# Operational Policy: Succession Planning (NAG 3)

## Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ

## Statement of Intent:

The purpose of succession planning is to ensure the continuity of quality, experienced and competent leadership in key positions. Deep strategic thinking about workforce preparation will aim to retain and develop institutional knowledge and specialist skill capital for the future, as well as encourage individual advancement. To this end the Blind & Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ) recognises that succession planning is of paramount importance. It will ensure the continued effective performance of BLENNZ by making provision for the development, replacement and strategic application of key staff over time. Consideration for succession planning for staff must occur at all levels.

Succession planning within BLENNZ will gather and align specialist expertise with the demographics and education requirements of ākonga, and the special character of BLENNZ and its community, in a way that ensures continuity and promotes organisational impetus. As the primary provider of blindness education services in New Zealand BLENNZ has the responsibility to be cognisant of current and future directions of education, be the cutting edge of blindness education, and to fulfil its role as a good employer.

Key positions within BLENNZ are:

* Principal
* Senior Managers
* Co-ordinators
* Managers of Visual Resource Centres
* Senior Teachers
* Executive Assistant to the Principal / Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Potential risks associated with the failure to succession plan include:

* Lack of sustainable staffing
* High work loads
* Eroding of staff morale
* A reduction in the specialist knowledge and skill base
* Losing an understanding of the history of BLENNZ
* Unknown future directions for education
* Not being able to attract or retain staff
* Loss of the post graduate teaching diploma programme.

## Policy Requirements:

1. Senior Managers will undertake an annual assessment of personnel within their service to determine current need against predicted future needs. The assessment will include:

* Identifying gaps between skills and knowledge for the service as a whole
* Review of staff, focussing on capabilities and aspirations (linked to the BLENNZ performance appraisal cycle)
* Targeting professional development to groups and individuals to address gaps
* Developing and implementing plans for individual advancement
* Managing culture, resources, delegations and opportunities to ensure leadership skills are supported and affirmed.

2. BLENNZ will retain and develop the culture, intellectual knowledge and skill capital for the future by:

* Securing and maintaining a sustainable staffing model for Resource Teachers Vision and DOM
* Continuing to foster a shared understanding of the vision, mission, values and culture of BLENNZ
* Advocating for the retention of a graduate diploma programme in the education of students who are blind or low vision including having input into the content of the programme and selection of candidates
* Ensuring appropriate staff professional development and mentoring for new staff
* Accessing programmes for professional leadership and management
* Engaging with the international community of blindness education
* Developing a culture which embraces technology.

3. BLENNZ will encourage individual advancement by:

* Actively seeking staff who have expectations of advancement within BLENNZ
* Developing appropriate expectations around ākonga achievement
* Developing an induction package
* Providing a mentor to new staff
* Planning and providing for professional development
* Providing opportunities to develop personal and professional skills which could lead to career advancement based on an individualised career plan
* Building career planning into appraisals.

## Supporting Documents:

BLENNZ Policies

BLENNZ Strategic and Annual Goals

Induction Package

BLENNZ Appraisal documentation

Approved: 

Date: 8 February 2023

Next Review: