sup>30</sup> McGeorge and Snook, 81, 57



covered. This Curriculum Development Unit was disbanded as Tomorrow's Schools arrived, but the groundwork had been laid.

Probably the most significant long-term impact of the Integration Act from this thesis' perspective is that it looks like the Catholic school lobby, amongst other lobbyists, had gathered significant traction with the Ministry of Education over the 70s and 80s, enough to see Religious Education assessment added into 6<sup>th</sup> Form Certificate, a second-tier qualification behind 6<sup>th</sup> Form University Entrance in the 90s. The initial Curriculum Development Unit's discussions of the 80s and the new Catholic Curriculum of 1991, "Understanding Faith", were key stepping stones to the new RS USs' introduction. So, from the mid-90s these first RS USs were written. They were used mostly by the Catholic schools but were also accessed by church groups developing young trainees in ministry. This certainly allowed RE to gain some traction. This was the state's stamp of approval that really counted in the long term.

### **"Tomorrow's Schools" and a changing landscape in the last three decades**

Since the education reports up the 70s, particularly as a result of the public debate caused by aspects of the Ross and Johnson reports, there has been an uneasy milieu in the secondary school sector about teaching topics that might raise contention in the community. It seems that the voice of strong visionaries like Johnson can backfire and actually limit their influence. Certainly, there is a sensitivity both to conservative Christian voices and a growing secular humanist voice from this time. The default position seems to be a strongly secular one in secondary schools even though this is not the legal position nor the curricular one.

The Beeby-influenced era (late 1930s to late 1970s) had a strong focus on developing the good citizen through a child-centred education. The backdrop is still very much a mono-religious one, with the Judeo-Christian tradition being given prominence, though not spelt out in curriculum documents or given public support. Rather, from the earlier general civics focus by Johnson, talk of the spiritual dimension gains traction. In this model education is still very much child-focused but with the belief

that this approach will result in a better society. As late as the 1986 Curriculum Review the committee noted that moral values were an integral part of New Zealand culture and that much of the basis of the Anglo tradition was Christian, while spirituality was the basis of the Māori tradition. They emphasized that the “curriculum must develop language and cultural awareness as a natural part of school life, recognise the family and community traditions and values, and give all children a sense of history and belonging.”<sup>31</sup> Harking back to my answer in chapter one to the French researchers who interviewed me, there are strongly felt contested categories highlighted here. Religion. Christianity. Spirituality. Values. The language of the curriculum itself is secular and values rich, but it is in the public domain that there seems to be a hostility to religious discourse.

It appeared that the values-rich curriculum was under attack when the David Lange lead Labour government introduced the “Tomorrow’s School” legislation. What appears in the late 1980s looked like the domination of a business and economics-focused drive for schools. This is seen even now in the career pathways thrust promoted in secondary schools of a “profitable” career-focused education. But the NZC of 2007 is not so narrowly focused.

The implementation of the new New Zealand Curriculum from 1992, reviewed in 2001-2 and finally released in 2007, while being an outcomes-focused curriculum, with application in career pathways, is very aware of New Zealand’s changing society along with a perceived change in workforce demands. It is a curriculum that is values-rich and strongly pedagogical. It is not, after all, full of the economic blatancy of The Picot Report of 1988.

The education commentator Ivan Snook has been raising the discussion about the values base of schooling for over three decades now. From articles like “Whose Christian Values?” in 1980 to “Whose interests are being served? Values in the draft curriculum” in 2006. His voice is one of continued concern for transparency around

---

<sup>31</sup> Curriculum Review, 86, 26

the dominant values driving education. The richness of the Health curriculum with its hauora strand may actually have seen the implementation of some of the aspirational ideas of Johnson and others. The Health curriculum has a strong and compulsory place in schools up to Year 10 with its focus on, for instance, personal development, well-being, hauora, affirming diversity and understanding your rights. This looks like a new receptive context for openness to spirituality and world views from certain curricular developments, which might be a curricular counterbalance to the secular zeitgeist deferment in public perception. It might also look like a curricular development has taken over from the education reports (up to the mid-80s) that affirmed New Zealand's Christian heritage base in school and society.

From the 90s onwards in particular there are a number of voices to appear in the call for RS to be a part of the norm in secondary schools. Jean Holm returned to New Zealand in the early 90s after a successful career as a RS lecturer in the UK. She was called into action almost straight away by contributing to the Ministry of Education working party that was developing the NCEA RS USs. The group given this task were essentially adapting church school syllabi for NCEA use. University lecturers like Paul Morris were called on to critique and help in this development later.

Jean Holm, herself well versed in different models of RS delivery, began work on trying to get RS into state secondary schools from 1996. This began with an Auckland Diocese working party in 1997 which was then opened up to an Interfaith Task Force in 1998 to promote RS in state secondary schools. The groups worked on their aims and circulated them for discussion. "The report explained the aims of Religious Studies (neither inculcation of, nor nurturing in, any one religion), and how the subject related to aspects of cultures and values..."<sup>32</sup> Jean and Jocelyn Armstrong also ran a course on Religion for Teaching at the Auckland School of Education, in 2000 and 2003, when there was enough student take up.

---

<sup>32</sup> Moutier, 2014, 106

Jocelyn Armstrong, Chair of the Religious Diversity Centre, has herself written a text book on understanding religion called *Discovering Diversity* for use in Year 9 and 10 in all secondary schools. The book published in 2009 is tied directly into the Social Studies Curriculum goals and the NZC focus on diversity. Jocelyn continues to give religious diversity a more public profile in her new role as chair of the Religious Diversity Centre, launched in 2016. The RDC is “a national centre of educational and research excellence fostering an appreciation for and understanding of religious diversity amongst all New Zealanders.”

The voices of the Catholic lobby, other Christian advocates for RS like Holm and Armstrong, and the growing inter-faith presence are seen particularly strongly in the Statement on Religious Diversity quote that began chapter one. How much traction does this growing voice have within the secondary sector and are its goals clear and unanimous? The group acknowledged in the Statement on Religious Diversity has a substantial representation across religions and organisations. (See the footnote below.)<sup>33</sup> Certainly, this group and the RS educators in the background mix have had a chance to share their wisdom and experience on some platforms, and the inclusion of RS USs and then RS ASs, available to all New Zealand schools has their influence to thank. The controllers of curriculum (Ministry of Education) and assessment (NZQA), still had to approve and introduce the RS assessments. More of that process shortly.

Another recommendation from the Statement on Religious Diversity was that, “schools should teach an understanding of the diversity of religious and spiritual traditions in a manner that reflects the community of which the school is a part.”<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> The Statement on Religious Diversity is a product of the New Zealand Diversity Action Programme and was developed with the support of the New Zealand Human Rights Commission, Victoria University of Wellington, the Ministry of Social Development and the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO. The text was prepared by Professor Paul Morris, Victoria University of Wellington. He was advised by Race Relations Commissioner Joris de Bres and a reference group comprising Rehanna Ali (Islamic Women’s Council), Glyn Carpenter (Vision Network New Zealand), Archbishop John Dew and Fr Jim Lyons (Catholic), Rohan Jaduram (Human Rights Commission), Bishop Richard Randerson (Anglican), Rev Jenny Te Paa (St John’s Theological College), Bev Watson (Baha’i) and Dr Pushpa Wood (Hindu, Wellington Interfaith Council). A number of City and District Councils and interfaith groups organised public meetings to discuss the draft statement.

<sup>34</sup> Statement on Religious Diversity, 2007, 5

This acknowledgement of the importance of a school's contributing communities, is in a continuum with the reports introduced earlier and in keeping with the Tomorrow's Schools legislation that empowered community involvement in local schools even more than before. On the one hand this could look like a promising opening to introduce religious diversity teaching. But there is a question around how importantly individual schools might see the teaching about religious diversity to be. Add in contextual variables from the secular leanings of a society that has close to 40% who say they have no religion, to school groups whose very self-definition allows them to foster their own special character, there may be too many different contexts, each with a certain amount of autonomy, actually working against the growth in teaching about religious diversity.

What questions does this pocketed history of secondary education in New Zealand demand I ask of the data I gather and analyse? It will be interesting to see what state school teachers who have introduced RS ASs say about the school reception RS gets. They may also have first-hand assumptions and experience of the secular dimension of secondary schools set against their understanding of a curriculum that encourages an understanding of diversity. They will be able to comment on aspects of transparency around the introduction of RS. They may even be able to posit their introduction of RS into state schools on an historical continuum. Overall their reporting of differences, particularly against other subjects will be a significant part of the quality of this research project.

## **NCEA and the New Zealand Curriculum**

The New Zealand Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is the immediate educational context that needs to be explained along with its relationship to the NZC 2007. NCEA is a standards-based assessment system for Years 11 to 13, introduced between 2002 and 2004. It has been running for a little over a decade with its own distinct philosophy and application. If one achieves the standard, one passes, and there is in theory no norm-referenced scaling. If 100% of the students reach the

standard, as some schools make the boast of achieving, that is fine. Accumulation of credits is the key in this egalitarian method of assessment, in which the Achievement Standards are owned by the Ministry of Education and the assessment of them is administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). One of the latest developments in the ideology of NCEA delivery being encouraged is the Integrated Curriculum Approach. This may have contributed to the use of RS ASs in state schools. A possibility to be tested in my research.

The NZC, launched in 2007 is the official curriculum of New Zealand. It is a broad-spectrum outline of the vision, principles, values and key competencies that schools should aspire to. It outlines skills and knowledge for Levels 1 to 8 across seven learning areas. One of the learning areas is Social Science, which has a strong emphasis on understanding cultural difference. In fact, some of the Social Studies ASs could be used to teach religious perspectives.

The RS ASs can be very well aligned with the NZC, both generally and specifically, though RS it is not mentioned by name in the document. Neither does RS have a content area on the official Ministry of Education website, TKI.

The NZC applies across Years 1 to 13 in its overall philosophy but is also level and subject specific in its detail. It is clear that RS has a relevant place because the NZC vision talks about all cultures being valued for the contributions they bring and the importance of understanding that we are connected, as members of communities and as international citizens. The NZC principles touch on the need to reflect NZ's cultural diversity and be inclusive and engaging with community: cultural diversity, inclusion, community engagement and coherence. As regards coherence, RS certainly improves coherence by linking to a wide range of subjects.

The NZC values, particularly those of equity, diversity, ecological sustainability and respect are values consistently encouraged, modelled and explored in RS. The NZC key competencies of thinking, relating to others and participating and contributing, for instance, are also central to RS. The NZC effective pedagogies are also important to effective and meaningful learning in RS - encouraging reflective

thought and action, making connections to prior learning and enhancing the relevance of new learning.

In more subject-specific detail, the NZC Social Science objectives are particularly relevant to RS. For instance: explore and analyse people's values and perspectives; consider the ways in which people make decisions and participate in social action. The Social Science Position Paper of 2009 mentions that Social Science is informed by academic disciplines such as sociology, philosophy, anthropology, history, geography, political science and economics.<sup>35</sup> There is no mention of RS. But the RS ASs do fit well into the Social Studies' philosophy.

RS 90818, the NCEA Level 1 ethics standard, fits in with the SSt Level 6 Social Justice and Human Rights AOs.

RS 90822, the Level 2 ethics standard, fits in with the SSt Level 7 Rights and Responsibilities AOs.

RS 90826, the Level 3 ethics standard, fits in with the SSt Level 8 Ideology AO - understand how ideologies shape society and that individuals and groups respond differently to these beliefs.

Social Science is strongly values orientated in curriculum and delivery. So, if religious perspectives were included in a Social Science topic, it might be that the bigger values picture into which religious perspectives were introduced meant that the objective study of religion was not the dominant learning focus. This will be of high interest as I question the philosophy of the state school teachers who use the RS ASs.

RS connects through the History strands as well: particularly through causes and consequences at History Levels 6, 7 and 8. RS ASs are also able to be used as a complement in an integrated learning approach in subjects like English, Māori, Philosophy and Humanities. So, an interdisciplinary approach can be seen to be encouraged.

---

<sup>35</sup> Mutch et al, 2008, 24

The fact that the assessment system (NCEA) preceded the finalised curriculum (NZC) by five years allowed for the dominance of the assessment over the philosophy of the curriculum at first, and it could be argued still has the upper hand.

RS ASs were first introduced in 2009 amidst this context of assessment variety and interdisciplinary approaches. Interviewing teachers in this research will give me the chance of finding out what the motivation for the introduction of RS AS was. Was it more about giving a chance to support students of a certain demographic, so more about NCEA assessment opportunities, or a curriculum driven introduction, so more about the higher objectives of understanding religion? Is there any evidence from these teachers that the introduction of NCEA RS is fulfilling the intentions of the TKI preamble, the NZ Curriculum, or the NZC Social Studies emphasis on understanding diverse cultures?

### **NCEA Religious Studies Achievement Standards**

While the focus on an inclusive society fits in with the tenor of past curriculum developments, as the preceding Social Studies description shows, the actual breadth of the RS ASs points to a new field of knowledge to be taught and assessed. The nature of the RS ASs possibly has more in common with the 1976 McComb's emphasis on the importance of allowing students to pursue ultimate questions, the Department of Education discussions in the 80s (also mentioned in chapter two) and the model of faith-based Religious Education in Catholic and other faith schools' curriculums.

The process of approval for the RS ASs themselves, their writing and cross-checking just needs a quick summary here. There was a period of waiting in the mid-2000s while the approval of RS to join the NCEA subject list was in process and discussion between the Ministry of Education and NZQA. According to Sir Brother Patrick Lynch, Helen Clark had a hand in moving the processing of RS AS along, when the process seemed to be stalling at this time.

A small group of RS educators (experienced faith school teachers and advisors) were tasked to come up with a matrix of assessments across NCEA Levels 1 to 3. Their brief



was to cover a range of RS areas and keep the wording of the standards open enough to be applicable across a wide range of contexts. The draft matrix was then circulated around a wider group of academics and religious leaders for critique and feedback. There was also some screening of teachers' views, for instance about whether they wanted four or six credit RS standards. The four-strand matrix for each of three levels with six credits for each standard was the final form in the end. Once everything was finalised, the matrix of RS ASs was circulated in 2008 ready for use from the beginning of 2009.

These are the only ASs specifically available for assessment in RS at the moment in New Zealand. However, there are Social Studies ASs that allow for the study of religion in their content, but this is not part of this study. The four RS strands have been the same since 2009, with strand one being on sacred texts, strand two on religious history, strand three on ethics and strand four on key beliefs. The teachers can choose which religious tradition(s) to teach to, according to their school's philosophy, teacher ability and student interest. Teachers can also use these ASs selectively, taking one or two ASs as part of another subject or use three or four ASs at one level to make a whole course in its own right. The guide notes attached to each AS give a wide range of options that are not limited to any one religion. For instance, in strand one part of the explanatory notes read: "examples of sacred texts include the Bible, the Qur'an, the Pali Canon, the Vedas, the Torah, the New Testament and indigenous oral traditions." The individual teacher has the responsibility of designing an assessment task that is true to the AS title and appropriate to their learning context.

Given that the RS ASs fall under a single rubric of unalterable wording, it will be interesting to find out the variety of ways that teachers in different contexts and of different belief backgrounds write assessment tasks that match their content.

## FIGURE 1. The NCEA Religious Studies Achievement Standards

### Level 1, usually assessed in Year 11

	TITLE	Credits
1.1 AS 90816	Describe the purpose of a sacred text within a religious tradition	6
1.2 AS 90817	Describe a significant development within a religious tradition	6
1.3 AS 90818	Describe the application of the key ethical principle(s) of a religious tradition to an issue	6
1.4 AS 90819	Describe key beliefs of a religious tradition	6

### Level 2, usually assessed in Year 12

	TITLE	Credits
2.1 AS 91724	Explain a significant theme in a sacred text within a religious tradition	6
2.2 AS 90821	Explain the changes in an expression(s) of a religious tradition	6
2.3 AS 90822	Explain how a contemporary social action derives from the ethical principles of a religious tradition	6
2.4 AS 90823	Explain the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question	6

### Level 3, usually assessed in Year 13

	TITLE	Credits
3.1 AS 91725	Analyse the meanings in a sacred text within a religious tradition	6
3.2 AS 90825	Analyse a religious tradition(s) in Aotearoa New Zealand	6
3.3 AS 90826	Analyse the response of a religious tradition to a contemporary ethical issue	6
3.4 AS 90827	Analyse the key beliefs of a religious tradition and a secular world view in relation to ultimate questions	6

## **In summary**

This history chapter has not shown a straightforward continuum of legislative, curricular or societal development, rather it has brought out many points of contestation and a variety of voices with different degrees of influence along the way. For example, one of the last situations described was the contest between the curricular acceptance of a spiritual dimension in the Health Curriculum set against a perceived societal secular zeitgeist that is almost feared. This is a reality of operation for many teachers in state schools.

There is indeed a long history of contestation around who controls the curriculum. Part of the education report focus of this chapter shows a continuity of a strong values base in Social Studies teaching, in particular, but uncertainty around whose voice is strongest in delineating the values, with a disparity at times between theory and practice. How significant these historical developments may have been on the eventual introduction of RS ASs in state schools in 2009, will become a part of the unfolding story told by state school teachers who have introduced RS ASs in the last decade.

A final note. While there might often be talk of the secular zeitgeist in operation in New Zealand's secondary school system, this could be seen as more of a tangible assumption than a substantial fact. But in terms of the group of teachers teaching to RS ASs in state schools, their stories about operating with such a zeitgeist will be heard in the next chapter.

*The NZC “gives schools the discretion to enact the curriculum in ways that take account of the particular diverse learning needs of their students and the expectations of their communities.”<sup>36</sup>*

*“Given the flexibility of the NCEA model, teachers are effectively the curriculum builders.”<sup>37</sup>*

### **CHAPTER 3. Fieldwork**

The research question is: “What factors account for the post-2009 growth of RS AS use in New Zealand state secondary schools?” The introductory quotes suggest that there is a flexible curricular environment for secondary teachers to build their courses in. This was a significant line of inquiry with the state school teachers in my research to characterise the reasons they gave for introducing and using RS ASs. Their stories connect throughout with the background context given in the previous chapter.

This chapter tells the story of the state school take up of RS ASs solely through state school teachers’ eyes. Firstly, the NZQA data files were unpacked for significant patterns, which in turn led to deeper questions, to get behind the data. Secondly the state school teachers’ reportage from the Questionnaire and Interviews gave substance to these deeper questions around philosophy, pedagogy and policy. The first subsidiary question of the thesis, which focuses on identifying differences between the understanding and approach to RS compared to other subjects, is a key focus of the chapter and a direct question I put to the state teachers.

#### **The NZQA data files**

This thesis uses a full set of results from NZQA on every secondary school’s RS AS entries from 2009 to 2016. The results were delivered with a number of requested variables like: school type (private, state, state-integrated), decile, RS ASs sat and at what level, ethnicity, pass rates and more.

---

<sup>36</sup> Mutch et al, 2008, 10

<sup>37</sup> Hipkins, Johnston and Sheehan, 2016, 206

After having established that there were the numbers of state school students entered in RS ASs to warrant this research (briefly laid out in chapter one), the NZQA data was then further explored for trends and characteristics that were significant in themselves, to see what questions the data could answer and to find questions that needed further exploration. The broad picture from this data picture particularly helped allow the teachers' answers in the Questionnaires and stories from the Interviews to be understood better. This data package also provided a number of variables to be run through various result sets later.

The data set is of 212 State schools who have entered 3,984 students in NCEA RS ASs from 2009 to 2016.

**FIGURE 2. The Providers: the increase in the number of state schools that are entering students in the RS ASs. (NZQA files)**

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Increase in 7 years
33	37	36	42	57	84	98	76	<b>+43 = 130%</b>

The biggest increase in school entries was from 2013 to 2014, an increase of 27 schools. There was a steady increase from 2011 to 2015 which was interrupted with a drop from 98 schools entering students in 2015 to 76 in 2016. The significance of the drop is not as major as it might look. An explanation of the reasons for this follows, in combination with the next graph which details the number of students entered.

**FIGURE 3. The Students: the increase in the numbers of students being assessed by RS ASs in state schools. (NZQA files)**

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Increase in 7 yrs.
44	229	188	380	597	757	1020	769	<b>+725 = 1547%</b>

The total of 769 students entered in 2016 is about the same number of students entered in Level 3 Art History across the country in the same year. Art History is a minor, but significant subject. There are many NCEA subjects with fewer students entered than this. In 2009 the average number of students entered in RS ASs per state

school was 1.3. By 2014 this average was 9. In 2015 and 2016, the average had risen to slightly over 10 per school.

The increase of students entered grew constantly from 2011 to 2015, with increases of between 170 and 283 students each year. The drop from 1020 from 98 schools to 769 from 76 schools is straightforward to explain. Many state schools only enter one student as a one-off. The drop of 251 students from 2015 to 2016 can be explained by a large number of single-entry schools who entered students in 2015, not entering students in 2016 and two schools, with a combined student entry number of over 200, not entering any students in 2016.

Of the 212 State schools entered from 2009 to 2016, 186 of those schools only entered 1 or 2 students per year. Of those 186 schools, 89 entered 1 or 2 students in one year only, 58 entered 1 or 2 students in 2 separate years (not necessarily consecutive) and 39 schools entered 1 or 2 students over 3 separate years. For instance, in 2015 there were 21 state schools who had not entered RS ASs before, who entered 1 student that year but not the following. This single-entry scenario is a research thesis on its own. Trying to find the teachers who entered a one-off student here or there and research the integrity of the process, teaching and assessment would be a very significant educational window on an aspect of NCEA's delivery. It was decided not to pursue this cohort, both for difficulty of contacting someone in charge and also because they only represent around 10% of all the state school students entered. However, this is a possible point of difference, if RS ASs are a popular target of one-off use in the current assessment climate, where teachers and students identify standards to make up a short fall of required credits at the end of the year.

90% of the students in state schools entered since 2013 actually came from 26 schools out of the 212. These schools had entered more than 8 and up to 203 students each in a year. Taking the most recent NZQA statistics from 2015 and 2016 entries, there were 22 schools with 8 or more entries representing 89.88% of all students entered in those two years. These 22 schools had an average of 50 students entered per school.

**FIGURE 4. Cohort numbers of state schools with 8 or more students sitting RS ASs**

YEAR	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>L1</b>		3	3	7	8	8	8	8
<b>L2</b>		5	5	4	7	7	9	7
<b>L3</b>		1	1	4	8	13	14	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>

My “population” was current teachers with classes that had been entered in RS ASs in the last two years. By focusing on the key teachers from these schools I was aiming for an up to date census of teachers teaching to RS ASs in NZ.

**FIGURE 5. State schools in census (with numbers of students entered by level)**

		'15 / '16	'15 / '16	'15 / '16	2015	2016
School	Decile	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	TOTAL	TOTAL
1	8	25 / 50	35 / 25	18 / 21	<b>78</b>	<b>96</b>
2	2	49 / 46	0 / 0	0 / 0	<b>49</b>	<b>46</b>
3	5	27 / 48	22 / 18	23 / 22	<b>72</b>	<b>88</b>
4	6	1 / 27	44 / 48	31 / 28	<b>76</b>	<b>77</b>
5	4	24 / 12	18 / 16	34 / 25	<b>76</b>	<b>53</b>
6	N/A	7 / 9	25 / 19	37 / 35	<b>68</b>	<b>62</b>
7	8	133 / 0	70 / 0	0 / 0	<b>203</b>	<b>0</b>
8	9	0 / 0	0 / 1	0 / 56	<b>0</b>	<b>57</b>
9	8	1 / 0	0 / 2	94 / 78	<b>95</b>	<b>80</b>
10	10	0 / 0	0 / 21	0 / 0	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>
11	7	0 / 0	0 / 0	7 / 11	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>
					<b>804</b>	<b>646</b>
					<b>79% of all state</b>	<b>84% of all state</b>

This table is a confidential summary of the state schools and teachers that are part of this research project. The principals of each of the schools identified from the NZQA

data were sent a request with details of the research, and if they approved of it taking place, they were to pass on the research package to the teacher(s) using RS ASs in their school. In the end eleven schools and fourteen teachers responded. The target schools in this research represent around 80% of the state school students using RS ASs in 2015 and 2016.

**FIGURE 6. State School student entries by Level (all state schools)**

NZQA Result Set 6	L 1	L 2	L 3	TOTAL
<b>2009</b>	26	14	4	44
<b>2010</b>	101	123	5	229
<b>2011</b>	120	57	11	188
<b>2012</b>	231	80	76	380
<b>2013</b>	250	139	241	597
<b>2014</b>	324	200	249	757
<b>2015</b>	327	341	350	1017
<b>2016</b>	283	182	331	769

While entries at Level 3 were the fewest for the first four years, from 2013 onwards they have been consistent by entries. Six of the key target schools look like having a consistent number of entries each year over the last four years at Level 3. The Questionnaire and Interview responses will give substance to the nature of the RS courses taught.

Fluctuation is normal in secondary subjects. For instance, Art History, a subject with similar numbers to RS, might have two classes one year in a school and then just ten students the next. Level 2 RS entries have fluctuated the most. The drop from 2010 to 2011 is due mainly to falls at two schools, with one falling from 58 to 0 and the other from 17 to 0. The big drop from 2015 to 2016 is due mainly to three schools discontinuing RS AS use, one from 70 to 0, another from 43 to 0 and the third from 27 to 0. The message I received when I rang these schools was that the teacher who used RS ASs at the school had changed jobs or left teaching. This would not be so common with another subject like Art History or Geography, because there are more teachers qualified to teach such specialist classes than there are jobs.



On the other hand, six of the key target schools have kept steady numbers at Level 2 over each of the last four years. Seven of the key target schools have kept steady numbers at Level 1 for the last five years.

**FIGURE 7. Average number of ASs sat per student in state schools. (All state schools)**

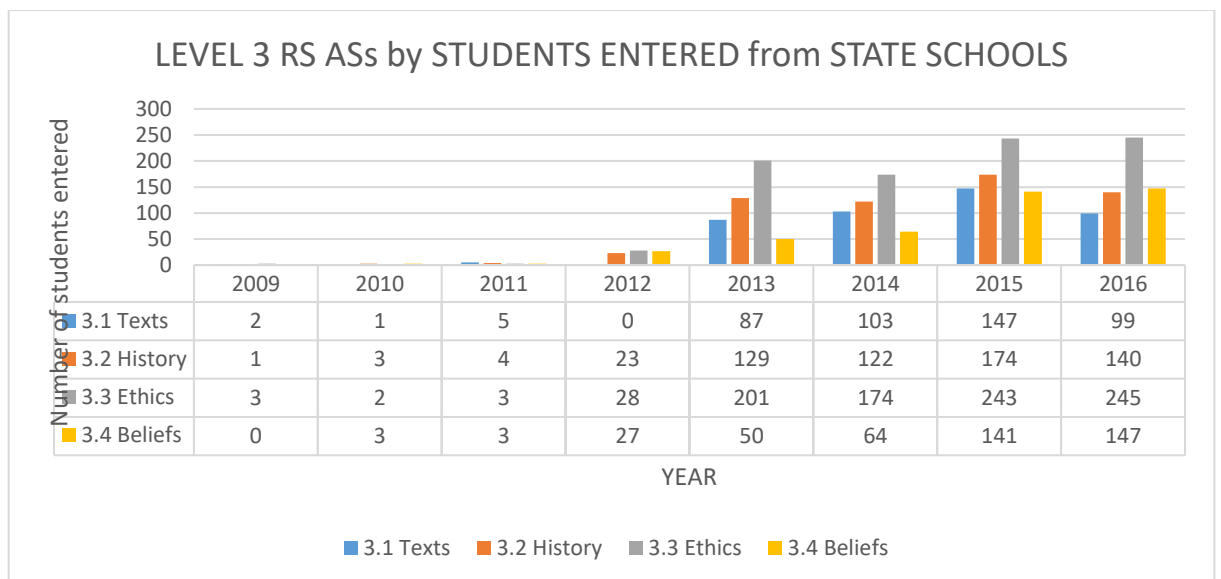
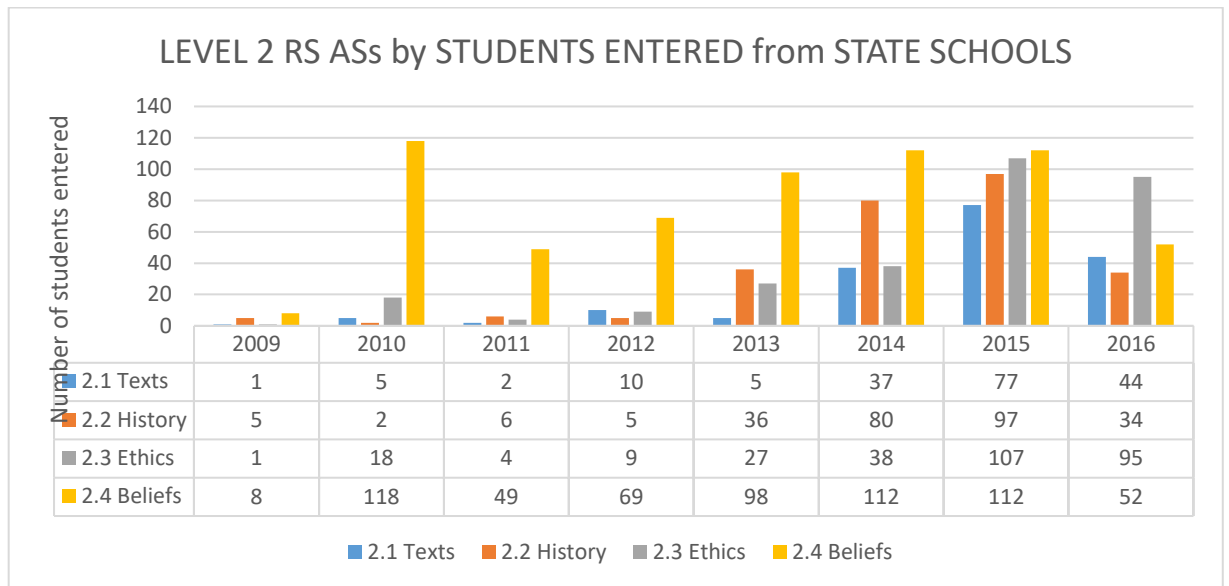
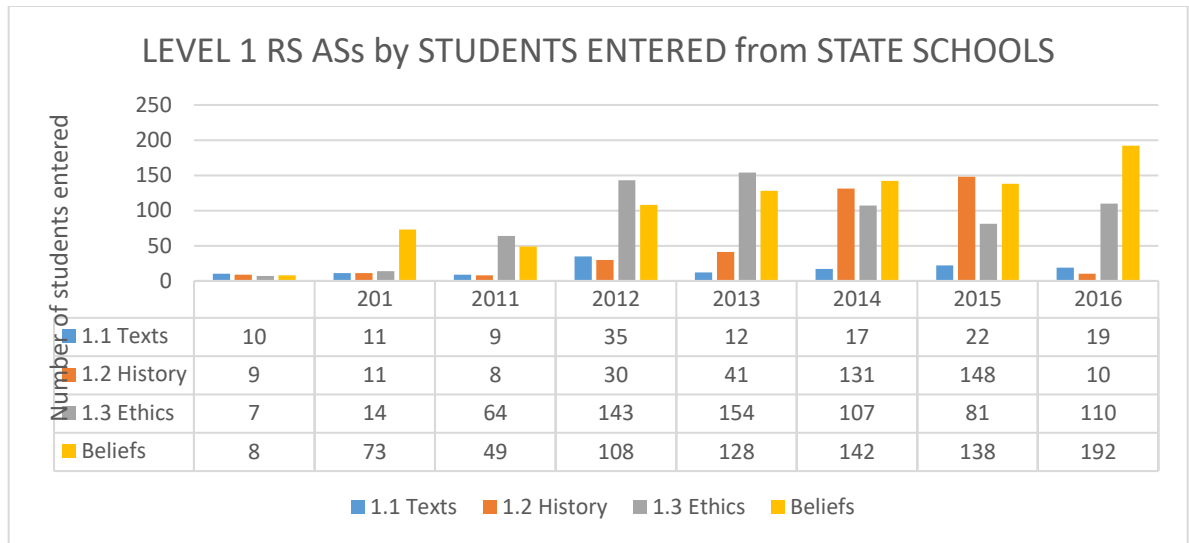
	No. of Students	RS ASs Sat	Av ASs sat
<b>2009</b>	44	55	1.25
<b>2010</b>	229	261	1.13
<b>2011</b>	188	207	1.1
<b>2012</b>	380	487	1.28
<b>2013</b>	597	968	1.62
<b>2014</b>	757	1227	1.62
<b>2015</b>	1020	1487	1.45
<b>2016</b>	769	1187	1.54

Five of the target schools enter each student in two or three RS ASs. All the other schools are only entering students in one RS AS at one level. It will be of interest in the interviews to compare those schools entering two or more with those just entering one to see the depth to which Religious Studies itself is explored.

The graphs on the next page show all the RS AS entries of state schools by standards. As was explained in the previous chapter, there are four different strands at each level of RS. Noting any variability of use may help characterise state school use of RS ASs. Key questions may revolve around avoidance of certain RS ASs or changes of RS ASs used.

The introduction of NCEA Religious Studies into state schools looks like being a cautious one. In 2010, the second year of RS being introduced, the world religions belief strand is used with significant numbers sitting 1.4 and 2.4 at Level 1 and 2. In 2011 the ethics strand, 1.3, is added in numbers at Level 1. In the next year, 2012, the Level 3 standards, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 are accessed with reasonable numbers. By last year, 2015, there are good numbers taking most of the standards, the notable exception being 1.1 with not many enrolled in the religious text strand.

**FIGURE 8. The RS Standards being used in state schools by numbers of students**



Substance will be added to these developments from the targeted teachers, for instance when they describe which standards they chose and why they chose them.

The NZQA statistics also provided variables for running variables through the teachers' answers from the interviews and questions. The variables that may be of significance include schools' decile rating, mix of ethnicities and location, for instance.

### **What the NZQA statistics could not show**

The analysis of the NZQA data could not show their philosophy of teaching to RS ASs, the actual topics they taught or details of the policies they followed. But the background patterns and trends will inform the teachers' reportage of what they have done.

### **The Questionnaire**

The Questionnaire went out following my first round of analysis of the NZQA statistics and after the ethics approval came through. The Questionnaire responses supported the NZQA data, particularly about entry numbers, but gave so much more information around the reasons for the introduction of RS ASs, their topics and the process of introduction. I have combined the Questionnaire answers under the three areas of philosophy, pedagogy and policy.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The following three questions were designed to find out what underpinned the teachers' reasons for introducing the RS ASs into their courses and examines the possible impact of RS AS use at the school. The answers highlighted a range of differences in philosophy between RS AS use and other subjects.

#### **Why were Religious Studies Standards introduced by you?**

Here are a sample of teacher responses that help characterise their reasons for using RS ASs.

"We created a new course covering world cultures and RS 1.4 was an obvious fit alongside the other selected standards. It was a chance to validate indigenous belief and expand students' learning experiences."

“This is going to sound so pragmatic, but essentially it was to bring more interest into History, to get away from the boring research project, that sapped the life out.”

“As part of SS to reflect both the diversity in the school and cross-cultural understanding, but also to reflect the rise of religious issues in society and complement other senior social studies classes.”

“I wanted to add another standard that fitted with SS - it's all the ethics papers. We use Christianity as a group that have a particular perspective on what we view as a social issue.”

The reasons given show a combination of teacher interest, subject promotion, a diversity focus and the needs of the particular student body in their school. In summary, teachers wrote about finding a course to complement the diversity within their schools, of increasing interest in their own subject, of growing students' awareness of the history and beliefs of the major religious traditions, and of catering for students who preferred internal assessment. The answers all fitted comfortably with the Social Science philosophy that I outlined in chapter two and fit well into the new environment of a flexible NCEA system.

### **What are the benefits to your school from the Religious Studies programme?**

The wording of this question could be misleading in that most of the state schools are just using RS ASs in other subject domains and not teaching a RS programme per se. However, their answers were all related specifically to the benefits of RS AS use. Most of the responses to this question are very much in keeping with the intention of the NCEA RS introductory explanation in TKI. This explanation actually comes under the Social Sciences subject umbrella, possibly because it is the subject that has the most responsibility in terms of teaching about diversity. The range of responses from the teachers who use the RS ASs show a wide range of skills are developed from the analytic through to the empathetic.

“Allows us to run a philosophy programme.”

“It also encourages dialogue between students which makes different cultures feel safer and not exotic and bizarre.”

“Allows students to question the assumptions of their own world view.”

“It has on occasion allowed us to provide individual Pasifika students with a route to extra NCEA credits to gain Level 1.”

The responses overall fell into three easily categorized areas, but not discretely, with most teachers mentioning more than one of these areas. There is the very subject specific benefit, to a History class for instance, which may not necessarily look like treating RS on its own terms. Then there is the cultural empowerment benefit, which the RS TKI blurb encourages. Finally, there is the indication from some teachers that internal assessments are easier to get for some students, though of course this would not just be specifically RS ASs.

It is obvious that the specific students who get to take RS ASs benefit, but whether the whole school benefits was not really drawn out. The Interview questions will delve more deeply into whether there is a tangible influence on the whole school culture, its value alongside other subjects and the longevity prospects of continued RS AS use.

### **What do you call your course(s) that you use Religious Studies standards in?**

This question was designed to check how transparent RS as a subject was. In the NZQA data it showed that most state schools were only entering students into one or two RS ASs which would not constitute a RS course. The answers to this question backs that up, as all but one school use the RS ASs as part of their main subject as it runs under the umbrella of that subject, namely philosophy, social studies or social science, civics, humanities, history, classics or Māori.

The one school that uses a full set of RS ASs at Year 13, calls their Social Science course Understanding Religion.

A key implication of this scenario is that in most cases there is not a significant focus on the fact that there is a RS component in the course, rather it is a complement to the major subject. The Interviews will allow teachers to explain this situation more fully and whether there is any nervousness around the inclusion of RS Ass in a state school.

## PEDAGOGY

These three questions focus in specifically on the actual content of the courses using RS ASs and examines the teachers' awareness of the connections between the NZC and RS. The answers point to differences in pedagogy between RS AS use and other subjects.

### What major topics and what religions do you study?

These two questions were designed to find out the actual subject matter being taught to be assessed with RS ASs. Looking just at these topics covered, this looks like any mainstream general Religious Studies, Theology or Philosophy curriculum at a university.

**FIGURE 9. RS topics used in state schools.**

Just war theory in Islam	Islam and terrorism	The Reformation	The Crusades
The Torah	The Book of Job	Buddhism	Major faiths of Asia
Traditional Maori belief	Abortion, euthanasia, sexuality	Catholicism and Caritas	Catholicism's response to abortion
Ethics – divine command, virtue ethics, utilitarianism	Miracles and the problem of evil	Secular Humanism	Cosmological, teleological, ontological arguments

It is to be noted that none of these state school teachers used 1.1, 2.1 or 3.1 in their teaching. This is the sacred text strand. In the follow up interviews I will be able to find out why. The above topics were spread across all the other RS ASs. (There is a fuller table on page 116 linking topics to RS Standards.)

Interestingly, looking at the Questionnaire data around which RS ASs were used, there was no change in RS ASs by any of these teachers. It may mean that they are happy with what the RS ASs they have chosen cover, or that it is too soon to think of alternative RS ASs. Again, I will be able to follow up this question in the Interviews.

Ethical topics are obviously popular from just war theory, through to Caritas and the Salvation Army as examples of ethical action to the big bioethics' topics of abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research and IVF. It is obvious that an attempt has been made to introduce a range of faith traditions, but as the RS ASs explanatory notes make clear, they are set for the branch of one religious tradition's response only, which can be seen to actually work against teaching to diversity. This will be a good discussion point in the Interviews.

### **How are the topics you teach and assess in Religious Studies aligned to the NZ Curriculum?**

The two selected responses below are representative of the whole group and show that the teachers in this research are well versed with the emphasis of the New Zealand Curriculum. If one starts with the NZC and takes its emphasis on cultural diversity and being informed and connected seriously, then there must be a place in New Zealand's schools for learning about the world's different religious traditions, particularly the many that have adherents here in New Zealand. The addition of the RS ASs adds real potential to this emphasis. These teachers are consciously acting within that philosophy.

"Very well aligned. The vision talks about all cultures being valued, the principles touch on reflecting NZ's cultural diversity, and being inclusive and engaging with community. It also improves coherence by linking to a wide range of subjects. Its connections are manifold."

"The values, principles and key competencies all relate to the Understanding Religion course. So too does the essence statement for the Social Sciences - how societies work; how to participate as critical, active, informed, responsible citizens."

### **POLICY**

These three questions were designed to get behind the specific process of introducing the use of RS ASs in a state school and school policies around, for instance, being qualified in a subject before you can teach it. The answers should point to differences in policy between RS AS use and other subjects.

### **How were the Religious Studies Achievement Standards added to your programme?**

Bearing in mind that some of the major public debates of the past about sexuality education or the current one over Bible in Schools instruction in primary schools, one might have thought that a major process would have had to be gone through by schools wishing to use RS ASs to make sure it was safe with the community. But this is not the case. The professional process of introducing a new assessment is functional (whether RS or Psychology) and covered by professional curriculum committees going about their business as usual.

Teachers said, "I simply asked the HOD and was given approval to include the RS Standards in History." "I went through the curriculum committee, which includes a member of SMT, for approval. Then several meetings held with teachers who were teaching it to clarify Achievement Standards, which were then made and moderated."

In summary, this is a very straightforward school policy matter. In all cases it starts with the interests of the teacher, is taken via the HOD to the curriculum committee, which will have SMT representation, approved and implemented like any other course. There was only one teacher who had to clarify with SMT that the use of RS Standards was not opening the door to the possibility of indoctrination.

This surprised me, in that I could not tell whether the functional nature of the teachers' RS AS introduction was an avoidance of publicity around religion, the treating of all ASs as just another assessment or something else. This will be an important follow up discussion in the Interviews to get a full picture of.

### **What degree(s) do you hold? How many years have you been teaching?**

#### **What subjects have you taught?**

These questions were designed to see what qualifications the teachers had to begin RS teaching with. Was there a school policy to comply with? These questions combined to give a picture of the experience and qualifications of the teachers related to RS. By and large the teachers in this cohort are well qualified Social Science teachers with majors in Philosophy, History, Sociology or English, with two with a RS major for their PGSE and two with RS minors. They are experienced teachers, with all but three



teaching for ten years or more. These results helped in variable analysis that explored whether previous experience or papers in RS was of significance in the choice of RS topics or RS teaching approaches.

Any difference in the qualifications of this cohort will show up against the sample of faith school teachers in the next chapter.

### **Summary of Questionnaire responses**

Two particular areas that can be explored more deeply in the interviews have become clear. The question of the transparency of RS ASs as just another NCEA AS or a subject in its own right. The question of the straightforward way RS AS use went through school systems – is there more to this than meets the eye?

## **The Interview Questions**

I had processed the Questionnaires before I began the Interviews. Here is a summary of the Interview responses. I had fourteen interviews with state school teachers of between twenty and sixty minutes each. When I finished each one of these interviews, I gained a really good impression of the passion and insight of a fellow teacher. They are all strong in their pursuit, they have to be, because in most cases they have started using RS ASs on their own and without any set curriculum, resources or RS network. The Interview questions are more open than the Questionnaire questions so that it gives the teachers the chance to describe their thinking and practices in more depth.

As with the Questionnaire I have combined the Interview answers under the three areas of philosophy, pedagogy and policy.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

#### **Interview Question 1**

**How do you see the teaching of Religious Studies being similar/distinct from other subjects?**

As a significant part of this thesis is trying to establish the particular characteristics of state school teachers' approach to RS teaching, this question was designed to elicit clarification around the teachers' understanding of RS as a subject, so that their approach could be compared with other approaches nationally and internationally. It combines well with question 10, which asked about their philosophy of RS teaching. It is not a leading question, so it allows the teachers to put emphasis on the similarities and differences of teaching RS to other subjects.

A common response is summed up by one teacher, "It is a human study, and this is understanding how and why different humans think and act as they do." This question has elicited clear understandings of the similarities and differences of teaching RS compared to teaching other subjects. It became clear which teachers were rigorous in an academic way and avoided certain areas of discussion, whereas others saw aspects of RS teaching venturing into understanding religion from a more personal, spiritual angle.

At the similarity end of the spectrum it is seen as an important part of the Social Sciences. The Social Studies teachers who examine the world of many different religions, beliefs, values and ideas see little distinction. They approach RS from a philosophical, historical, sociological framework, so the methodology is very much the same as their home subject. They are drawing on the domain of RS within their own disciplines, e.g. the Reformation within History, or ethics within Philosophy. A Social Studies teacher put it this way, "It's important we understand why people do what they do and behave the way they do and as I explain to my kids, back in the day everybody had a religion."

But at the distinct end of the spectrum would be those who find discussion heading into theological areas and the mystical aspects of religion. Looking back at the Questionnaire question on the topics covered, they are all very much RS topics. Some teachers avoid aspects of RS that would require them to explore these experiences, by not offering certain standards or avoiding certain topics. Others navigate carefully when discussions head in the direction of the more exacting focus on existential questions and self-reflection. Some of the learnings the students encounter can require their own exploration and some examination of their own prejudices and

points of view. And some respondents pointed out that trying to teach the Intifada or Reformation requires a good understanding of a particular religion. Also, at this end of the spectrum there is the need to be more sensitive to different beliefs within the class.

The RS style across the board is “teaching about religion”, as Schreiner delineated it (page 22), but some teachers venture more into the personal beliefs and spiritual reflection of the students in discussion, as in Schreiner’s “learning from religion” category. Some teachers balance the two approaches comfortably. “So, it’s more studying it as outsiders looking at a topic but obviously, we bring in where kids have an internal experience that they come from a particular faith tradition themselves and they’re able to add that personal experience into the wider class discussion.”

An interesting additional strand of many of the teachers’ response to this question was a significant amount of dissatisfaction with the way RS was moderated by the national assessors. This is an NCEA subject that has to be administered in as professional a way as other subjects. The majority of the teachers felt that there seemed to be an insider’s bias rather than a multi-faith emphasis to the national moderators’ guidelines. This was particularly a criticism of the way the RS AS went through a revision process recently, but the submissions to make the RS AS more general and open would seem to have been ignored, and what has happened is a narrowing of the RS ASs to favour a single tradition within a religion, which does not take account of the wider clientele cohort in state schools. This is evidence that points to RS teaching being different in a secular setting to a faith setting.

The answers to this question also amplified the Questionnaire question on the name of the course in which RS ASs were used. Calling the course philosophy or history, for instance, kept the main subject’s essence intact, and the RS ASs used were a complement. In some cases, the students would not have known there was a RS AS in their history or philosophy course. Teachers talk elsewhere about keeping any religious or secular concerns at bay, so this also adds to the idea that in state schools RS AS use is subsumed under a Social Science banner.

## Interview Question 10

### Could you describe your philosophy of Religious Studies teaching succinctly?

There was a question mark in the planning stage as to whether this question would stump teachers, but in the end, they gave profound short summaries. Again, their answers are very much in keeping with the NZC focus on diversity and support the TKI explanatory note on the RS ASs. The philosophy of RS teaching that best summarises the group would be: one has a duty to know the world's diversity of belief systems. "I think that everyone has a duty to understand how and why people behave the way they do based on faith. Basically, I think it's just about understanding the world you live in." Another teacher said, "Religious traditions represent a great deal of wisdom about why we are here, and it is worth spending time listening to those voices. It's worth the students hearing these people and thinking about these ideas. It's also a valuable experience for students to learn about other people and their cultures as it contributes to their understanding and hopefully their tolerance."

The interview responses to this question in particular, really showed a varied approach to RS teaching. So I could not say all state schools are in this category or that category. One of the most interesting realities about this set of teachers is that they started off with no curriculum. Here are enthusiastic teachers from whatever background creating a reality out of this matrix of RS ASs. I found this quite revealing getting to their philosophy, and their philosophy is very much historical, philosophical, and/or sociological.

The questions from the Questionnaire and the Interview are gleaning straight facts through to personal stories. Many of the answers show a pragmatic approach and very much curriculum-based motivation as they are thinking of their students. "I've got my subject, how do I motivate them, I know, let's do the Reformation." "Let's look at an ethical approach to that – how about what the Salvation Army is doing." But they are also passionate to a teacher about the big picture of connection to the big picture of making sense of the world and affirming common humanity. There is a strong link in the Social Studies teachers' philosophy with the history of Social Studies teaching from Thomas on (outlined in chapter 2).

## **Interview Questions 7 & 8**

**How does RS fit into your school's overall ethos, goals and values?**

**Do you see RS growing into a wider role in your school?**

**Are there any barriers to its growth?**

"I feel like our programme is a reflection of our identity.... We're really big here on trying to validate the kids in a different cultural capital and giving that kind of opportunity in a non-threatening way it really adds to what we do."

"That whole idea of different cultures and beliefs and understanding those different cultures and beliefs fits into that kind of values and ethos within the school because you try and encourage that inclusiveness."

These two quotes reflect the schools who have a multi-cultural student body and the RS use fits well into the school as a whole, though RS itself is not seen as a driver or a necessity in the fostering of understanding cultural diversity.

None of the respondents really saw RS growing into a wider role any time soon. Perhaps it is because there is no national trend towards a wider use of RS in state schools or even that there does not seem to be a national drive to understand diversity more. As one teacher put it, "At the moment I think that it still hasn't reached critical mass and there is always a critical mass that comes with any subject and once it reaches that then I think that we will be on our way". There were barriers to growth identified like the lack of a history of RS in New Zealand, nervousness around perceived negative attitudes to RS and the actual RS ASs in their current form not being open enough and not being very state school friendly in some ways.

One of the teachers is very clear in why it should have a wider implementation but notes the specific barrier of growth being the RS ASs themselves. "I think it needs to have a spot. I think we talk about the schools being secular schools etcetera and I think people imply that and take from that implication that there's not any religion or discussion of religion but if we're actually talking about diversity within our schools there's got to be a recognition that some students will come from faith backgrounds and some will not. We can't ignore the fact that some come from faith backgrounds

because it marginalises them. Even sociologically it hides a whole interaction within NZ society. A major barrier to growth is the lack of clarity I think - it's about the genesis of those RS ASs in particular, of where they came from and what they were there to serve. The standards should help us teach students about diversity, but at the moment the standards with their explanatory notes pigeon-holes things."

This teacher is a passionate Social Science teacher who uses the RS ASs to grow the understanding of religious diversity in the school. But the concerns expressed are that the RS ASs as they are written and administered are a barrier to their full usefulness in state schools.

## **Interview Question 2**

### **How is Religious Studies valued alongside other subjects at your school?**

The teachers say it does not draw a lot of attention as such. One might generalise that the sciences are highly valued and respected amongst subjects at high school. They are visible and given attention. RS teaching, because it is mainly done within other subject domains does not get much publicity, and indeed the teachers might not want it to get much publicity. But there is generally respect for its part in the curriculum and support for the way it complements a school's diversity.

It is valued as an NCEA subject because it has to go through the same moderation procedures as all other subjects. "I think by the staff I think it's quite valued. A lot of the staff are really interested when you hear what you're teaching."

At the negative end it might appear to be unnoticed, subsumed under other subjects or even seen as an easy credit subject for those who need another six credits.

From the students' point of view, they are taking the course in significant numbers and are really engaged in learning, discussion and field trips. "It attracts a diverse range of students, from the very brightest who are potential dux candidates, through to students who are struggling, found it hard to get literacy. So, I think because of the numbers and also the calibre it seems a subject of equal value than any other subject." However, by and large the students do not know there is an RS component when they

sign up to a course, say in history or philosophy, which makes it hard to specifically note the impact of RS.

This teacher's quote shows that the value of a subject is dictated by the school's highest values. "I think the more that religious studies goes down the path of the university entrance, the literacy approved and finally having a scholarship exam attached to it, the more credibility it's going to get". But not all schools will necessarily see the introduction of scholarship or exams as the best way to increase numbers taking RS. It is a minor subject in the scheme of things in state schools at the moment, so it will be very interesting to see if and how numbers can increase over the next few years.

## **PEDAGOGY**

### **Interview Question 5**

#### **How do you measure the success of the RS programme?**

"Probably in terms of the excitement that is generated among the teachers when we get together and co-mark everything."

"It's about teaching the whole student, it's a bit more holistic, there's success in that as well as the academic success."

"The Māori and Pasifika students certainly did a lot better in their RS ASs than some of the other ones and I think that's just tapping into something that's already quite important in their lives and adding a bit of interest."

In New Zealand high schools, the success of programmes is officially measured by pass rates and student numbers taking courses. Within the framework and process of NCEA assessment and moderation the teachers in this cohort are trusted professionally in their use of RS ASs, and this is backed up by national moderation. The teachers are particularly encouraged when the use of RS ASs helps students of certain demographics gain credits. The use of RS Standards has definitely been an advantage to students with religious understanding and average students who do better with internal assessment than exams and tests.

Teachers also measure success in engagement and all-round growth. They regularly access “student voice” to reflect on the interest in and effectiveness of their courses. The teachers in this research group are no different, though the particular perspectives that the RS programme opens up is often highlighted, noting with excitement how the RS topics open up learning about cultural diversity, different perspectives and religious faith.

### **Interview Question 3**

**What were the criteria for you choosing the RS standards you did? Were there particular reasons for you not choosing one of the RS standards available?**

These questions extend the excellent answers given in the Questionnaire, question 7, in that they are designed to find out why particular RS ASs were used or avoided. Following on from the Questionnaire answers, I was hoping to find out why they chose a certain level, the reasons around them continuing with the same RS AS and whether they had considered changing a RS AS at any stage. The question also had the more general intention of finding out why they chose RS ASs at all.

Except for one school, the choice of RS ASs fits with the programme they are complementing, like history or philosophy. So, for instance, the philosophy course does not use the religious text standard, rather chooses the ethics or comparative world views one. “They had to fit with our philosophy programme. For example, the sacred texts ones have no relevance to us. The ethics ones do, and the key beliefs ones do, they just fit better with our things that we already cover.” Or as part of history it complements and adds a high interest level. “History requires to posit yourself within the world view of the people of the time you are studying. Religion is essential to that. They’ve got to see inside that world view to properly get the topic. I think it has added value to their study of history.” Also, safety was a concern, so not doing a standard that might be seen to be too religious was important. “It fits in with the Social Science goals.”

So, it is obvious that there was a perception that 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1, the sacred texts strand, were not appropriate in a state school. It was an area the teachers felt they would have to head into confessional areas with, (as in Schreiner’s category of



“education into religion”).) This avoidance is understandable given the teachers’ perception of the secular setting they are operating in. One of the teachers had avoided using 3.2, with such fears. 3.2 was originally worded as “Analyse religious expression in Aotearoa New Zealand”. The teacher felt it would require too much heading into the dangerous territory of theology and practice. But when I pointed out how the wording of 3.2 had changed and how it could be used from a sociological and historical perspective, for instance by simply asking, “Is New Zealand still Christian in 2016?”, then the initial narrow interpretation of the standard gave this teacher a new perspective and opportunity.

The reasons teachers gave for sticking with the RS ASs they had and not changing them was that the introduction of the particular standard had been smooth, and the content could be chosen to suit the subject in which the RS AS was being used. So, it is easy to say that you are doing an ethics standard, for instance, because it raises no concerns. Also, the wording of the RS ASs does not prescribe the content stringently, so designing an assessment from the RS AS that suits your subject content, is totally up to the individual teacher. Obviously, they chose carefully in the first place and did not feel the need to change the chosen standard(s) at all.

The one school where a whole Year 13 Level 3 course only uses RS ASs the criteria for choosing the standards was around the maturity and cultural capital of the students, “The only thought of expanding it was to cover the religions in great depth.” But even in this one exception, the Year 13 RS AS use is seen as a culmination of a rich Social Studies programme over four previous years.

Finally, the strengths and interests of the teachers themselves were important in the decisions. Mostly the level at which the RS ASs were used just matched the particular teacher’s load. For instance, a year 12 English teacher decided to add a RS AS to her course to add interest to it, particularly to develop their ethical empathy and critical thinking skills. The schools with a Philosophy programme searched around NCEA subjects to support running their subject, and despite reservations, they had used RS ASs to do this.

The overall impression of the answers to this question is a combination of practical usefulness of the standard chosen combined with the perceived hard question of is it likely to rock the secular boat.

Problems with understanding the national RS moderators' interpretation of the assessments arose in most interviews without prompting, because it highlighted the awkwardness around the standards in their different contexts. Here is how one teacher summed up the problem. "The RS ASs as they are worded and administered at the moment pigeon-holes things and forces us to define them as religion when the world's not quite as neat as that. Whether something is philosophical, or a religious or a political position or a cultural or social one, it's really difficult to say. When you study Shintoism, you can't just study this or that aspect as the purely religious parts. The RS ASs don't really seem to help with understanding that diversity." Is this a widely felt area of contention? It will be interesting comparing the state school dissatisfaction in this area to the faith school teachers' response and understanding.

There was no indication from the teachers in either the Questionnaire or the Interview that the use of the RS ASs could be seen as an easy filler assessment for students needing supplementary credits. This has been labelled "credit-farming" and "harvesting"<sup>38</sup> Was there any suggestion that their use of RS ASs was for easy credits, easier assessment options or an academically valid and interesting subject? The answers indicate in a highly professional way, that the teachers were looking to find the right fit of assessment options for their students and at the same time trying to match this with an interesting course that would engage them.

Further to this, was their use of RS ASs more about a general assessment opportunity than honouring a subject with its own autonomy? The answers here show real integrity, with the broadness of the wording of the RS ASs, teachers tried to treat their content to the assessment with consistency and honour to what they understood the RS focus to be.

---

<sup>38</sup> Hipkins, Johnston, Sheehan, 2016, 43

#### **Interview Question 4**

##### **What are the skills and knowledge the students need to have to do RS well?**

“From a Social Studies’ perspective, they’re actually a really similar skill set. As we bring them through, we’re looking at basic stuff, like cause and effect and heavily emphasising perspective, like historical and contemporary issues. That leads quite nicely into the Religious Studies side of it and of course we’re able to emphasise things like empathy but also we look at difference and understanding different concepts of respect.”

So perhaps the only distinct RS aspect is the empathy with understanding faith and the spiritual dimension, whereas the skill to research and write about these are general academic skills. The topics that are being covered are particular to the RS domain. One of the skills that has to be developed is learning to appreciate other people’s world views. This is a challenge sometimes.

Building up that safety net and mediating potential challenge or confrontation are part of the sensitivities of all of the teachers involved.

“The way I teach it is I say to them look, you don’t have to be religious but what we’re doing is we’re writing and we’re understanding what a particular group of people think about something, a particular issue.”

#### **Interview Question 6**

##### **Can you characterise the students who take this subject?**

In only a couple of schools did the students know the RS ASs were a significant part of the course and sign up accordingly out of interest, though their preconceptions of what RS is can vary, whereas others have entered History or Philosophy for interest and find RS as an extra dimension which they then react to variously. So, from the curious to the critical, from the personally committed and practising to the surprised and secular, there is perhaps no categorising of a student set, other than having a bent for the Social Sciences.

The general characteristics of the students in a class depends on the culture of the school and the philosophy of the subject they are in. This is what a Philosophy group might be characterised as. "Not many of them have any religious affiliation. So most of them are from secular backgrounds, many of them will say that they're openly atheist or agnostic."

In contrast a school with a wider cultural diversity might look like this: "It is very diverse. We do get Christian people taking it and that means that a strong Christian community in the Pacific Islands, so there's a lot of Pacific Islanders in there. And Europeans and we also have Middle Eastern, Muslim students. The least represented is probably Buddhist. Although we do have Asian students taking it from South East Asia."

One thing is clear though from all the teachers' responses is that they have to be aware of where the students are coming from in terms of culture and belief and have to set up a safe environment for sharing their beliefs and opinions.

Also, there was a common theme that when it came to studying a world religion for the first time at Year 11 to 13, students were shocked they had not encountered this important area of world knowledge at all before. An example of this is summarised by this teacher: "The students we've got actually are quite interested when we look at a variety of religions. There's also a little bit of shock, almost like how could we have got to this age and not heard about this area of knowledge. Like arriving at secondary school and never had the concept of history. It's just peculiar. A whole aspect of society or thing that affects society that they don't have an awareness of and they're quite shocked by that sometimes."

## **Summary findings from the Questionnaires and Interviews on differences in RS philosophy, pedagogy compared to other NCEA subjects**

What the evidence from the state school teachers using RS ASs suggests is that while they can connect the RS ASs to NZC themes for safety, they are actually accessing this new subject area professionally and treating RS with integrity. Most of the cohort are learning on the run and adapting their programme very specifically to their own contexts. It is an opportunity that NCEA has provided, more than a need that has been identified, even though they each think there should be a place for understanding religion that is more universal than just in limited RS AS use.

The stronger differences against other subjects have been accentuated around philosophy and pedagogy. The process of introducing the RS Standards into state schools is a straightforward academic one and done professionally on a needs-of-students and interest-of-teachers base. The policy dimensions around RS AS introduction and use did not bring out significant differences to other NCEA subjects. The significance of this is that RS does not gain any unwanted attention. It will be interesting to see what differences the comparison groups introduced in the next chapter bring out.

### **The secular elephant in the room.**

There is a strong thread of caution about using the word religion in the state school environment from most of the teachers. Listening to these teachers telling their stories of their reality as regards the secular dimension as it impacts on their teaching practice is an essential part of this research. "People here would define themselves as a secular school, but I think there's confusion about what secular means." By taking these state school teachers comments their anecdotal feedback can inform the secular zeitgeist thesis. I have included a longer list of quotes than I have used to date, because I think it is necessary to get a feel for a range of the teachers' fears as it is a significant milieu they describe.

“Parents-wise, that’s the bigger concern. Every year when I do one of these assessments, I need to send a little email home using Kamar saying whilst it’s titled RS, they’re very secular, we’re not proselytising, it’s very much a history focus, and we also have to do the safety talk with the students as well. Because debates do come up and we do have to handle it.”

“There are some standards I wouldn’t touch with a barge pole in a secular school because I think they’re just, they’re about a belief system that some people may not buy into so it would be very difficult to teach those.”

“Obviously in a state school I have to be quite careful of navigating, that none of the kids misinterpret this as being any kind of spiritual influencing or anything of that kind so we tend to approach it as, a social science type approach.”

“I’ve kept it on the ethics type ones just because it fits with what I do and as I say I think my board and my head would sort of put their foot down and say no to anything that was more “religiousy”.”

“We have to be careful to make sure that it is not perceived that we are teaching religion, as opposed to teaching about religion.”

“A barrier to growth is that it’s a secular school! I find it quite funny because I wouldn’t be allowed to teach a religious studies course because of it being a secular school They wouldn’t allow it as an option in and of itself.”

“I think we talk about the schools being secular schools etc and I think people imply that and take from that implication that there’s not any religion or discussion of religion but if we’re actually talking about diversity within our schools there’s got to be a recognition that some students will come from faith backgrounds and some will not. We can’t ignore the fact that some come from faith backgrounds because it marginalises them.”

This is the reality for these teachers. They feel a secular pressure at all times, mostly from the weight of the religion-free zone of secondary schools that they have experienced up to this time. There is also a little concern about not letting the Christian lobby gain cause for concern and protest. The nervousness comes from within the school as well. In more than one case, when I was approaching principals to see if I could contact the teacher teaching RS at their school, they strongly denied that their school taught RS at all. When I shared the NZQA data that showed their school had entered students in RS ASs, they insisted that I rephrase my question around the use of RS ASs rather than teaching RS itself.

## **Analysis using coding and variables**

To further try and characterise the state schools' use of RS ASs, some coding with variables run through the data was undertaken. This was to potentially further focus my conclusions around which factors were more influential in the introduction of RS ASs in state schools. I have included a couple of the results that gave more insight into the teachers' responses.

### **Coding by "type" of RS teaching**

By interpreting the teachers' responses to the questions about their philosophy of RS teaching and skills needed for RS in particular, I categorised their "type" of teaching on a five-point scale, adding two in-between descriptors to Schreiner's three-fold "education about", "education from" and "education into". This analysis is aimed at bringing out any differences in teaching style to other subjects. An example of a teacher's quote is attached to each category.

1. "Learning about religion" –  
"We are treating religion as an object of study from a philosophical perspective."
2. "Learning about and from religion" –  
"Religious traditions represent a great deal of wisdom about why we are here, and it is worth spending time listening to those voices."
3. "Learning from religion" –  
"It's about teaching the whole student, it's a bit more holistic, there's success in that as well as the academic success."
4. "Learning from religion and learning to be religious" –  
"It's a journey of exploration and anybody who is interested in the life of the spirit and the life of the soul and the way man develops spiritually, this is the only subject to take."
5. "Learning to be religious"



The answers from the state school teachers fell into the first two categories. The full school list is on page 46.

**FIGURE 10. RS teaching “type”**

Learning about religion	Learning about and from religion
Schools 1, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11	Schools 2, 3, 5, 9

There is a sense of tension around the description of how RS ASs are taught to. Part of the tension is the sensitivity many of the teachers feel around the public perception of religion in state schools and a perceived or real secular zeitgeist. So, they are extra vigilant to teach the religion content like any other Social Science topic.

The coding descriptor 1, learning about religion, fits the delivery of many of the schools. The RS ASs themselves require description or explanation or analysis of a religious tradition’s ethics, history or beliefs, which in code 1 is done historically, sociologically or philosophically to be academically safe. A teacher might describe their own personal philosophy of teaching RS as studying the most important dimensions of life, but not actually deliver the course in that way. Trying to understand why people behave or believe as they do can be done sociologically for instance, without needing to emphasize learning anything from the faith dimension of religion.

The coding descriptor 2, which includes aspects of learning from religion, happens in schools that may still be sensitive about the contesting voices (evangelical Christians and the secular lobby) but have a school ethos or student body who clearly see that what they are learning is applicable and relevant in their lives. So, these schools’ use of the RS ASs might be more open to learning from the religious studies traditions they are studying and seeing the relevance to their lives.

Can the teaching approach be categorised further by variables?

**FIGURE 11. RS teaching “type” and decile**

Learning about religion		Learning about and from religion	
Schools	1, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11	Schools	2, 3, 5, 9
Deciles	8, 6, -, 8, 10, 7	Deciles	2, 5, 4, 8

There is a strong correspondence between higher decile ratings and “learning about religion”. There is good correspondence between lower decile ratings and “learning about and from religion”, with one school going against this trend. Adding another variable of ethnicity to decile adds a different perspective on the coded teaching approaches.

**FIGURE 12. RS teaching “type”, decile and ethnicity**

Learning about religion		Learning about and from religion	
Schools	1, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11	Schools	2, 3, 5, 9
Deciles	8, 6, -, 8, 10, 7	Deciles	2, 5, 4, 8
Euro %	52, 43, 62, 55, 59, 80	Euro %	9, 49, 42, 49
Maori %	24, 33, 29, 15, 8, 14	Maori %	20, 21, 51, 15,
Pasifika%	7, 7, 3, 12, 5, 1	Pasifika%	44, 9, 2,

These decile and ethnicity percentages are derived from the 2016 NZQA update.

Adding in ethnicity percentages does not give a straight forward accentuation of the two styles of teaching being coded. While all the schools in category 2 have over 10% less European population than the national average, two of the schools in category 1 are also over 10% below the national averages. It is however very interesting for this group of state schools, in that six of the schools, across both categories of teaching have a much higher than average Māori population than the national average and also six of the schools, again, across both categories of teaching, are well below the European/Pakeha national average.

This has particularly brought out some of the differences between the teachers' approach to RS AS use compared to other subject's RS use. It is more in the culturally diverse schools that there seems to be an aspect of "learning from religions" that would not occur in any other subject.

**FIGURE 13. RS teaching "type", decile and subject**

Learning about religion		Learning about and from religion	
Schools	1, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11	Schools	2, 3, 5, 9
Deciles	8, 6, -, 8, 10, 7	Deciles	2, 5, 4, 8
Subject	A, A, A, A, A, A	Subject	B, B, B, B

Adding in the variable of the subjects RS is under – A: philosophy, classics and history, versus B: social studies and understanding religion, the correlation between approaches to teaching RS strengthens the decile coding, but not the ethnicity coding. So, a higher decile school is more likely to use RS ASs in a course like philosophy or history, whereas (with one exception) a mid to lower decile school is more likely to teach to a comparative religion curriculum within a general Social Studies programme.

#### **Method of introducing RS ASs**

This analysis was another way to check on whether there were patterns in the introduction of the RS ASs in state schools that stood out against the norm. The answers to this in the Questionnaire were functional and surprising to me.

Code for method of RS AS introduction

1. SLT consulted
2. Curriculum Committee consulted
3. HOD consulted
4. Self-introduced

**FIGURE 14. Method of RS introduction by decile and subject**

Code	1.SLT	2.Curriculum	3.HOD	4.Self
School no.	1, 3, 4, 5	6,9	7, 10	2, 11
Decile	8, 5, 6, 4	-, 8	8, 10,	2, 7
Subject	A, B, A, B	A, A	A, A	B, B

The process of the introduction RS ASs into State schools is no different to the introduction of any other subject. The teachers have followed processes that are normal practice within their schools. It varies from school to school how much autonomy an individual teacher has to construct their own course from various subject domains. In the case of the use of RS ASs in these state schools there are differences in scale of consultation. None of the schools, however, have gone to public consultation, as is required for the Health programme around sexuality. There is no particular pattern that the coding and running variables suggests in this case. But it can confirm that it does not matter about decile or subject bias as to which method of introduction is used.

### **Why RS ASs introduced**

This analysis was undertaken to try and discover patterns of take-up that might accentuate differences in the reasons for RS introduction compared to other subjects. A representative teacher quote is attached to each code.

#### **Code**

1 To fit a subject - “we wanted to create a philosophy course and had to find ASs.”

2 To add interest to a subject – “essentially it was to bring more interest into History.”

3 To suit the clientele’s cultural characteristics – “to reflect both the diversity in the school and cross-cultural understanding....”

4 To offer an internal course with achievable credits for weaker students - “it gives these lower ability girls half a chance of getting some credits.”

**FIGURE 15. Reasons for RS introduction**

Code	1	1 + 2	3 + 4
School no.	1, 6, 8, 11	3, 7, 10	2, 4, 5, 9
Decile	8, -, 8, 7	5, 8, 10	2, 6, 4, 8
Subject	A, A, A, A	B, A, A	B, A, B, A

The results here suggest that higher decile schools by and large are more academically focused, which supports their clientele. There is nothing wrong with working at understanding religion through rigorous research, like the long running New Zealand Attitude and Values Survey. With a different focus, namely by working with the cultural and religious capital of their students, some schools across deciles and teaching approaches use the RS ASs very effectively.

**Are there differences in the RS philosophy, pedagogy and policy compared with other NCEA subjects? And what is the significance of these differences?**

This is only a short summary of this chapter’s findings as a fuller summary and review comes at the end of the next chapter and in the conclusion. “Placing” the nature of the RS ASs delivery in state schools at this stage is a question of describing what has happened just in the teachers own words, against the New Zealand setting as regards religion and schools, in general discussion about the contested field of religious studies itself and specifically in the ways the state teachers describe differences between the use of RS ASs and other subjects.

In some ways the use of the RS ASs does not seem dissimilar in use to other subjects, particularly policy-wise. RS is another subject subtly added, without drama, to the plethora of NCEA subject offerings. There is Ministry of Education encouragement to use the RS ASs and there are models of state use growing in pockets.

Curricular-wise, the teaching to RS ASs sits very comfortably under the umbrella of NCEA Social Studies. But the RS development is different, because there is no RS curriculum, it has no mention in the NZ Curriculum and has never been taught in NZ

secondary schools before. There is no specific teacher training required and the teachers who take it only need an interest and any degree. A difference that has been highlighted is that there has been a positive reflection from many of the teachers about being able to access areas of discussion around religious diversity that they would not otherwise have had the opportunity for.

Philosophy-wise, there is a practical approach to the use of RS ASs in another subject area like history that shows up a difference compared to other subjects. It is particularly in the flexibility of the use of the RS ASs that the difference is strongest. Also the use of RS ASs has seen a quiet philosophy of not drawing too much attention to its use to the extent of saying it is not religion that is being taught, but ethics. The response of some schools when I made contact to see if they would take part in the research, was that they did not teach RS, even though I had evidence from the NZQA data that their students had been entered into RS ASs.

**How has this data helped answer the research question: What factors account for the post-2009 growth of RS Achievement Standard use in New Zealand state secondary schools?**

A key answer is that it is individual teachers with an interest who have introduced the RS ASs into schools, either to respond to the needs of a multi-cultural clientele or to complement specific subjects like Philosophy or History. It also clearly seems to be an NCEA opportunity that has been taken up, perhaps encouraged by the Ministry of Education's promotion of a cross-curricular approach. There is also a strong values base in the philosophy of teaching of the teachers who have used the RS ASs that makes the use of RS content sit comfortably in a state school, particularly within the Social Science domain with its empathy for understanding cultural diversity.

It will now be interesting to see, in comparison with NZ faith schools and the comparison countries of Australia, Canada and the UK, whether further differences in the New Zealand state school use of the RS ASs can be drawn out.

*“The Religious Studies standards have been developed for a diverse Aotearoa New Zealand and need to be able **to be used by all schools and all students** – by those with a specific religious affiliation as well as by those who have none but wish to acquire knowledge and understanding of religions.....*

*The Ministry has not developed resources relating to individual standards because of **the difficulties associated with selecting contexts** that would be useful to teachers. If a context were selected that related to a specific religious faith, the resource would not be engaging for those who did not espouse the faith that was used as the context; and if generic contexts were used, they would be very abstract and therefore unlikely to be engaging.”<sup>39</sup>*

## **CHAPTER 4. Comparisons**

### **Faith school sample and comparison countries described and analysed in contrast to state schools**

The introductory quote has an added supplementary explanation (as part of the TKI statement used at the beginning of chapter two) about RS AS use. This throws up a question about the perceived wide range of possible contexts the AS RSs might be used in. Is this the Ministry’s avoidance of acknowledging that RS is not in the NZC? Is this showing a lack of certainty about which model(s) of RS teaching are acceptable? Does it show a lack of certainty about the way RS ASs might be received and perceived in the state sector?

The wording as it is, seems to allow for confessional through to academic approaches. Is there a decided uncertainty, even confusion, about the audience who will take up use of the RS ASs or were the RS ASs launched with a view to opening up genuine teaching about religion in all schools? One gets the impression that this scenario is very particular to RS ASs. The state school teachers in my census feel a little unsure of the direction the RS ASs are going in. Adding in the responses of the faith school

---

<sup>39</sup> Te Kete Ipurangi / Social Sciences / Religious Studies, 1

interviewees I have in this research should shed some light on how these issues are perceived and played out in a different context.

In this chapter I add the analysis of the sample of New Zealand faith schools against the state schools' scenario described and discussed in the last chapter, and also introduce three comparison countries into the discussion. This will allow me to further characterise the RS approach in NZ state schools. These comparisons particularly focus on finding answers to the second two subsidiary questions of the thesis around differences between state schools and faith schools, and state schools and the selected comparison countries. These comparison groups are being used as "lenses" to help delineate differences in the state school approach to RS AS use.

### **The NZQA data files**

Since 2009 300 schools have entered students in NCEA RS ASs, with the most entries in one year being 179 schools, in 2015.

The break down is: 212 State, 49 Catholic, 20 Anglican and Presbyterian, 19 other Christian denominations/faiths. 11 more integrated/private schools entered students in 2016 compared to 2015.

**FIGURE 16. The Providers: the increase in the number of schools that are entering the students in the RS ASs.**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Increase
<b>State</b>	33	37	36	42	57	84	98	76	<b>+43</b>
<b>Catholic</b>	45	48	49	49	49	49	49	49	<b>+4</b>
<b>Integrated/ Private</b>	10	15	6	19	26	31	31	42	<b>+32</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>+79</b>



## 2015 to 2016 changes

While there is a small overall drop in providers between 2015 and 2016, it is not a drop in significant providers. By significant provider, I mean schools that are entering at least a class of students in at least one RS standard. The 49 Catholic providers stay strong and the other integrated schools, along with private schools have increased in participation. In the state sector the key dozen schools in my study are maintaining their numbers in RS and will need support for succession plans, because there were five schools who dropped off because the teacher who used RS ASs left.

**FIGURE 17. Students: the increase in the numbers of students being assessed by Religious Studies Standards.**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Increase
<b>TOTAL</b>	12011	14544	15406	15985	16408	17052	18034	18055	<b>+6044</b>
<b>State</b>	44	229	188	380	597	757	1020	769	<b>+725</b>
<b>Catholic</b>	11325	12386	13392	13678	13893	14024	14291	14407	<b>+3082</b>
<b>Integrated Private</b>	642	1708	1824	1927	1918	2291	2725	2879	<b>+2237</b>

In 2009, 94.2% of the students sitting RS AS were from the 45 Catholic providers, with 5.8% of the students coming from all other schools. Students from state schools only made up 6.8% of the students from the “other than Catholic” schools, or 0.36% of all students.

In 2016, the Catholic percentage was 79.7%, other faith schools were 15.9%, and state schools were 4.2% of all students entered and 21.2% of the students from the “other than Catholic” schools.

There is still an increase in the number of students entered in RS despite the drop of 251 students less in state schools from 2015 to 2016. 203 of those students are from one school. That teacher who used 1.2 and 2.2 for all his students in History, a significant number in fact, moved schools in 2016 and no one continued the RS content. However, he is starting the same programme gradually at his new school and so the numbers will be back up from 2018. The other factor is the large number of single-entry students. For instance, 50 students from 50 different schools were

entered in one standard in 2015, but there was not one entry in those schools in 2016. (Full details of this were outlined in the chapter 3.)

The large number of students entered in RS across the country in all school types is similar in number to those entered in bigger subjects like History and Geography. The numbers in state schools however is more like a smaller subject like Art History. As noted in the last chapter, RS AS use fluctuates with teacher movement in the state schools, with RS AS stopping after an individual teacher using the standards leaves. Also with the RS ASs it appears that they have been used quite extensively as a one-off extra six credit assessment, with or without a class of students, or a teacher even.

The following table shows the use of RS ASs across all school types and accentuates the small numbers (relative to faith schools) using RS ASs in state schools.

All the Catholic colleges are entering most of their students at all three levels of RS, which means RS stands alongside the other academic subjects students take in Year 11, 12 and 13, with equal credit possibilities and almost equal time allocation. For the other faith schools, while less than half of them are entering most students at all three levels, like the Catholic colleges, all but a couple are entering all students at one or two of the levels. A third of the other than Catholic faith schools are entering students in RS ASs at just one level, but it is still the whole cohort. In none of the state schools is the whole year level cohort entered, with the biggest proportion of a year group sitting an RS AS standard being well under half of the cohort total. One reason for this difference will have to do with compulsory entry in RS ASs in the faith schools generally being the norm and the numbers in the state schools entering RS ASs depending on the numbers who have chosen a particular course. So, the state school scenario is option related.

**FIGURE 18. 2016 students entered in NCEA RS AS by State / Faith (other than Catholic) / Catholic**

(Level 1/Level 2/Level 3 = total)

**Faith (other than Catholic)**

**State**

(42 faith schools entered students in RS)

(76 state schools entered students in RS)

(with a total of 2879 students – 16%)

(with a total of 769 students – 4%)

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 172/188/44 = 404</li> <li>2. 282/0/0 = 282</li> <li>3. 134/91/0 = 225</li> <li>4. 188/0/0 = 188</li> <li>5. 73/87/0 = 160</li> <li>6. 76/67/0 = 143</li> <li>7. 41/51/50 = 142</li> <li>8. 63/36/42 = 141</li> <li>9. 55/50/27 = 132</li> <li>10. 43/37/85 = 128</li> <li>11. 126/0/0 = 126</li> <li>12. 51/41/26 = 118</li> <li>13. 75/0/25 = 100</li> <li>14. 29/24/27 = 80</li> <li>15. 65/0/0 = 65</li> <li>16. 19/16/28 = 63</li> <li>17. 17/23/11 = 51</li> <li>18. 19/23/6 = 48</li> <li>19. 47/0/0 = 47</li> <li>20. 15/17/14 = 46</li> <li>21. 45/0/0 = 45</li> <li>22. 11/12/9 = 31</li> <li>23. 0/0/24 = 24</li> <li>24. 20/0/0 = 20</li> <li>25. 14/0/0 = 14</li> </ol>	<p>Schools with a teacher using RS AS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 27/48/28 = 103</li> <li>2. 50/25/21 = 96</li> <li>3. 48/18/22 = 88</li> <li>4. 0/02/78 = 80</li> <li>5. 9/19/35 = 62</li> <li>6. 0/01/56 = 57</li> <li>7. 12/16/25 = 53</li> <li>8. 46/0/0 = 46</li> <li>9. 0/0/28 = 28</li> <li>10. 27/0/0 = 27</li> <li>11. 0/21/0 = 21</li> <li>12. 0/0/11 = 11</li> <li>13. 0/01/8 = 9</li> <li>14. 9/0/0 = 9</li> </ol> <p>57 state schools entered 1 or 2 students only and 5 schools entered 3 or 4 students only.</p>
---	--

**Catholic Schools**

(49 Catholic schools entered students in RS)

(with a total of 14 407 students – 80% of all students entered)

Average students entered per year since 2009 by number of schools.

<b>500+</b>	<b>400+</b>	<b>300+</b>	<b>200+</b>	<b>100+</b>	<b>100-</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>

**FIGURE 19. Average RS ASs sat per student**

	ALL	ALL SCHOOLS	ALL	STATE	STATE SCHOOLS	STATE
Year	Total students	Total ASs sat	Av ASs sat	Total students	Total ASs sat	Av ASs sat
2009	12011	25580	2.12	44	55	1.25
2010	14544	33525	2.3	229	261	1.13
2011	15406	37639	2.44	188	207	1.1
2012	15985	41906	2.62	380	487	1.28
2013	16408	43726	2.66	597	968	1.62
2014	17052	46111	2.7	757	1227	1.62
2015	18034	48102	2.66	1020	1487	1.45
2016	18055	48560	2.68	769	1187	1.54

In comparison to Catholic Schools, where students are sitting two or three RS ASs at each of Years 11, 12 and 13, this graph shows that the state school use of RS Standards is usually only one or two per student. In NCEA, a full course in a subject requires at least 14 credits. From the questionnaires it is clear that state schools are not teaching full RS courses (except for one school at Year 13), but rather using RS as an extra topic to complement another subject domain in which the students will get their course accreditation. This adds clarification to a key difference in the use of RS ASs in state schools

#### **National spread of RS AS use**

I had a couple of enquiries from interested parties in the South Island when they heard about the increase in the use of RS ASs in state schools. One of the enquiries was news-related and the other for educational interest. In both instances the details I gave them did not match their expectations, as they had hoped to be able to identify the state schools who were leading the way. Other than the faith schools there are only a couple of state schools in Christchurch who have entered more than 8 students in a RS AS, and this as a part of a philosophy programme. 95% of the users of RS ASs in state schools are from the North Island and close to 60% of them are from either Auckland or Wellington. This may point to the importance of the context (multi-cultural and big city) allowing RS AS use to take root.

### **Key faith schools: selected as representative of the different faiths.**

The faith schools represented in my sample are from Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Evangelical Christian and Muslim traditions. I selected a cross section of faith schools to get this sample. This will provide some useful comparative analysis with the state school definition set up in the previous chapter. The principals of each of the schools identified from the NZQA data were sent a request with details of the research, and if they approved of it taking place, they were to pass on the research package to the teacher(s) using RS ASs in their school.

**FIGURE 20. Faith schools in sample with numbers of students sitting NCEA RS AS**

<b>Table 5</b>			<b>'15 / '16</b>	<b>'15 / '16</b>	<b>'15 / '16</b>	<b>'15 / '16</b>
<b>School</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Decile</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	main	3	43 / 41	38 / 40	43 / 31	<b>124 / 111</b>
2.	main	8	87 / 100	90 / 120	85 / 98	<b>260 / 318</b>
3.	main	3	23 / 11	12 / 12	7 / 9	<b>39 / 31</b>
4.	main	5	123 / 98	84 / 105	79 / 69	<b>283 / 272</b>
5.	main	7	170 / 163	152 / 165	107 / 109	<b>429 / 437</b>
6.	main	5	160 / 160	152 / 160	162 / 146	<b>474 / 466</b>
7.	main	10		0 / 8		<b>0 / 8</b>
8.	main	9	193 / 172	206 / 188	39 / 44	<b>437 / 404</b>
9.	main	8	56 / 55	27 / 50	18 / 27	<b>101 / 132</b>
10.	main	10	88 / 73	0 / 87		<b>88 / 160</b>

## **Questionnaire and Interview Results for Faith Schools**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

#### **What do you call your course that you use RS standards in?**

The faith schools named their courses RE, Theology and Philosophy, Christian Studies, Christian Living, Understanding Faith or RS. Just in the naming alone one gets a feel for the specific nature of the RS programme in the faith schools. The one school that calls their course RS actually runs the programme in a very traditional faith style. It is called RS because of the RS ASs used. The state schools are more than one step removed from this as they do not even name their course as RS but History and so forth.

### **Why were RS ASs introduced at your school?**

“Because Achievement Standards were the qualification that had the highest kudos. The school has prided itself on academic rigour and looked forward to having RS on a level playing field with other high-level subjects.”

This teacher quote sums up the gist of all the faith school teachers. Having RS on a level with other subjects, that could contribute to a student’s Merit or Excellence endorsement, that could support University Entrance and that could be one of the Level 3 subjects offering fourteen credits, has raised the profile of RS in the faith schools markedly. It has certainly increased student buy-in. There is still the “given” of a faith setting in the foreground though: to foster understanding and involvement in their tradition. The state school reasons for introducing the RS ASs is quite different to this. It is not to directly raise the profile of RS, but more to complement another subject, though in the use of the RS AS there was an authentic focus on religious history or ethics.

### **What are the benefits to your school from the Religious Studies programme?**

“Internal credits with no external exam pressure. Outreach and community projects that can be incorporated. Spirituality and prayer life can be explored through the topics. “

“We hope to develop/instil in students, a sound character according to the Qu’ran and Hadith and help them to realise their full academic potential.”

For the faith schools the benefits of having a university endorsed RS assessment cache that complements their special character has been a great boon. It benefits the whole school and is promoted proudly. In the state schools the benefits are very specific to the teacher and a subject that the RS ASs are used in. As yet, the state system has not seen the RS ASs being used to raise the value of understanding religious diversity as a whole. This is a very interesting point, in that the NZC has a huge diversity focus, but how it is being honoured in this important area of appreciation and understanding of religious diversity is not terribly visible yet.

## **PEDAGOGY**

The curriculum and RS ASs used by the faith schools is attached in the appendix (page 117). For all the Christian schools they have a Christian curriculum that might lead to Theology at university or Bible College. The Muslim school's topics cover the full spectrum of traditional Islamic teaching. The faith school topic collections would not be appropriate in their fullness in a state school as it would show a denominational and possibly proselytising thrust.

Another contrast between the faith and state school use of RS ASs is in the number of RS ASs entered at each level. All the Catholic schools and half the other faith schools are taking RS as a full subject at all three levels, entering students in two or three standards at each level. The other faith schools only use RS ASs selectively, for instance a number enter their whole Year 10 cohort into a Level 1 RS, but do not use the RS ASs at all in the senior school. The difference in the state schools is it is mostly one standard at a one level, to complement their main subject, though a couple of schools offer 3 RS ASs at one level.

### **How are the topics you teach and assess in Religious Studies aligned to the NZ Curriculum?**

The faith schools give first priority is to their faith tradition's curriculum and that delineates their main focus. For instance, the Catholic schools align to the Bishops' Curriculum. However, RE teachers in faith schools do follow best practice teaching guidelines and also link their RE teaching to the NZC's focus of skills, values and key competencies. The difference in the state schools is that the links to the NZC and home subject aims are very strong and there is no link to any authoritative RS source.

## **POLICY**

### **How were the Religious Studies Achievement Standards added to your programme?**

"We just changed from Unit Standards RS to AS RS."

"The Achievement Standards were phased in gradually so that the assessments were developed professionally using teachers from other already started

domains as advisors.”

“Curriculum Review Team identified a need. BOT adopted the proposal and it was rolled out over a number of years.”

There are different pressures in the faith schools to the state schools in this area. For Catholic schools it was just a roll-over because USs were extensively used, and time allocation was generous. While all of the faith schools have an existing RE time allocation, some had to apply for more periods to do justice to the RS ASs. In state schools it was a different process of adding RS ASs to an already existing subject, which did not require time adjustment, just course content variation. The process I expected state schools to go through to have religion taught in a class actually had to be followed by a couple of the non-Catholic faith schools, who had to go through an extensive consultation process involving proprietors and community.

#### **What degree(s) do you hold?**

Comparing the state school teachers and the faith school teachers it looks like there might be some clear difference between the two groups in specific RS qualifications. All the faith school teachers in the sample have a strong theology component in their qualifications, whereas the state school teachers have stronger Humanities degrees, though a few have significant enough RS components to be teaching RS in a Catholic school. Bearing in mind that the state school cohort is virtually a census, and the faith school sample is mainly of the RS HODs in their schools, the strength of the comparison might be limited.

There was a Catholic survey completed recently, which documented teacher qualifications, amongst other items, within its schools. The return for this research was around 37% of the total number of teachers in Catholic schools. 89% of the respondents taught RE. 41% of the RS teachers had RE and /or Theology qualifications from this sample.<sup>40</sup> So, there are probably many teachers in Catholic schools using their Humanities degree as their academic back up, but without exception the most

---

<sup>40</sup> Tuohy et al, 2015, 3



important “qualification” is being of the Christian faith. This is a significant difference in the state sector, of course, where a teacher’s faith position is actually not required, and by and large best kept quiet.

### **Summary of Questionnaire responses**

To sum up so far, the comparison with the faith schools has shown a strong use of the RS ASs to support the existing special character of the school. The addition of RS ASs has not required these schools to change their existing philosophy of RE, which is unashamedly nurturing in the faith. The differences in the state school use of the RS ASs that these characteristics highlight are mainly pedagogical and philosophical.

In contrast to the faith schools, the state school teachers have a subject specific adoption of RS ASs other than RS and they teach with a strong academic focus. Their philosophy is linked to NZC themes, not faith traditions, though many of them do enjoy entering areas of learning not otherwise available by teaching to the RS ASs.

### **The faith school teacher Interviews**

These responses from the faith school teachers further help distinguish the state school set of teachers in many more ways. I have chosen representative statements from the faith school teachers to the questions that provided the best evidence for this comparison to be explored and selected the questions which had the most useful material for this thesis.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

#### **How do you see the teaching of RS being similar/distinct from other subjects?**

“It’s a humanities subject, like so many, but RS has a special place of Faith and Reason which no other subject does – faith seeking understanding; faith purifying reason and reason purifying faith - it offers a synthesis that no other subject has. Students end up with disjointed knowledge unless they have something like Theology that can bring all the disparate parts into a single whole.”

“For a lot of our students they come from strong faith backgrounds and their parents practise, so if they get that home grounding when they come to the RS teacher it makes our job a lot easier. So, for us it’s just about building up their knowledge and helping them to internalise it so that they feel an emotional connection to what they are learning about.”

The strong faith base of the RS teachers in the faith schools, whether they have a growing secular clientele or not, allows them to teach RE unashamedly both to foster better academic understanding but possibly more importantly for them to nurture spiritual growth. This is strongly complemented by the next question, “how is RS valued alongside other subjects in your school?” Where the state schools do not really have a RS profile, because the RS ASs are under other subject domains and only used by small numbers of students, the faith schools can unashamedly promote theirs. There can be some resistance in faith schools to more emphasis on RE, as some of the integrated schools do have a clientele who see a disjunct between RS promotion and their school’s privileged status. But even this scenario accentuates a difference to state schools, because so far none of the teachers in this research have reported any resistance to the use of RS ASs, because they are fulfilling a positive function of raising interest in the home subject and giving students six credits per standard.

**Could you describe your philosophy of Religious Studies succinctly?**

“Most of life seems to rest on a choice between what the Greeks called Cosmos or Chaos, what Christianity calls Salvation or perdition. And it does seem to be a choice at the most profound level: Do I see meaning in the universe, in history and in my life? Or is it all purposeless chance – from the birth of the universe to my own birth; from the death of the universe to my own death. This choice – usually unconscious – colours my whole life, my whole attitude toward everything. It seems to me that RS can help a student see purpose in history, in the universe, in his/her own life. In the teaching of all else, it should be the main goal of the RS teacher to help a student make the positive choice.”

“My philosophy of RS is relational – I need to know my kids. I believe in teaching it as a subject, therefore giving it the gravitas required but at the same time remembering

that it is not just head knowledge – we really want it to be heart knowledge as well. We want them to incorporate everything they learn into their lives.”

“That I teach them what’s right, that I teach them according to the Qu’ran and the Sunna, that’s what’s important to me. That I teach them authentic knowledge – that’s all that matters – not whether they get Excellences or Merit.”

These responses fall into the realm of teaching Schreiner calls education into religion, into a strong focus of nurturing young people’s growth in faith. The fact that the use of RS ASs has added kudos to this project in faith schools has obviously been a big boon to them. But they could not take this philosophy of RS teaching into the state school environment, rather they would have to adopt the subtlety of the state school teachers’ approach.

## **PEDAGOGY**

**What were the criteria for your choosing the RS Standards you did? Were there particular reasons for you not choosing one of the RS standards available?**

“We had the experience of RS Unit Standards to go on, so we knew which ones had the most interest and engaged students and teachers the most. We also picked the RS ASs that corresponded to our expert RE teachers’ strengths.”

“This goes back 10 years. At Level 1 we decided to focus on the structure of the Bible strongly because not all of our students arrive knowing their way round a Bible that well. So we do that by teaching 1.1 and 1.4 – the purpose of the Bible and key themes in the Bible.”

The overall impression from this cohort was that they chose the set of RS ASs according to a number of key factors such as student interest, teacher knowledge and most importantly, relevance to the school’s special character. The state school teachers’ reasons matched the first two factors, but not the third of course. This emphasises how the introduction of RS ASs into faith schools has affirmed their whole school ethos, whereas in the state schools it is about subject interest, and even though many of the state school teachers see the potential of the big picture of

affirming religious diversity through the use of the standards, this is not something they feel has potential traction within the state school sector as yet.

**What are the skills and knowledge the students need to have to do RS well?**

For the faith schools, while they have taken the introduction of RS ASs up with a vengeance, they have also had to ensure that their students do complete their assessments with academic integrity. So, the analytical and critical thinking skills are crucial, as is a reasonable level of literacy. But they also see an aptitude for being receptive to the spiritual dimensions of the content as crucial. So, a preparedness to engage with existential questions and religious practice, and to treat the holy scriptures with reverence, are also essential to doing well in RS.

**How do you measure the success of the RS programme?**

“Besides the usual data tracking and marking of assessments the success of the RS programme is evident from the behaviour changes, outward manifestation of empathy and tolerance of the students in various interactive sessions.”

“We’d like to think there was good faith development going on. But it depends on the individual whether the RS AS work has a transference to faith. To some kids it really boosts their faith – but for others it’s just an academic exercise.”

Good results and an application of the subject matter into life itself are common responses from both faith and state school teachers, though the deepening of faith goal of the faith schools, would be a deepening appreciation for religious diversity in the state schools. A state school teacher said, “It’s also a valuable experience for students to learn about other people and their cultures as it contributes to their understanding and hopefully their tolerance.”

## State and Faith school Questionnaires and Interviews summarised

The following table is an attempt to summarise the similarities and differences between the way the RS ASs have been used in state and faith schools. Reading down this parallel tabulation, the differences in the state schools' approach to and use of RS ASs are clearly laid out and cumulatively are quite extensive.

**FIGURE 21. Summary of state and faith by philosophy, pedagogy and policy**

Aspect/question	State schools	Faith schools
<b>Philosophy</b>		
RS approach	Sociological, philosophical, historical mainly – straight out of Social Sciences, and with Social Science empathy, at times accessing faith of students for deeper understanding.	Faith based and academic. Confessional in the sense that academic learning is intended to impact on spiritual development of students.
Philosophy of RS/RE teaching	Social Science approach of “let’s try and understand the world we live in by looking at its peoples’ histories, beliefs and practices.”	RE approach of affirming a higher meaning to our existence through theological and religious studies programme.
Why were RS ASs added?	To add to subject (not RS!) interest/needs and to offer more achievable assessments for students.	To add kudos to existing RE programme.
Name of course RS ASs used in	Not RS, but History, Philosophy etc.	RE, RS or CE
<b>Pedagogy</b>		
Topics/religions taught	General RE, more like university RS, with variety of religions taught.	Majority teaching in depth about the home faith’s history, scriptures, teaching and expression.
The RS AS strands	Little use of 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1, the sacred texts strand - seen as risking going too close to RI. Strands that complement home subject, teacher interest and student cohort used.	All strands accessed according to how they reinforce home faith, how competent teacher feels and how it might engage students
Solo or part of department?	Mostly just one teacher using RS. Four schools had 2 to 4 in a team using AS RSs.	In most schools a strong team of up to 12 RS teachers. Some of the Anglican and

		Presbyterian schools just have one chaplain/RE teacher.
Succession plan?	If a teacher using RS ASs leaves, programme falls over, i.e. introduced through single teacher initiative.	If an RE teacher leaves the programme continues and replacement sought.
Student skills needed	Literacy Research ability Desire to learn about other cultural beliefs and practices	Literacy Research ability Desire to learn more about the home faith in more depth
<b>Policy</b>		
History of NZ's religion in schools developments	Religion has never been taught as a subject in state schools, despite the background Christian milieu and continued public Christian rituals in secondary schools. Use of RS ASs in last decade by state school teachers is not really seen as religion in schools.	Catholic schools integrated into state fold in 1975 and had RE accepted as 6 <sup>th</sup> Form Certificate subject in 90s. Other religious schools gain state support. Religion in special character schools is state sanctioned – their confessional practices supported.
Use of RS ASs	Selective – one or two RS ASs used, to complement different subject domains.	Full RS subject use, 3 RS ASs per student per level in Catholic schools and 2 or 3 RS ASs in half of other faith schools (other half selective use).
Teachers' qualifications	Social Science degrees mostly, with small % of teachers having RS components.	A variety of Humanities degrees with some level of theology in most cases.
How were RS ASs introduced?	Through existing internal school curriculum development models – no community consultation.	Simple change from use of RS USs to RS ASs in Catholic. Other faith some negotiation with curriculum committee and community required.
How was RS added to curriculum?	Added to NZC subjects like History or Classics and strongly linked to NZC.	RS ASs seen to support existing faith syllabus. More linked to faith than NZC.
Moderation of NCEA RS ASs	Some awkwardness in wording of RS AS and national moderation experienced. State school teachers feel there is a bias towards faith-based schools and would prefer a more general comparative RS situation.	Wording and marking are a perfect fit for set faith traditions. National moderators still have to moderate excessive confessionalism in pockets.

The future		
Barriers to growth	The perceived faith-biased set of standards and moderation system. Little appetite in state schools for a full religious diversity programme.	No barriers, except in some independent schools where Christian tradition of school is seen as of minor importance.
Worries about secular zeitgeist?	Yes, strongly felt. All teachers talked of being aware of context of state school and perceptions about religion not fitting.	No worries. Very happy to teach the faith with a sensitivity to secularised student body.

This table accentuates strongly how different the two contexts really are as a whole. Certainly, building up the story of the state school take up of RS ASs over the course of this thesis, has at each stage picked up details of key differences. But placed side by side against the faith schools in the above summary, the development within the state system can be seen to be different in so many ways, and this will be summed up shortly in the conclusion.

One of the last follow-up interviews I had towards the end of writing up the thesis was with a leading RE teacher from the faith sector. One of his observations about the set of RS ASs as they stand was that there needed to be one more strand that was focused on religious ritual. My observation about this wish was that it showed how faith schools used the RS ASs as an assessment tool for their own faith tradition's teaching in full. In fact, the faith schools are showing a flourishing use of the RS ASs to support their particular faith tradition. The contrast with the state school teachers is very pronounced on this point, because they would like to see more of a comparative religion focus in the RS ASs and one of the state school teachers suggested replacing the religious scripture strand with a psychology of religion standard. This really does add up to a different understanding of the purpose and potential of the RS ASs.

I will now reconsider my suggestion in the first chapter that it is possibly more significant that the RS ASs have been introduced in state schools than if it had just been faith schools who had the opportunity to use them. There is an accepted commentary that New Zealanders' attitude to religion is tolerant as long as one keeps

one's religion as a private matter. Combine this with the support provided to faith schools by the state, particularly since 1975, but before that in the Christian milieu in the background of education philosophy. If the faith schools were the only ones using the RS ASs and this did not give them an unfair advantage in the competition of educational achievement, there would have been no particular issue, as this parallel system operates elsewhere in the world, and there would probably have been no public fuss about the development.

It is the introduction of RS ASs into state schools that is more significant because the state-controlled curriculum still does not have religion mentioned anywhere. Yet, state school teachers have linked their use of RS ASs to the NZC seamlessly. The teaching of RS to the RS ASs is curriculum in action, so RS now does have an official place in state schools. This is a very significant development which has happened in a rather indirect manner.

### **Comparison countries introduced - RS in UK, Australia and Canada**

To further attempt to identify any differences there might be in New Zealand state schools around the use of RS ASs recently, some comparison of overseas developments will be useful. This will particularly help answer the third subsidiary question around differences between state school use of RS ASs in New Zealand and overseas comparators.

Taking a snapshot of developments in the UK, Australia and Canada as a sample group, there seemed to be a number of similar ingredients to the New Zealand setting involved to make the comparison useful. There are factors such as the Christian heritage, established legal and educational provisions, a growing diversity in population, a change in the nature of RS teaching with a debate in the background between religious groups about the best way to deliver an RE programme, a debate about any compulsory factors and a growing secular voice. It is the way that such factors are combined that makes each situation different.



## United Kingdom

The official state-sanctioned curriculum in the UK is currently one of multi-faith religious education. It is a subject that has to be provided in the state schools, but it is not compulsory for students, they have the right of withdrawal from RE. “The business of contemporary religious education is the academic study of religion, and it is not clear why parents should have any more right to withdraw their children from the study of religion than from the study of Dickens, decimals or democracy.”<sup>41</sup> Hand’s editorial discussion starter at the beginning of the 2009 Impact publication, points to there still being uncertainty about the nature of RS teaching and issues around its compulsory status in UK schools.

From 1944 (with the Education Act, 1944) to 1988, RE was the only compulsory subject in the curriculum. Through the 1970s the teaching approach began to change from nurturing in the Anglican faith, in the Religious Instruction or confessional model, to a more comparative model in cognisance of the growing diversity of the UK population. With the Education Reform Act of 1988 this approach was more clearly encouraged, though understanding of its implementation in schools still varied. To further complicate the UK situation, schools are also required to have a daily public religious ritual, with at least a 51% Christian content.

So, the field of contention in the UK sees Schreiner’s categories (introduced in chapter one) tossed about somewhat. Public ritual of at least 51% looks like “education into religion”. The contestable delivery of RE also raises debate about whether one is to “teach about religion”, focused on each religion’s integrity, or “teach from religion”, focusing rather on shared concepts and empathy for other views of life.

Notwithstanding all the debate and varied delivery models, RS has been one of the more popular O Level and A Level subjects in the GCSE assessment cache. A small number of New Zealand secondary schools use the GCSE assessments, including GCSE RS.

---

<sup>41</sup> Hand, 2009, 9

The subject aims and learning outcomes of GCSE RS focus on students:

- learning about religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism;
- studying religious beliefs, teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts;
- developing a good standard of balanced and structured written arguments;
- addressing questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life;
- developing their own values, beliefs and attitudes so they can take their place in a pluralistic society and global community.<sup>42</sup>

These goals resonate with the official New Zealand TKI statement about the purpose of the RS ASs being available and fit in well with the NZC focus on diversity. The goals are nuanced in a way that would really suit the New Zealand state school teachers' approach to the use of RS ASs. As described in chapter two, Jocelyn Armstrong published a Social Studies text book for New Zealand secondary schools called *Discovering Diversity*, for Years 9 and 10 students, the years preceding GCSE or NCEA Levels 1 to 3. Her goals are very similar to the above set of GCSE ones.

One significant difference with the use of RS ASs in New Zealand in the state schools using RS ASs is that because of the one-off selection of a RS AS here or there, there is no comparison with the complete curriculum guarantee of the UK system. To be fair to the teachers using the RS ASs in state schools, they do take their professional delivery of their subjects seriously, and are delivering their courses with Social Science integrity, but what cannot be seen is a full RS curriculum being delivered. Also, the philosophy of Social Science is more of a values-based approach, with the main focus being on the present context and the students' understanding. So, the religious perspective taught under the Social Science banner might look decidedly different to the UK RS approach.

---

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062/scheme-of-assessment/aims-and-learning-outcomes>

The set of New Zealand RS ASs themselves, if used as a full set, could actually be the assessment evidence of a comprehensive RS programme. It is just that in New Zealand there is not a curriculum for RS except in the faith schools. The faith schools could be seen to be using the RS ASs as a full set of assessments that provide evidence of a comprehensive RS programme. The state school use of RS ASs, again, stands outside this scenario, and despite the best intentions of the diversity focus in the NZC and various groups trying to increase religious diversity awareness in schools, the evidence of the data gathered for this thesis, specifically around RS AS use, is that the state take up is a very small, and mostly unnoticed one.

### **Australia**

In Australia the variables are mixed together differently and vary from state to state. Since the Nineteenth Century there has been a legal provision that gives churches the right of denominational instruction in state schools; nurturing in one's own faith tradition by ministers of that denomination. In recent years those of non-Christian faith traditions have had this legal right too. While there may be thirty minutes provided for this, the actual coverage is not as extensive in secondary state schools as in primary. The payment for the religious teacher in these cases is by the religious community they represent.

In New Zealand there is no such provision in secondary schools largely because the secular clause does not officially apply outside the primary sector. What happens in a number of state secondary schools, mainly at school assemblies, is a sort of Christian ritual with a hymn, a Bible reading and a prayer. Christian clubs or provision for prayer will happen outside class teaching hours, usually under the tacit supervision of a teacher. But there is no "right of entry" in New Zealand schools.

In Australia a religious studies course and assessment cache were developed in the 1970s for Year 11 and 12. They were non-denominational and about the study of world religions. Only a few state colleges used this package, but the Catholic colleges took them up with alacrity, because it gave credence to RE as a university entrance subject. The same scenario is seen in New Zealand with the Catholic schools making up 80% of the RS ASs use, entering virtually every student from Year 11 to 13 in three

RS ASs each. The big difference here is that there was actually a course written in Australia, whereas in New Zealand RS is course-less with a stand-alone assessment cache!

In Australia, while the official RS programme has been in place for decades now, there is still debate about the church school versus state school understanding of RS. “There has not been a lot of attention given to the similarities and differences in religious education in state and church school contexts and there are still some ambiguities about how different the two approaches are.”<sup>43</sup> In the background of this discussion is contestation around the gulf between open world religion study and denominational RE. The New Zealand situation seems to be playing out the same way at the moment. Part of this may be just because the church schools are the 96% users of the RS ASs and therefore their style of teaching and assessing RS will have a distinct nature. This then makes it more difficult for state schools, who have a totally different context and clientele, to use the RS ASs and construct their own courses with their state-relevant context.

In Australia various reasons have been mooted for the lack of take up of RS in state schools. One reason was the lack of availability of training in RS, another was there was no career path in RS apparent and yet another was competition for curriculum space did not allow RS a foothold. These three reasons could equally apply to the state school situation in New Zealand at the moment. Around the RS qualification issue and teacher training in RS, there is a path for RS teachers destined for Catholic schools, but because RS is not an official subject in state secondary schools the pathway is not transparently there at the moment.

#### **Canada:**

In Canada’s federal system of government, the place of religion in education has been under the jurisdiction of the provinces. But even though regional variety is the norm, they are also all bound by the second principle of the education framework of the

---

<sup>43</sup> IARF, 2001, 45

Constitution Act of 1867, which guarantees Protestant and Catholic schools constitutional protection in all provinces.

The long-term outfall is still beset with problems of defining what RE actually is. There was a ruling in Ontario in the mid-80s, relating to the public school context that read: "It is permissible to teach about religion, but not to teach religion or attempt to inculcate any type of religious belief."<sup>44</sup> This ruling had many detractors who were dissatisfied with it and even saw it breaking the 1867 denominational protection clause. The traditional privileged protection of church schools in Canada exacerbates this debate.

Three clauses from the Ontario ruling read:

"The school's approach to religion is one of instruction, not indoctrination."

"The function of the school is to educate about all religions, not to convert to any one religion."

"The school's approach is academic, not devotional."<sup>45</sup>

These are like safety clauses that the state school teachers in New Zealand are actually abiding by both professionally and in their nervousness around the secular zeitgeist. The faith schools in New Zealand could not sign up to this ruling. There is continued tension between public and church schools in Canada, but while there is debate in New Zealand from time to time over "special character" schools exceeding their brief and using their state funding to become more like private schools, there is not a significant tension between the two bodies. Where this study has found the potential of a divide happening is more around the decidedly different contexts that RS ASs are delivered in and the big question about whether one size of RS ASs with one assessment profile can fit all with integrity.

In another Canadian province, Quebec, their RS programme, called ERC (ethics and religious culture), is designed for the whole of a child's schooling.

---

<sup>44</sup> Peters, 2013, 279

<sup>45</sup> Ibid 280

There is an ethics portion and a religious culture portion. The ethics portion is focused on values and the common good. The first part of Quebec's model, the ethics portion, is covered thoroughly in New Zealand's Health and Social Studies curricula, is strongly emphasized throughout the NZC and will be a natural part of all state schools' everyday teaching and culture. There is some overlap of the RS ASs in these areas, particularly in the faith schools, who can apply their faith values to all aspects of life.

The religious culture portion of the program is focused on becoming familiar with Quebec's religious heritage, becoming open to and respectful of religious diversity and non-religious positions, and finally being able to place one's own position in relation to religion.<sup>46</sup> In New Zealand this does not happen as a given in state schools, primary or secondary. However, the small number of state school teachers using the RS ASs do cover these areas in varying degrees of depth, depending on the RS ASs they use, and the number of RS ASs taken by the students.

### **Summary from comparison countries**

Regarding the development in the philosophy of RS teaching, one of the big differences with the New Zealand situation is that the RS discussion in New Zealand from the 80s on (page 32), had no existing model in place, except the confessional one of faith schools. In the UK, Australia and Canada the development came within a given teaching context, so theory and change have moved together.

So while New Zealand, coming late to the game, had any number of overseas models to critique to find its own best model, it has possibly found the climate of reception and willingness to add religion into the curriculum to be the biggest hurdle (by it not being mentioned by name as a subject), rather than the eventual RS ASs cache, which as it stands, contains a comparatively broad set of assessments. It is a significant theme of the data gathered from the interviews and questionnaires of this thesis that because there appears to be a hint of denominational emphasis in the moderation of the RS ASs, that the open approach to understanding world religions, that the RS AS cache looks like on paper, has been compromised.

---

<sup>46</sup> Clarke, 2012, 68

In light of this overseas comparison, have the different factors focused on brought out differences in the fledgling state school introduction of RS ASs in NZ? In both the UK and Canada, trying to find the right approach for state schools to deliver a RS programme is an area of public debate, made particularly more complicated by the fact that there has been a history of denominational instruction within the state system. What is happening with the New Zealand state school use of RS ASs is very different to this because firstly, it is a very small, almost unnoticed use of RS ASs. Secondly, it is a very particular curricular adoption of RS ASs for another subjects' use. Thirdly, it is not part of a nation-wide debate about the nature of RS programmes or teaching, because there is not one anyway.

Yet from discussions with the teachers in this survey, they are certainly involved in debate around the nature of RS teaching and differences of understanding about the RS ASs wording and moderation. Also, the way the faith schools in New Zealand have picked up the use of the RS ASs with as much alacrity as their Australian counterparts, puts certain aspects of the development in New Zealand on a common footing with the three comparison countries.

But it is the state schools use of RS ASs that is the particular focus of this thesis, and the differences in the state school RS philosophy, pedagogy and policy compared to other subjects, faith schools and comparison countries will now be summed up in the conclusion.

*“We were looking not for a content specialist, or someone working on so-called peacebuilding, but for someone who could conceive of their work as being focused on a problematic, one applicable to any number of situations, concerning how a variety of disputes and formal behavioural codes intersected with whatever it is that we mean by this designator ‘religion’.”*<sup>47</sup>

## **CHAPTER 5. Conclusion**

“Religious Studies is being taught and assessed in New Zealand state schools.”

“Really? I haven’t seen one Religious Studies position advertised in a state school.”

The introductory quote comes from a McCutcheon discussion about a job advertisement for a tertiary RS lecturer with a range of skills in Religion, Global Conflict and Law. I thought it was a useful scenario to consider as I conclude my discussion and summary of the factors that account for the post-2009 growth of RS ASs uses in New Zealand state schools. It is not quite as if the state school teachers who use RS ASs are teaching RS by any other name, but they are having to use the RS ASs as they intersect with their particular disciplines, none of which are RS. And until there is a job advertised in a state school for a RS qualified and experienced teacher to teach RS, the current reality of an emerging and varied use of RS ASs on the quiet, with no succession plan, will continue. Ironically, what is actually happening on the ground, as this thesis has borne out in detail, looks a bit like the state school teachers using RS ASs did see an advertisement like the one above!

### **Are there differences in the RS philosophy, pedagogy and policy in NZ state schools’ use of RS ASs compared to other countries?**

To summarise where I left off at the end of the last chapter, there are a number of differences in the use of RS ASs in state schools in New Zealand compared to the three countries selected. One straightforward difference is that the New Zealand use of RS ASs in state schools is very new compared to the three countries chosen who have a

---

<sup>47</sup> McCutcheon, 2016, 83



longer, more comprehensive and regulated system around RS. It is in this newness that key differences are revealed.

The NZ NCEA RS ASs are supposed to accommodate a wide range of approaches to the study of RS, from deep faith development to straight sociological expression. This is obviously the intention from the Ministry of Education's preamble on TKI about the RS ASs. But trying to get one rubric for all contexts might be seen to exacerbate RS delivery, if the comparison countries are considered. In Canada, for instance, they are trying to extract the devotional or proselytising aspects of RS teaching, traditionally a central part of the faith tradition approach to RS, from their curricula. Having an existing RS curriculum delivered in a faith environment transferred with modifications into a secular setting has caused some problems here and overseas. The TKI statement does highlight the context issue as one reason it did not supply content for the RS ASs. Has it had an impact in the New Zealand setting? The state teachers' dissatisfaction with what they see as a single faith tradition focus in the assessment of the RS ASs from the moderators might suggest there is a problem here. So, the policy of open access and interpretation in an egalitarian NCEA system is a contested issue for state school teachers who use RS ASs.

But how much does the rubric within which you choose to study RS really determine the internal content? Not much really in the NCEA RS AS case, if the issue raised in the last paragraph is put to one side. There is a lot of variation possible, as can be seen from the topics the schools choose. In fact, it is almost the other way around.

Teachers will have a topic or a subject they teach and look around for an AS that matches what they are teaching. The RS ASs are worded so generally that the content variation between schools is very broad. This is different to overseas. But the wrestling over what the "religious" focus of the assessed RS AS work actually should be in New Zealand, is a perennial part of the international debate.

Paradoxically, the RS ASs cache is a nation-wide system that is much less defined than non-nation-wide systems that are clearly defined. Pedagogically this is quite different. It is not a comprehensive RS programme as in overseas models but an assessment cache that can be picked from in isolated chunks. There has been a growth in the state

school use of the RS ASs but the comparison with the overseas selection seems to accentuate uncertainty and fragility in the current development of less than a decade. An aspect of this fragility is that if the teachers using RS ASs under other subject domains found alternative ASs suited to their subject or students, the use of RS ASs in state schools could diminish quickly. And the demise would not even be seen as a demise, because in most cases there was little notice taken of RS ASs being used anyway.

The way a faith-based model of RE was used initially to base the first versions of RS assessments to be available for all secondary schools, faith and state, is not unusual, if one compares the way the UK RS programme has evolved from a confessional RI model to a more open RS model over the last half century. It is the fact that the NZ development is only an assessment cache without a prior philosophy of RS or curriculum base that makes it so different. This shows up strongly in the state teachers' philosophy of RS teaching compared to the UK situation. Their approach is not developed from RE training and a set curriculum but from a variety of personal perspectives and discipline backgrounds other than RS.

### **Are there differences in the RS philosophy, pedagogy and policy in NZ state schools' use of RS ASs compared to other subjects?**

The way the RS ASs have been introduced and rolled out is different in a number of ways. There is certainly a difference in that not having a curriculum base caused confusion as to where to put the new RS ASs. In Health or Social Science? Even though neither of these subjects specifically references RS at all. RS is only an assessment cache, not in a curriculum for state schools, but it is a nation-wide opportunity for anyone to use the RS ASs. There is no other subject like this.

The way the teachers in state schools have been able to creatively and quietly add RS ASs to their courses is a key difference. The environment of "Tomorrow's Schools" combined with the flexibility of the NCEA model, means the teachers have effectively become the curriculum builders and RS AS use fits well into this. But no jobs have been advertised for a RS teacher in state schools in New Zealand. All users of RS ASs have brought the RS assessments in to complement their other main subject, except

for the one school that has a full RS AS course at Year 13, though this too is a final complement to a full Social Science programme.

While the TKI RS vision for the RS ASs is for all students to be able to use these standards to deepen their understanding of religious diversity in New Zealand and the world, the way NCEA standards can be selectively picked and assembled means there is no guarantee that the use of RS ASs will lead to any growth in religious diversity understanding. In fact, the way the RS ASs are used in another subject domain, with the students often not realising that the course had a RS component through the RS AS(s) when they signed up to, is rather opaque. So, compared to other subjects RS as a full subject in its own right is not being delivered per se.

Philosophy-wise, with a new subject available without a curriculum base in the state schools, there was a different approach required of choice and creation, with teachers needing to both work backwards from the wording of the RS ASs to designing a course and working forwards from a subject domain other than RS to try and use the RS ASs to fit that subject. This looks like the dilemma of “a subject which will not be named.” The TKI RS blurb under Social Studies does not make it any clearer, but rather exacerbates the problem by acknowledging the difficulty of providing content for a wide range of contexts for RS delivery. So, it would seem doubly unfair if state school teachers without a RS curriculum, design their courses creatively and from scratch, and then find their assessments criticised for not matching a RS curriculum they do not have.

RS could be compared to the sexuality component of Health in that these are areas of public contention. But the difference in the role out of the RS ASs is that by and large public contention has been avoided. The potential for it may still be at the back of the teachers’ minds. There is a reluctance by the state school teachers to admit that they are teaching RS, preferring rather to say that they are using RS ASs in another subject domain. Also, the interview question around the status of RS showed that because of the quiet introduction of the RS ASs there was no profile of significance or reason for protest.

The scenario of the RS content used in state schools being able to be taught and assessed in other subject domains is very interesting. There are Social Studies and Māori ASs that can be used to assess RS content. Combined with the way that other subject domains are appropriating RS ASs for their own ends, might look like a curricular development with a difference. But RS ASs are not the only assessments to be accessed as a complement to other subjects. Art History ASs are sometimes used in English for example and Media Studies ASs are used in more than one subject too. It may be that the RS ASs are the most used cross-subject resource, but that would need more research.

The teachers' fear of the perception that in using RS ASs they might be indoctrinating or teaching religion, is strong. But they are not indoctrinating, they are teaching to RS ASs. No other subject is embarrassed about its essence like this. One might argue that the essence of RS is compromised because of this. In some ways the fit of RS ASs with History or Philosophy, for example, is not an easy one. An introduction to historiography or philosophy leads students to higher levels of critique that is more outside the brief of the RS ASs than in.

Is the use of RS ASs in state schools just an NCEA thing? An opportunity that a new policy of assessment opened up? There are different aspects of the NCEA system that could be considered in answering this question. There are aspects such as the egalitarian assessment system that preceded the final publication of the NZC, the wide range of assessment options that teachers can pick and choose from to suit their subject and students, and the way subjects are arbitrarily divided up into units. Other subjects might have lost some to their breadth and depth as a discipline by this division of a subject into units. But RS did not start as a subject, rather as a one-off unit choice of RS ASs to complement another subject. Only one of the state schools in my census could be said to have delivered a whole RS course at one level, by offering three or four RS ASs.

The question about whether state school teachers might have accessed the RS ASs because of a perception that the assessment requirements might be easier for their cohort does not seem to hold much water if the teachers in the census are listened to. Though there may be some who have done so, if the large number of individual

entries is taken into account, and some teachers noting that some of their students perform better with internal assessment.

### **Are there differences in the RS philosophy, pedagogy and policy in NZ state schools' use of RS ASs compared to faith schools in NZ?**

RS AS use is introduced or falls off with one teacher's initiative in state schools. It has no set place in the curriculum, unlike faith schools, who have a full RE programme that has to be taught, which is supported by school policy around hours and content. To me this points to a very fragile situation. While there are many factors that have been shown to allow the introduction of RS ASs for all in New Zealand, the take up in the state school sector is still very much rest on individual teacher implementation. Because RS AS use in state schools has not come from a curriculum and school base, as soon as the teacher using the RS ASs moves on, it drops off.

Faith schools prefer the Mercuriarda "sui generis" argument, giving their faith tradition an essential standing, whereas in the state school setting that understanding no longer stands. In the state schools religious perspectives are generally translated into sociological perspectives. The use of RS ASs in state schools sees a totally new field that teachers have been able to explore, and develop their own particular reasons and resources for, unlike the faith schools who have set faith curriculums. But this has areas of contention rising.

At a seminar at the end of 2017, a number of the participants from my research gathered to get feedback from me and thus check that my conclusions were sound. The seamless introduction of RS ASs by using existing school processes of subject introduction was not seen as anything dramatic by the group, though this does make the RS entry into secondary schools quite out of the ordinary. The most robust discussions were had by this group around understanding what each RS AS required. While much of the discussion around the understanding of the wording of the different RS ASs could have been about any NCEA subject, the most hotly debated moments showed up a fault line between faith schools and state schools.

The state school teachers have a different context in which to introduce RS ASs and use them in a particularly crafted way. A robust debate in this session made it very clear how using the RS ASs from within a faith tradition was very different in the secular setting of a state school. The Questionnaires and Interviews very clearly showed the sensitivity to “secular safety” the state school teachers had to show in their settings.

There are issues over the definition of the nature of the RS ASs between state and faith schools. In a 2010 article for the *International Handbook of Inter-religious Education*, Wanden and Smith argue that “for students to effectively participate in interreligious education, they will need to recover their religious heritage.”<sup>48</sup> This argument does not hold water if the students using RS ASs in state schools are considered. In fact, for many of the students in Catholic schools the use of the RS ASs does not necessarily mean they engage any deeper with their faith tradition. Maybe Wanden and Smith’s argument is still valid if one sees a limited coverage of a full interreligious education in the way RS ASs are used. Catholic schools do not extensively teach world religions, rather mostly focus on their own tradition. The state schools in this study however have a significant world religions coverage and it certainly would not be appropriate for it to be mandated for the state school teachers to try and connect them with their own (distant by one or two generations in many cases) faith tradition. In fact, the census of state school teachers shows that only a minority come close to exploring interreligious themes. The majority of state schools use the RS ASs as a complement to their main subject like History or Philosophy.

The responses of many of the state school teachers show they feel that the RS ASs, as they are administered currently, favour those with a specific religious affiliation, rather than those who wish to acquire knowledge and understanding of religion. The state school teachers are looking like pioneers thwarted on one side by the faith insiders and challenged by the secular environment on the other.

The state school teachers have chosen to teach RS in spite of a system that is not open or welcome. A perceived advantage to this scenario is that they do it in incredibly

---

<sup>48</sup> Wanden and Smith, 2010, 461

creative ways. A downturn and disadvantage is that they do not really have a context for what they are doing. One would hope that if the current fragile situation becomes a more cemented one, those that have succeeded in the state schools will lead the way to making the use of RS ASs in the state school context settled.

In a faith school there is an underlying expectation of commitment to the faith as paramount before one is even considered for teaching RS. In the state school setting it is incumbent on a teacher to deliver a programme that fits in with the school's ethos, the particular students' needs and that might gain the best results. The use of the RS ASs used selectively has helped with this. But the weight of pressure to pass a subject is not fully placed on the RS AS used. Rather the RS AS use in other subject domains is a six-credit bonus in a course of over fifteen to twenty credits in the main subject.

In New Zealand, even if you have some RS component to your degree, there is no specific RS training available, unless you take the Catholic Catechetical studies courses.

So, the uptake of RS ASs in state schools in New Zealand, can be seen as an opportunity taken but with layers of awkwardness surrounding its delivery. The opportunities that have been provided because of the way NCEA has been rolled out, have allowed a small number of teachers in state schools to:

- design context and subject-specific RS components to their main subject;
- show how directly the RS ASs can be linked to the NZC;
- encourage a growth in the understanding of religious diversity.

The layers of awkwardness can be seen in the following ways.

There is a discrepancy between the secular setting and the faith setting in both the wording and administration of the RS ASs. This is one of the key areas identified by the interviewees as a barrier to the growth in the use of RS ASs.

The majority of the RS ASs users, 96%, are from faith schools teaching with a faith-based philosophy, which makes the state school teachers' understanding of how to teach to the RS ASs a point of difference and raises contention about what the subject RS is.

The nervousness with which users of RS ASs in state schools talk about secular perceptions impacting on their delivery and content choice is strong.

The future uptake of RS ASs in state schools could well depend on the resolution on one or more of these layers of awkwardness. Just as it was difficult to give a majority credit to any one group for the eventual introduction of RS ASs into NCEA, so it might be just as hard to predict whether there will be a bigger uptake of RS ASs in state schools or not. Issues around the academic robustness of NCEA itself, whether schools will be required to include religious diversity content, whether RS AS use in state schools remains in the hands of one key teacher who uses them or if it could become more cemented in, are some of the unknowns. In the end it will be the lens through which one views this take-up that will influence the answer to the future prospects of RS AS use in state schools.

### **In summary, what factors account for the post-2009 growth in the use of RS ASs in state secondary schools in New Zealand?**

These are the chief factors for the growth that this thesis has been able to show.

Firstly, there is the actual appearance of the RS AS cache of assessments under the Social Science banner available to all schools, putting RS credits on a par with all others by being able to contribute to UE requirements and being a Level 3 approved subject.

Secondly, there is the new NCEA environment in which teachers can be creative with how they assemble their courses and assessments following the integrated curriculum approach encouraged by the Ministry of Education.

Thirdly, there are individual teachers looking to promote their subject who have seen the availability of the RS ASs as a way to add interest and success in their subject, not necessarily RS itself.

Fourthly, there is the straightforward process of subject introduction in state schools that has just followed due process with the addition of RS ASs in another subject's



course. There is no major community consultation process to go through, as with the sexuality component in the Health programme.

Fifthly, there are the various voices and developments from the preceding decades that have had an influence. One in particular, the existing model of Sixth Form Certificate RS, was added from the late 90s and assessed by the first model of RS USs. With this in place the roll over to RS ASs was straightforward.

This has been the story of fourteen state school teachers from eleven schools who have creatively adapted RS ASs to their particular subject and student cohort needs. Just on narrative analysis alone, their stories have accentuated key differences in the New Zealand state school adoption and use of the RS ASs. Their use of the RS ASs is still in its early days, to the extent that they have not even thought about succession plans. It is a significant, but still fragile set up. They live with a nervousness around a perceived secular zeitgeist that limits the breadth and depth of their RS delivery.

In chapter one I commented, “What is quite clear from this short discussion about the contested field of RS is that the secular understanding of religion is quite different to the religious understanding of religion.” Now at the end of my research and analysis of the New Zealand experience of the last decade with regards to the introduction of RS ASs, it is clear that this divide has played out strongly here too. But within such a milieu and given New Zealand’s history of no official mention of religion in curriculum developments, the state school teachers have still taken up an opportunity within the new NCEA model of assessment variety and Ministry of Education cross-subject fertilisation drive.

This has also been the story of a very specific set of Religious Studies Achievement Standards being variously accessed by faith and state school alike. For those who would like to see understanding of religion in the curricula of all schools, this small inroad in the state school sector looks more like an NCEA opportunity taken than a movement for increasing our senior students understanding and appreciation of religious diversity.

The use of RS ASs by the state school teachers in this census makes it look very much like an individual thing. It began with a teacher, within a subject, within a school,

rather than an awareness of the various groups who have been advocating for an increase in teaching about religious diversity over previous decades. Much of my work outlining historical developments in chapter two actually does not feature in the state school teachers' consciousness of what they have introduced. They are very much in tune with the NZC and NCEA goals, though.

I would like to finish with an acknowledgement of the excitement the state school teachers in this research showed about the area of learning they would not otherwise have accessed when they were teaching to the RS ASs. Does this show they think something is missing in the whole of what state schools offer, particularly teaching about religious diversity?

"If you are talking about diversity, I think the fact that teachers are in odd bits and pieces around the country are starting to adopt these standards as a positive thing."

"Religious traditions represent a great deal of wisdom about why we are here, and it is worth spending time listening to those voices."

### **Where to next?**

What has been studied has raised the need for more work and more research in a number of areas.

There needs to be a Religious Studies Position Paper written to clarify what the nature of the subject base behind the RS ASs is. This may be a task for the recently formed Religious Studies Teachers Association of Aotearoa New Zealand to produce.

In the bigger picture of religious diversity education, it would be of real interest to know what actual teaching of world religions is undertaken already in secondary schools other than the RS AS use this research has tabulated. This would be focused in other subject areas like Social Science, Media Studies and English.

There needs to be research to see how widespread the use of one-off ASs is, particularly in terms of the authenticity and integrity of their use.

The state school teachers need a support base so that teachers using the RS ASs do not get isolated or give their teaching of RS away. Also, attention needs to be given to what support is accessible by state school teachers using RS ASs.

Research could be undertaken to clarify whether the RS teachers' worry about their safety in teaching around world religions is well founded or not.

Obviously, the growth of RS AS use tabulated in this thesis needs to be updated annually and commented on to keep educational awareness growing.

Finding out what students want in terms of understanding religion could be another line of inquiry. A New Zealand thesis could be timely: "Why study religious studies?" Research has recently been conducted in England on this topic, "Why study A Level Religious Studies?"<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> Jones, 2017

## **Appendix**

### **FIGURE 22. The Questionnaire**

1. What do you call your course(s) that you use Religious Studies standards in?
2. For 2015 and 2016: which RS standards are used and at what levels?
3. What religions/world views do you study across the RS standards you offer?
4. What major topics do you study in each standard?
5. What degree do you hold? (Include RS or Theology papers)
6. How many years have you been teaching? What subjects have you taught?
7. Why were Religious Studies Achievement Standards introduced at your school?
8. How were the Religious Studies Achievement Standards added to your programme?
9. How are the topics you teach and assess in Religious Studies aligned to the NZ Curriculum?
10. What are the benefits to your school from the Religious Studies programme?

### **FIGURE 23. The Interview Questions**

1. How do you see the teaching of Religious Studies being similar/distinct from other subjects?
2. How is Religious Studies valued alongside other subjects at your school?
3. What were the criteria for you choosing the RS standards you did? Were there particular reasons for you not choosing one of the RS standards available?
4. What are the skills and knowledge the students need to have to do RS well? (Does your school develop these in the Junior School?)
5. How do you measure the success of the RS programme? (Student engagement, results, effect on school culture....?)
6. Can you characterise the students who take this subject? (by ethnicity, religious affiliation, career pathway, ability.....)
7. How does RS fit into your school's overall ethos, goals and values?
8. Do you see RS growing into a wider role in your school? Are there any barriers to its growth?
9. What resources do you use? (How much is generated by you? How much is already available?)
10. Could you describe your philosophy of Religious Studies teaching succinctly?

**FIGURE 24. RS ASs used with corresponding topics in state schools**

<b>1.2</b> Describe a significant development within a religious tradition	The Reformation	Christian history 100%
<b>1.3</b> Describe the application of the key ethical principle(s) of a religious tradition to an issue	Just war theory in Islam; Islam and terrorism; Ethics of war	Islam/Christianity 50/50%;
<b>1.4</b> Describe key beliefs of a religious tradition	Key beliefs of Islam and Buddhism; Major faiths in Asia; Key beliefs of Islam and Christianity; Traditional Maori belief; Buddhist philosophy	Buddhism/Islam 50/50%; Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism 25% each; Islam/Christianity 50/50%; Traditional Maori belief and practice 100%; Buddhism 100%
<b>2.2</b> Explain the changes in an expression(s) of a religious tradition	The Crusades	Christian history 100%
<b>2.3</b> Explain how a contemporary social action derives from the ethical principles of a religious tradition	Salvation Army	Christianity 100%
<b>2.4</b> Explain the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question	Problem of evil and related theodicies	Christianity 100%
<b>3.3</b> Analyse the response of a religious tradition to a contemporary ethical issue	abortion, euthanasia, sexuality; Catholicism and Caritas; poverty ethics, stem cell research, IVF, pollution; anthropogenic climate change	Islam/Christianity 50/50%; Christianity/Secular Humanism 80/20%
<b>3.4</b> Analyse the key beliefs of a religious tradition and a secular world view in relation to ultimate questions	Secular Humanism; cosmological, teleological, ontological arguments; miracles and the problem of evil; Ethics – divine command, virtue ethics, utilitarianism; faith and reason; main theistic arguments; problems of life after death (dualism vs materialism)	Christianity/Scientific Materialism 60/40%; Christianity/Scientific Naturalism 50/50%

**FIGURE 25. Major topics taken in each standard in faith schools**

1	<p>1.1 Matthew’s Gospel, 1.2 Reformation, 1.3 Fair trade</p> <p>2.1 Covenant in the Bible, 2.3 Social Justice – Caritas, 2.4 Life after death in Catholicism and Islam</p> <p>3.1 God’s revelation, 3.3 Abortion + Euthanasia, 3.4 Does God Exist? Secular/Catholic</p>
2	<p>1.1 Gospels, 1.2 Reformation, 1.3 War, 1.4 Trinity</p> <p>2.1 Call in the Bible, 2.2 Eucharist, 2.3 Service, 2.4 Suffering</p> <p>3.1 Revelation, 3.2 Hahi Katorika, 3.3 Abortion, 3.4 Worldviews</p>
3	<p>1.1 Qur’an, 1.2 The Khalifa, 1.4 6 Articles of Faith</p> <p>2.1 1 of 6 Articles, 2.3 Social Action, 2.4 Tawhid, Trinity, Day of Judgement</p> <p>3.1 Qur’an, 3.3 Euthanasia, 3.4 Islam – 3 of 6 articles &amp; Atheism – doing good, present life.</p>
4	<p>1.1 Mark, 1.2 Reformation, 1.3 Euthanasia</p> <p>2.1 Luke, 2.3 Social Justice, 2.4 World Religions</p> <p>3.1 Jesus the Christ, 3.3 Abortion, Just War, Pornography, 3.4 Agnosticism, Secular Humanism, arguments for God and life after death</p>
5	<p>1.1 Luke, 1.3 Conscience</p> <p>2.1 Bible themes, 2.2 Church changes, 2.4 Islam + Judaism</p> <p>3.1 Esther, John, 3.2 Gloriavale, 3.3 Bioethical issues, 3.4 Catholic and chosen secular worldview</p>
6	<p>1.1 Bible, 1.2 Reformation, 1.3 Morality</p> <p>2.1 Luke + Revelation, 2.3 Social Justice, 2.4 Islam/Cath</p> <p>3.2 Sects and Cults, 3.3 Euthanasia, IVF, 3.4 Worldviews</p>
7	<p>2.1 Bible themes, 2.3 Christian ethics, 2.4 World religions</p>
8	<p>1.1/1.4: Bible – OT + NT; Key themes in Bible: creation, fall, salvation, redemption, judgement</p> <p>1.2 Early missionaries NZ; Crusades and rise of Islam, Persecution of church AD 64-313</p> <p>2.2: Creeds and Councils; Mass evangelism 20<sup>th</sup> C (Billy Graham); early 20<sup>th</sup> C revivals – Azusa St and the Welsh Revival</p> <p>2.4 Christianity and Hinduism – How do I live my life?</p> <p>3.1 Hermeneutical principles : OT and NT passages from the Bible</p> <p>3.3 Poverty ethics, stem cell research, abortion, euthanasia, IVF, global warming etc</p> <p>3.4 Christianity compared with a Secular Humanism, Utilitarianism, Marxism</p>
9	<p>1.1 Gospels, 1.3 Salvation Army, 1.4 Nicene Creed</p> <p>2.1 Book of Acts – theme of Mission, 2.3 Christian ethics of showing charity, 2.4 Christianity and Islam, suffering and meaning’</p> <p>3.1 1 Timothy, 3.3 Church’s response to current ethical issues, 3.4 Materialist and Christian answers to ultimate questions such as death, life, meaning and suffering</p>
10	<p>1.2 Protestant Reformation</p> <p>2.4 Christianity and either Buddhism or Islam in answer to one of: nature of the divine, life after death, peace and conflict</p>

## Bibliography

- Abbiss, J. (2011). Social Sciences in the NZ Curriculum: Mixed Messages. *Curriculum Matters*, 7, NZCER. Retrieved from <https://www.nzcer.org.nz/nzcerpress/curriculum-matters/articles/social-sciences-new-zealand-curriculum-mixed-messages>
- Attfield, D.G. (1996). Learning from Religion, *British Journal of Religious Education*, 18 (2), 249–252.
- Armstrong, J. (2009). *Discovering Diversity: how the diverse values and beliefs of world religions are shaping our identity*. Auckland, Pearson.
- Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 1 (3), 385–405. Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/VpQeQJ>
- Barber, L. (1980). The Religious Dimension of New Zealand's History. In Colless, B., and Donovan, P. (eds), *Religion in New Zealand Society*, Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Barnes, L. (2001). What is Wrong with the Phenomenological Approach to Religious Education? *Religious Education*, 96 (4), 445-461.
- Beeby, C.E. (1992). *The Biography of an Idea*. Wellington, NZCER.
- Broadbent, L. and Brown, A. (2002). *Issues in religious education*. London: Routledge/Farmer.
- Buchanan, M. (2005). Pedagogical drift: the evolution of new approaches and paradigms in religious education. *Religious Education*, 100 (1), 20-37. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00344080590904662>
- Clarke, P. (2012). Religion and Public Schools in Quebec: The Supreme Court of Canada Has Spoken...At Least for Now. *Education Law Journal*, 21 (2), 167-183.
- Collins, J. (2003). Ideology and accommodation: The Thomas report and Catholic secondary education in New Zealand. *Education and research perspectives*, 30 (2), 9-25.
- Crawford, M. and Rossiter, G. (1994). The Nature of Religious Education in Public Schools: The Quest for an Educational Identity, *Panorama: International Journal of Comparative Religious Education and Values*, 5 (1), 77-94.
- Davidson, C. and Tolich, M. (1999). *Getting Started: An Introduction to Research Methods*. Auckland: Pearson.
- Davies, M. and Hughes, N. (2014). *Doing a Successful Research Project – Using Qualitative or Quantitative Method*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Duncan, P. A. (1983) *A study of curriculum change: the implementation of Section 58 of the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975, with a particular emphasis on the establishment of courses in general religious studies at teachers' colleges*. Education. Wellington, Victoria University of Wellington, Master of Arts.

Fancourt, N. (2017). Teaching about Christianity: a configurative review of research in English schools, *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 38 (1), 121-133. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2016.1229469>

Forum: Crafting the Introductory Course in Religious Studies. (2016). Wiley and Sons Ltd. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/teth.12323/abstract>

Franken, L. (2017). Coping with diversity in Religious Education: an overview. *Journal of Beliefs and Values*. 38 (1), 105-120. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2016.1270504>

Fraser, D., Aitken, V. & Whyte, B. (2013) *Connecting Curriculum, Linking Learning*. Wellington: NZCER Press.

Fraser, D; Hill, M. (2016). *The Professional Practice of Teaching in New Zealand*. 5th Edition. Melbourne: Cengage.

Fraser, D. (2004). Secular schools, spirituality and Maori values. *Journal of Moral Education* 33 (1), 87-95.

Grimmitt, M. (2000). Contemporary pedagogies of religious education: What are they? In *Pedagogies of religious education: Case studies in the research and development of good pedagogic practice in RE*. (24–52). Great Wakering, Essex: McCrimmon Publishing.

Hand, M. (2009). Editorial. *Impact*, 17, 9. Retrieved from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.2048-416X.2009.tb00129.x>

Hand, M. and White, J. (2004). Is compulsory Religious Education justified? A dialogue. *Journal of Education and Christian Belief*, 8 (2), 101-112. Retrieved from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/205699710400800204>

Heaton, S. (2011). The co-opting of hauora into curricula, *Curriculum Matters*, 17, 99. Retrieved from <https://www.nzcer.org.nz/nzcerpress/curriculum-matters/articles/co-opting-hauora-curricula>

Hill, B. R. (2006). Values in free-fall: RE and values in public schools. *Journal of Religious Education*, 54 (2), 51–58.

Hill, M. (1985). The sectarian contribution. In Colless, B. & Donovan, P. (eds), *Religion in New Zealand society*, 119–142. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.



- Hipkins, R; Johnston, M; Sheehan, M. (2016). *NCEA in Context*, Wellington: NZCER Press.
- Hinchcliff, J. (1997). *Values Integrating Education: an Exploration of Learning in New Zealand*, Pukekohe: Mirilea Press, 176 – 178.
- Hoverd, W.J. (2008). No longer a Christian country? Religious demographic change in New Zealand 1966-2006. *New Zealand Sociology*. 23 (1), 41-65.
- Hoverd, W. LeBrun, E. and Van Arragon, L. (2012). Religion and Education in the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario. Religion and Diversity Project-Social Science and Humanities Research Council. Retrieved from [http://religionanddiversity.ca/media/uploads/religion\\_and\\_education\\_in\\_the\\_provinces\\_of\\_quebec\\_and\\_ontario\\_report.pdf](http://religionanddiversity.ca/media/uploads/religion_and_education_in_the_provinces_of_quebec_and_ontario_report.pdf)
- Human Rights Commission. (2009). Religion in New Zealand Schools – Questions and Concerns. Retrieved from <https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/9414/2387/8011/HRC-Religion-in-NZ-Schools-for-web.pdf>
- IARF. (2001). Religious Education in Schools: Ideas and Experiences from around the World. Retrieved from [iarf.net/resources/publications/Religious Education in Schools.pdf](http://iarf.net/resources/publications/Religious_Education_in_Schools.pdf)
- Jackson, R. (2004). *Rethinking religious education and plurality: issues in diversity and pedagogy*. London, NY: Routledge.
- Jackson R. (2005). Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality: Issues in Public Religious Education, *Religion & Education*, 32 (1), 1-10. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/15507394.2005.10012346>
- Jackson, R. (2006). Intercultural education and religious diversity: Interpretive and dialogical approaches from England. In *The religious dimension of intercultural education*, 39–50. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Retrieved from <http://folk.uio.no/leirvik/OsloCoalition/Jackson0904.htm>
- Jensen, T. (2017). Apologising for the study of religion - no way! *Culture and Religion*, 18 (1), 8-19.
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come. *Educational Researcher*, 33 (7), 14 – 26. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X033007014>
- Jones, I. (2017). Why study A Level Religious Studies? Qualitative perspectives from two English Midlands sixth forms, *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 38 (1), 3-17. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2016.1232566>

- Kuusisto, A., Poulter, S. and Kallioniemi, A. (2017). Finnish Pupils' Views on the Place of Religion in School. *Religious Education*, 112 (2), 110-122. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2016.1085237>
- Lynch, P. (2000). Religious education: a right and a growing societal imperative. In Ahdar, R. and Stenhouse, J. *God and government: the New Zealand experience*, 93-103. Dunedin, University of Otago Press.
- McArdle, P. (2003). How to teach Religions of the World: A consideration of the NSW Studies of Religion experience. *Journal of Religious Education*, 51 (2), 24–33.
- McCulloch, G. (1992). *The School Curriculum in New Zealand History. Theory, Policy and Practice*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- McCutcheon, R.T. (2006). It's a Lie. There's No Truth in It! It's a Sin!: On the Limits of the Humanistic Study of Religion and the Costs of Saving Others from Themselves, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 74 (3), 720- 750.
- McGeorge, C. (1987). Religious Aspects of the Secular System Before the Great War. In Openshaw R. *Reinterpreting the Educational Past*, Wellington, NZCER.
- McGeorge, C. (1992). The Moral Curriculum: Forming Kiwi Character. In McCulloch, G. *The School Curriculum in New Zealand History. Theory, Policy and Practice*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- McGeorge, C. and Snook, I. (1981). *Church, State and New Zealand Education*. Wellington: Price Milburn.
- McLaren, I.A. (1977). Disparate Beginnings; Education in the Early New Zealand Settlements, *ANZHES* 16 (2), 1-11.
- Maddox, M. (2014). *Taking God to School: The End of Australia's Egalitarian Education?* Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Maddox, M. (2011). The Church, the State and the Classroom: questions posed by an overlooked sector in Australia's education market. *UNSW Law Journal*, 34 (1), 300.
- Marshall, J. and Hoff A. (1984). The Integration Act and religious indoctrination. *N.Z. Journal of Educational Studies*, 19, 124-135.
- Melchant, C. (1995). Pluralistic religious education in a Postmodern world. *Religious Education*, 90 (3/4), 346–359.
- Milligan, A., and Wood, B. (2010). Conceptual understandings as transition points: Making sense of a complex social world. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. 1-15. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00220270903494287>

Milligan, A. (2010). *Teaching ethics in social studies: New Zealand teachers' and learners' perceptions of issues and needs*. Symposium presentation at the American Educational Research Association Conference, Denver; Colorado.

Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Morris, P. (2004). Religion and Identity: The New Zealand Spirit. In Omar A.H. and Morris P. (eds). *Religion and Identity*. (Papers presented at the Colloquium on Religion and Identity at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, September 15th – September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004).

Morris, P. (2015). Comparative education, PISA, politics and educational reform: a cautionary note, *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 45:3, 470-474. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2015.1027510>

Morris, P. (2011) *Diversity in the New Zealand Workplace*. Human Rights Commission. Retrieved from [https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/6014/2388/1002/HRC\\_Religious-DiversityV6.pdf](https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/6014/2388/1002/HRC_Religious-DiversityV6.pdf)

Mountier, B. (2014). *Jean Lydia Holm: a serendipitous life*. Paraparaumu, The Author.

Mutch C., Hunter P., Milligan A., Openshaw R., Siteine A. (2008). Understanding the Social Sciences as a Learning Area. A Position Paper. Retrieved from <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/content/download/2609/34003/file/SSPP%20final%2031%20July%2009%5B1%5D.doc>

NCEA aligned to the NZ Curriculum. (2013). *NZ Education Gazette*, 92 (1), 12.

NCEC. (2008). Religious Education in dialogue: curriculum around Australia. Retrieved from <https://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/resources/publications/3-religious-education-in-dialogue-curriculum-around-australia/file>

NCRS. (2015). A National Survey on the Qualifications of Religious Education Teachers of Aotearoa New Zealand. The Catholic Institute of Aotearoa New Zealand. Retrieved from [http://www.tci.ac.nz/studentmanual/2014-student-manual/doc\\_download/96-tci-national-report-on-teacher-qualifications-re-2015](http://www.tci.ac.nz/studentmanual/2014-student-manual/doc_download/96-tci-national-report-on-teacher-qualifications-re-2015)

NCRS. (2005). *Understanding faith: Religious education in the Catholic secondary school*: Syllabus document. Auckland: National Centre for Religious Studies.

Newton, J., Milligan, A., Yates, E., & Meyer L. H. (2010). Global-mindedness and intercultural competence: Two responses to the challenge of educating for a linguistically and culturally diverse world. In Green V. and Cherrington S. (eds), *Delving into diversity: An international exploration of issues of diversity in education* (287-299). New York: Nova Science.

New Zealand Diversity Action Programme. (2007). *Religious diversity in New Zealand: Statement on religious diversity*: Human Rights Commission. Retrieved from [https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/5314/2387/7075/27-Aug-2009\\_09-44-53\\_Religious\\_Diversity\\_09\\_Web.pdf](https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/5314/2387/7075/27-Aug-2009_09-44-53_Religious_Diversity_09_Web.pdf)

Openshaw, R. (1987). *Reinterpreting the Educational Past*, Wellington, NZCER.

Openshaw, R. (1992), *New Zealand Social Studies, Past, Present, Future*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

Openshaw, R. (2004). How curriculum history can enhance teacher understanding, and why it may never get the opportunity to do so. *Access. Critical Perspectives on Communication, Cultural and Policy Studies*, 23 (1), 11–18.

Peters, F. (1998). Religion in Schools in Canada. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 1 (3), 275-293. Retrieved from Peters, F. (1998). Religion and Schools in Canada. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15365/joce.0103042013>

Plano Clark, V. L. and Creswell, J. W. (2008). *The mixed methods reader*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications. Pope, C., Ziebland, S., and Mays, N. (2000). Analysing qualitative data. *British Medical Journal*, 320, 114–116. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1117368/pdf/114.pdf>

Poulter, S., Riitaoja, A. and Kuusisto, A. (2016). Thinking multicultural education 'otherwise' – from a secularist construction towards a plurality of epistemologies and worldviews, *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 14 (1), 68-86.

Rossiter, G.M. (1999). Historical perspective on the development of Catholic Religious Education in Australia: Some implications for the future. *Journal of Religious Education*, 47 (1), 5-18.

Rymarz, R. (2011). Catechesis and Religious Education in Canadian Catholic Schools. *Religious Education*, 106, 537-549. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00344087.2011.613355>

Schreiner, P. (2002). "Models of Religious Education in schools in Europe – how can existing models contribute to tolerance and non-discrimination with regard to freedom of religion and belief?" Statement for the Strategy Development Seminar of the Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief. Retrieved from <http://folk.uio.no/leirvik/OsloCoalition/Schreiner1202.doc>

Sharpe, K (1982). *Religion and New Zealand's Future: Proceedings of the Seventh Auckland Religious Studies Colloquium*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

Smart, N. (1973). *The Phenomenon of Religion*. London: Macmillan.

Snook, I. (2003). *The ethical teacher*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

Snook, I. (2005). Values Education in Perspective: The New Zealand Experience. Address to National Values Forum, Australia. Retrieved from [http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/resources/CC\\_DEST\\_edit\\_Ivan\\_Snook\\_Keynote\\_address\\_VE\\_forum\\_140605.pdf](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/resources/CC_DEST_edit_Ivan_Snook_Keynote_address_VE_forum_140605.pdf)

Snook, I. (2006). Whose interests are served? Values in the Draft Curriculum. *Teachers and Curriculum*. 9 (1), 35-38. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.15663/tandc.v9i1.68>

New Zealand Department of Education. (1977). *Social Studies Syllabus Guidelines, Forms 1-4*. Wellington: Government Printer.

Statement on Religious Diversity (2007). *Religious Diversity in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 2009, NZ Diversity Action Programme. Retrieved from [https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/5314/2387/7075/27-Aug-2009\\_09-44-53\\_Religious\\_Diversity\\_09\\_Web.pdf](https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/5314/2387/7075/27-Aug-2009_09-44-53_Religious_Diversity_09_Web.pdf)

Storm, I. (2011). Researching religion using quantitative methods. Research Methods for the study of Religion: University of Kent. Retrieved from <https://www.kent.ac.uk/religionmethods/>

Swatos, W.H. (1977). The Comparative Method and the Special Vocation of the Sociology of Religion. *Sociological Analysis* 38: 106-144.

Te Kete Ipurangi. Retrieved from <https://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-Internally-Assessed-Achievement-Standards/Social-sciences/Religious-studies>

Templeton, E. (1999). Religious Education in a Secular Pluralist Culture. *Religion, State and Society*. 27 (1). Retrieved from [https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/rss/27-1\\_073.pdf](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/rss/27-1_073.pdf)

Tuohy A., Duthie-Jung, C., Bernardo, M., Beaumont, M., Luka-Lui, M. (2015). "A National Survey on the Qualifications of Religious Education Teachers of Aotearoa, New Zealand." The Catholic Institute of Aotearoa New Zealand, Wellington. Retrieved from [http://www.tci.ac.nz/studentmanual/2014-student-manual/doc\\_download/96-tci-national-report-on-teacher-qualifications-re-2015](http://www.tci.ac.nz/studentmanual/2014-student-manual/doc_download/96-tci-national-report-on-teacher-qualifications-re-2015)

Wanden, K. & Smith, L. (2010). Finding a Way Forward: Interreligious Education and Religious Education in Aotearoa New Zealand. In Engebretson, de Souza, Durka, Gearon (eds), *International Handbook of Inter-religious Education*. Springer, Dordrecht. Retrieved from <https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9781402092732>

Walk, K. (1998). How to write a comparative analysis. Retrieved from <https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/ho-write-comparative-analysis>

Wood, B. E., and Milligan, A. (2016). Citizenship education in New Zealand: Policy and practice. *Policy Quarterly*, 12(3), 65-73. Retrieved from <http://igps.victoria.ac.nz/publications/files/156006894e5.pdf>

Wood, M. and Welch, C. (2010). Are 'Qualitative and 'Quantitative' Useful Terms for Describing Research? *Methodological Innovations Online* 5 (1), 56-71. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.4256/mio.2010.0010>

## **EDUCATION REPORTS**

"Thomas Report". (1944). *The Post-Primary School Curriculum*. Report of the Committee Appointed by the Minister. Wellington: Department of Education.

"Currie Report". (1962). *Report of the Commission on Education in NZ*. Wellington: Government Printer.

"Ross Report". (1973). *Human Development and Relationships in the School Curriculum*. Wellington: Department of Education.

"McCombs Report". (1976). *Towards Partnership: The Report of the Committee on Secondary Education*. Wellington: Department of Education.

"Johnson Report". (1977). *Growing, Sharing, Learning: The Report of the Committee on Health and Social Education*. Wellington: Department of Education.

*The Curriculum Review*. (1986). Draft Report, Wellington: Department of Education.