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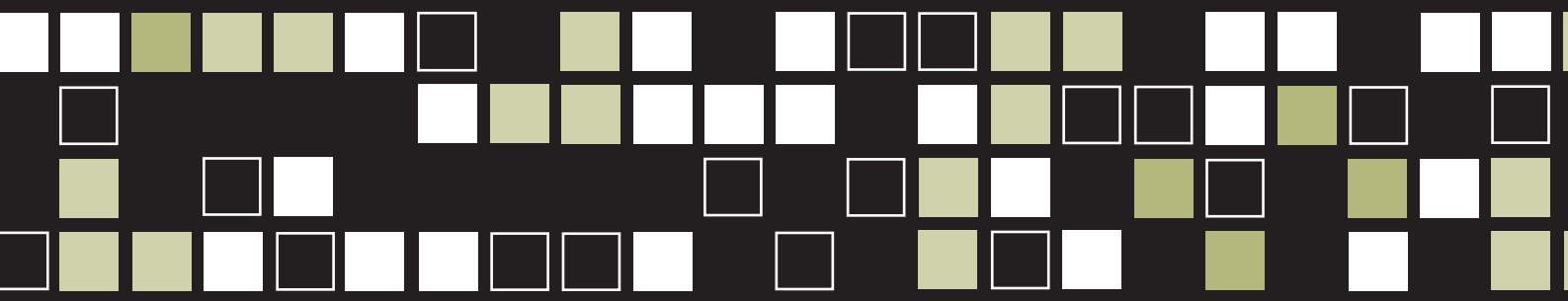
priorities

STATEMENT OF TERTIARY EDUCATION PRIORITIES

2005/07

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT





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Ministerial Foreword

We are in an exciting period for the New Zealand tertiary education sector. The reforms are largely complete. The new systems and structures are in place, with the Tertiary Education Commission building its strength, and the first round of charters and interim profiles completed. More importantly, the energy within the tertiary sector has created momentum for positive change:

- many tertiary providers have responded to the spirit of the reforms, and are leading new collaborative ventures in highly strategic areas of research and teaching;
- significant advances are already being made in areas such as industry training to provide the enhanced skills needed in order to grow the economy;
- the needs of stakeholders who previously felt marginalised (such as Māori, Pasifika peoples, and small businesses) are now better recognised in tertiary planning; and
- students now have more choices, information and advice and a smaller financial burden (due to the holding of fees, and changes to student loans and allowances).

We are now seeing tertiary providers, industry, researchers and communities taking up opportunities created by a tertiary system oriented towards quality rather than quantity, and towards greater collaboration rather than fruitless competition.

Tertiary providers are moving to ensure that their programmes are relevant to the needs of employers and the wider community. Not only industry training organisations, but all tertiary education providers are considering how they can blend learning in a workplace context with more traditional modes of delivery.

A strong commitment to liberal education is vital to the needs of the economy and society, and this continues to underpin our investment in tertiary education.

Later this year, the government will issue another Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities. This discussion paper sets out specific priorities and actions that we consider will help bring about the broad vision and goals for tertiary education that we have clearly articulated in the Tertiary Education Strategy 2002–07. It seeks comment from everyone involved in the tertiary system, stakeholders, providers and learners, confirming where the immediate priorities should be focused, and how we can achieve greater alignment with national goals; stronger linkages with business and other external stakeholders; and effective partnership arrangements with Māori communities.

We seek a wide range of perspectives from all parties. We especially want to hear from those whose vision of the future involves a strong, vibrant tertiary sector to help guide growth and change over the next year or so.

Please give these issues careful thought and share your ideas with us.

Steve Maharey
Associate Minister of Education (Tertiary Education)

Introduction

The tertiary education system creates the skills and knowledge that New Zealand needs for a thriving economy and society. This role should be considered in its broadest context, encompassing the skills and knowledge New Zealanders need to build and sustain healthy communities, a thriving democracy and a growing, knowledge-based economy.

The tertiary education reforms have brought the tertiary system closer to communities and businesses, and aligned tertiary education closer to the government's social, economic and environmental goals. There was a need to increase New Zealanders' sense of connection with the tertiary education system, to make it more responsive and accountable to those who look to it to shape the skills and knowledge that will increase their future well-being.

This discussion paper seeks confirmation of the priorities to be set out in the next Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities that will guide the tertiary system for the next year or more. The paper covers three major themes around the priorities for 2005 to 2007:

- building skills and knowledge;
- working to national goals; and
- enhancing capability and quality.

The government seeks responses to the issues raised in this paper from:

- stakeholders – those with an interest in the outcomes of the tertiary education sector, such as learners, Māori whānau, hapu, iwi, Pasifika communities, employers, unions and community organisations; and
- the tertiary providers and industry training organisations that make up the tertiary education sector.

Priorities for our tertiary education system are suggested in each of the three sections that follow and guidelines for your responses are at the end of each section. Your responses will be appreciated. Please include details of your current role or interest in the tertiary system.

It would be particularly beneficial for stakeholders and tertiary providers to talk with each other when preparing their responses.

The deadline for submissions is Friday 15 October. Submissions are to be sent to:

STEP discussion document
Tertiary Education Policy
Ministry of Education
PO Box 1666
Wellington

or

tertiary.strategy@minedu.govt.nz



The Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities and the Tertiary Education Strategy

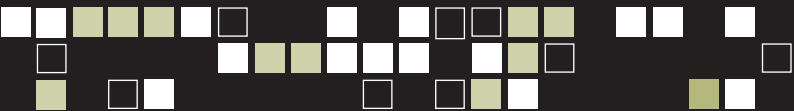
The Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities is issued by the Minister to set out the government's immediate priorities for the performance of the tertiary education system. The Statement is a statutory document under the Education Act 1989 which the Minister has to release every 1–3 years. Its purpose is to guide planning and delivery across the tertiary system in order to secure greater alignment of provision with the government's social, economic and environmental goals for New Zealand, as reflected in the Tertiary Education Strategy 2002–07 (the Strategies).

The Statement draws its priorities from the Strategies. The change messages cover: greater alignment with national goals; stronger linkages with business and other external stakeholders; effective partnership arrangements with Māori communities; increased responsiveness to learners; more future-focus; improved global linkages; greater system collaboration and rationalisation; increased quality; and a culture of optimism and creativity.

Each Statement applies across the entire tertiary education system. The Tertiary Education Commission has the task of giving effect to the Statement through negotiating Charters and Profiles, allocating funding and facilitating collaboration and greater connectedness within the system. The Ministry of Education, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Career Services and the Department of Labour (policy), among others, also reflect the Statement's priorities in their work. Tertiary education organisations themselves are expected to incorporate the key objectives in the Statement and the Strategies into their planning and activities.

The current Statement was released in 2003 and sets detailed priorities for the 2003 and 2004 academic years. Like the previous interim Statement, it focused on building the infrastructure of the reforms and the capability of tertiary education organisations to respond to the change messages.

The intention is for the next Statement to inform the funding decisions in relation to the profiles for 2006–08, and for 2007–09. It is possible that changing circumstances may mean that a further Statement is produced for the intervening period.



1

Building Skills and Knowledge

The tertiary education system plays a crucial role in creating the skilled population we need to sustain a growing economy and thriving communities. We need to develop a workforce that has both the specific skills and the broader competencies (for example, the ability to operate in social groups and to act autonomously) needed to thrive in a complex, globalised world and in a labour market characterised by frequent change and new demands on workers. While high level technical skills are important, the whole spectrum of competencies needs to be addressed, from foundation learning to advanced generic skills and specialist skills. The tertiary system contributes both to long-term and immediate skill needs (although its capacity to respond quickly to the latter is limited).

The tertiary system also has a central role in knowledge creation and transfer through research and industry partnerships. New Zealand's economic future depends in large part on our ability to develop and apply new knowledge in areas that thread through the economy such as bio-technology, information and communications technology and design.

The Growth and Innovation Framework is bringing into better focus the growth opportunities arising from information and communications technology, biotechnology and the creative industries. The importance of these areas is not so much as sectors of the economy in themselves; rather, it is because they are all 'enabling' areas whose impact can flow on to other aspects of the economy, in turn increasing their effectiveness and value.

For tertiary providers, the challenge will be to ensure that these areas are appropriately incorporated into broader programmes. For example, there needs to be **emphasis on design elements in programmes associated with manufacturing; biotechnology needs to be incorporated in programmes associated with the primary sector (e.g. agriculture, horticulture, and forestry); and technological literacy needs to be improved across a range of tertiary education programmes.**

Addressing Workforce needs

Addressing skill shortages

New Zealand is currently in a unique situation brought about by a strong economy and record low levels of unemployment. As a result, industry and employer groups are reporting ongoing skill shortages across a wide variety of industry and occupational areas.

Tertiary education has an important role to play in addressing skill shortages. Tertiary providers and employers need to **work together to ensure a close fit between the skills and knowledge that tertiary providers produce and those that are relevant to the economy**, now and in the future. This means:

- learners will be able to make informed choices about the skills they wish to acquire, the courses of study they need, and about the performance and focus of providers
- industries will be able to define and acquire the skills they need, and engage with tertiary education organisations on the focus and content of teaching and research; and
- tertiary providers will be continuously assessing their teaching portfolios and refocusing their work away from areas of low relevance towards providing education that is highly relevant to the needs of the economy and society and is of high quality (as illustrated in part by the suitability and career success of graduates).



Case Study: Assisting industries undergoing structural change

The Textiles, Clothing, Footwear and Carpet sectors are currently managing the transition to lower tariffs, and facing the challenge of transformation into a globally competitive, self-reliant sector.

Pro-active support around skills and training can improve the sector's resilience to change, assist the sector's growth objectives and thereby help to minimise the risks of employment loss when tariffs start to be reduced in 2006 as well as provide transferable skills for those with jobs at risk.

In order to address skill shortages, a high quality of engagement between tertiary providers and employers is essential. At the local level, individual tertiary providers should be working closely with employers, industry training organisations and local authorities in their region to respond to the future shape of the required regional workforce. This will be particularly important for stakeholders such as small to medium enterprises who may find it difficult to devote time and resources to assessing tertiary provision alternatives. All providers need to develop programmes which provide an appropriate mix of theory and practice, where an increasing element of delivery takes place in a workplace context.

Industry training organisations have recently been given a strategic leadership role in this area. The government will be looking to industry training organisations to determine future skill needs for the industries they represent and develop strategic plans to meet these needs. The outcome should be shared ownership of the overall vision and training strategy amongst tertiary providers, schools and those industries.

The government is developing a framework for engagement with particular sectors of industry across a range of portfolios. The framework will include improving the co-ordination of investment in education, training and Research Science & Technology.

At present the government is working with key leaders in the food and beverages sector to formulate the first of these whole of government strategies for facilitating growth in this cluster of industries.

Providing for the technical and trades skills vital for New Zealand's economic success

Achieving a highly skilled and high performing workforce requires **investment in technical and trades skills**. Technological change has meant that many jobs increasingly require specialist and technical skills. For example, there is now a wide range of specialised jobs within the primary sector (agriculture, seafood, horticulture, forestry) as well as jobs in manufacturing and the service sector (for example, retail, hospitality, and tourism) that require industry-specific, technical skills.

The tertiary sector has an important role in developing workforces with these higher levels of skills and knowledge and therefore needs to recognise the importance of technical and trades skills in planning their provision.

The government, industry groups and the education sector are working to shift public perceptions around the value of technical and trades training, in order to fill skill and labour shortages.

The government will continue to invest in modern apprenticeships and industry training in these areas, and it will be a priority for the relevant industry training organisations along with polytechnics and other providers to provide relevant and high quality technical and trades education and training.

Addressing education and health workforce needs

The education sector needs to work closely with tertiary providers to identify and resolve skill shortage and skill matching issues.

Suitable teachers must be recruited, trained, supported into their profession, and retained in order to achieve high quality outcomes for all learners in New Zealand. The success of this complex exercise depends on adequate responses to factors such as demographics, and the supply and status of teachers, to ensure that the calibre of the teaching force remains high to meet the increasing expectations that we have of teachers. In the next ten years, the challenges include:

- enhancing quality teaching;
- encouraging sufficient numbers of early childhood teachers to become qualified;
- sustaining increases in secondary teacher numbers;
- lifting student teacher numbers in subjects such as physics and English; and
- growing the supply of Māori-medium teachers.

An action plan for preparing teacher education graduates to teach diverse learners effectively is being discussed with the education sector. This plan, and current research, will change the way initial teacher education is delivered.

The delivery of health services is labour-intensive and dependent on a diverse range of skilled professional workers. Over the next ten to twenty years, demographic, technological and societal change will cause significant shifts in the nature of the health workforce New Zealanders need. As the population increases its profile will change – there will be a greater proportion of over 65's and Māori, Pacific and Asian peoples. More health services will be delivered in the community rather than in hospital or institutional care. The education sector will need to form links with the providers of health services in order **to be responsive to the changing demand for health services and the clinical and cultural skills necessary** to ensure that health practitioners can work effectively in a variety of settings.

Work is to be undertaken by the Tertiary Education Commission and Department of Health, and the District Health Boards to identify the likely make-up of the future health workforce and what is needed to align the provision of health qualifications with expected future needs.



Skills for work and life

With a wide variety of qualifications being offered, it is important that clear signals are given by tertiary providers about what competencies their graduates have acquired. Employers also need to be able to articulate the competencies that they are seeking. Generally, employers are seeking people who have a range of generic skills as well as skills specific to the job.

An important goal, therefore, is to develop a 'shared language' about competencies for educators, learners and employers. Recent OECD research recommends a shift in emphasis from circumscribed 'skills' to the more malleable and open-ended 'competencies', which underpin and complement the acquisition and use of specialist skills. A competencies-based approach describes **learners' ability to adapt to changing skills requirements, and therefore their ability to meet the challenges of a knowledge society**. The suggested approach involves three broad competency groups:

- operating in social groups (e.g. the ability to manage and resolve conflicts in the workplace);
- acting autonomously (e.g. the ability to relate a particular task to the overall needs of the organisation); and
- using tools interactively (e.g. the ability to adapt to and use new computer applications productively).

An overarching 'thinking' competency, which includes **critical thinking, creativity and a holistic approach, is integral** to all three groups.

This shift would involve explanations of the literacy, numeracy and language demands of specific tasks (such as using new technology in the workplace, becoming treasurer of a community organisation, or getting a driver's licence) through to the design of programmes for teaching high-level specialist competencies. This has implications for the make up of qualifications and the way they are delivered. A discussion document on adapting the framework to the New Zealand context, and the implications for policy and practice, is due to be released shortly.

Learning for living: meeting language, literacy and numeracy needs

OECD and other studies suggest that it is the average level of skills in the working-age population that drives economic success, rather than simply the existence of a highly educated 'elite'. Thus, a strategy for increasing high level skills has to sit alongside a strategy for lifting skill levels in the New Zealand population generally. The 1996 International Adult Literacy Survey indicated that up to 40% of New Zealanders needed to improve their literacy, numeracy and language competencies in order to meet the demands of modern life.¹ It is essential that we **raise the foundation competencies of New Zealanders, with emphasis on language, numeracy and literacy**.

Research tells us that language, literacy and numeracy are best taught in a context that motivates adults (that is, alongside the specialist competencies they need to meet the demands of life). Hence, the most effective approach to raising foundation competencies will be to ensure that language, literacy and numeracy skills can be taught in any tertiary

¹ Around one in five adults in New Zealand were at the lowest measured level of literacy. It should be noted that New Zealand's results were broadly comparable to other OECD countries. New Zealand is taking part in a new international survey in 2005, the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL), which will provide an update on the 1996 IALS survey.

education setting where a learner needs it, whether vocational, academic, work-based or community/family based. At present, foundation learning provision is often marginalised and, while there are examples of good practice, on the whole, the system lacks capability and quality.

Youth transitions

The government's goal is that, by 2007, all 15–19 year olds will be engaged in education, training, work or other options that will lead to long-term economic independence and well-being. At the moment, participation rates in both secondary and tertiary education for our 15–19 olds are lower than the OECD mean.

The government's goal requires agencies to work together on improving career advice and pathways for secondary students, providing more support for school leavers, and improving performance measures for youth transitions initiatives. While there are a number of initiatives and strategies in place (such as the Pathfinder pilot, Youth Training, Secondary-Tertiary Alignment Resource, and Modern Apprenticeships), we need to determine whether there are gaps and further measures required to address equity of opportunity. Tertiary education organisations need to **work more with schools to broaden young peoples' expectations and aspirations.**

Addressing the knowledge needs in society and economy

A key tertiary education strategy is to “strengthen research, knowledge creation and uptake for our knowledge society”. Research in tertiary providers is one part of a larger picture, which involves a variety of research institutes, different funding sources and a range of stakeholders.

The recent analysis for the Performance-based Research Fund found that research in tertiary providers is generally of a good standard. Studies undertaken by the Ministry of Research Science and Technology and other agencies indicate that the tertiary education sector contributes a balanced mix of basic, strategic and applied research. There is also a high level of international collaboration, and the amount of funding from external contracts is increasing. Studies also show that, in comparison with other OECD countries, private research investment through tertiary education organisations is low.

The government's focus is on **ensuring strategic investment in high quality research in tertiary providers that is relevant to New Zealand's economic and social priorities, and is widely disseminated and applied in New Zealand's businesses and communities.**

A balance needs to be maintained in research by tertiary providers between enabling staff to contribute to extending knowledge through ‘blue skies’ research and encouraging links between their research and New Zealand's national goals for economic and social development. We need to recognise that serendipitous discoveries are sometimes made when researchers are seeking knowledge for knowledge's sake; and we also need to recognise the value of research programmes that are focused on particular commercial aims. Both approaches to research can generate long term economic returns.

Given the finite public resources involved, research in tertiary providers should be of value to our economy, as well as enhancing our understanding of ourselves as a nation

and contributing to scientific and cultural understanding. Much research in tertiary providers is already focused on economic and social development objectives, in particular through that contracted by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology and commercial organisations. Patenting and external research grants are also increasing, as is collaboration between tertiary providers and independent research institutes.

We need to ensure that the full benefit of research carried out in tertiary providers is captured by communicating new knowledge to businesses and communities that could use or apply it in various ways.

Such knowledge transfer is currently a key role of the universities, and is being supported through seven Centres of Research Excellence which have been established to support world-class clusters of research that contribute to New Zealand's national goals. The centres cover a number of leading edge areas such as in the biological sciences and nano-technology. In addition, an increasing number of tertiary providers have developed commercial operations, such as business 'incubators' which provide a base for research applications to be turned into successful business ventures.

The tertiary system needs to find further opportunities to increase collaboration between researchers and to foster the spread of new knowledge throughout the economy.

Building research capability in strategic areas

The results of the Performance-based Research Fund indicated areas of strength and comparative weakness in the quality of research in New Zealand. It is primarily for the tertiary sector to respond, whether through greater cooperation or consolidation.

For areas of significance to New Zealand's development where there is either no research capability or the research is weak, the government intends to provide support in order to build the capability needed.

To build the tertiary education and research workforces of the future, we need to retain in New Zealand more of the growing number of people completing research based post-graduate degrees. This will require better career prospects for researchers in New Zealand, through expanded opportunities to undertake advanced and applied research in tertiary institutions, crown research institutes and the private sector. While women, Māori and Pasifika are enrolling in research degrees more than they did in the past, they are still under-represented as compared to the total student population, indicating that this is an area which needs continued attention.

Another area that the government sees as important for building research capability in New Zealand is in the social sciences. Building Research Capability in the Social Sciences has been initiated to build a critical mass of research capability and knowledge around focused areas and lift the relevance of social science research by supporting research into areas that underpin national development goals.

YOUR VIEWS ON SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Please tell us your views on the suggested range of actions and priorities for building skills and knowledge in New Zealand.

2

Working to national goals

Introduction

In order to maintain their capability, it is essential that tertiary providers have linkages to a global community of scholars and researchers. They also need to contribute to the educational needs of the nation, the region and the local community in which they reside.

To be effective, the teaching, learning, research and knowledge transfer carried out by the tertiary sector needs to contribute to larger social and economic processes. As the Tertiary Education Strategy stated,

New Zealand now needs a tertiary education system that makes a strong contribution to the achievement of national goals. It needs to be dynamic, outward-looking and strongly linked with the communities of interest it serves.

The government's national goals concern economic transformation, social development, Māori development, environmental sustainability, infrastructural development and innovation.

Maintaining a broad tertiary education system

The contribution of tertiary education organisations encompasses social outcomes (such as the functioning of the institutions of civil society and a strong cultural identity) as well as the more specific economic outcomes associated with a well-educated population with the skills to thrive in the labour market.

Indeed we look to tertiary providers to provide intellectual leadership in identifying opportunities for social and economic development and providing new tools to grasp such opportunities.

The government wishes to **maintain New Zealand's strong tradition of liberal education**. The skills and knowledge gained through disciplines and subjects that are not directly vocational are also highly valued in the marketplace and therefore contribute to the economy and our social development. The tertiary reforms provide a way to reflect the value of this education as the government moves towards a system based more explicitly on strategic investment in tertiary education.

Active involvement by tertiary providers in social and economic debates and the fostering of the values of a 'liberal education' are an essential component of building a society that functions well and can achieve economic growth.

Shifting public funding from areas of low strategic relevance to higher priority areas

The reforms to the tertiary system seek **better alignment of tertiary education with the government's national goals**. This means that tertiary providers are increasing the strategic relevance of their activities which will be more aligned to the economic and social priorities set out in the Tertiary Education Strategy. As an initial step, tertiary providers have been asked to assess the strategic relevance of their provision as part of the profiles round for 2005–07.

Recently the government has also acted to restrict funding to certain types of courses, in particular non-formal and non-assessed community education at tertiary education institutions. While some of these programmes are innovative and extend the teaching paradigm, the benefits from others are unclear.

The government is also concerned around the relevance of some areas of provision by private training establishments. Given this, the proportion of the capped funding pool for private training establishments that is contestable on grounds of strategic relevance will be increased.

A further area of concern is courses with a high recreational element, such as outdoor activities like diving where there is a significant gap between enrolment numbers and employment opportunities.

Strengthening Māori development

Many Māori communities are well advanced in articulating their development strategies, particularly in relation to managing and developing traditional assets such as land holdings and fisheries. Given that growing the skills and strengths of people is an essential component of Māori communities' strategies, tertiary education providers need to work with Māori, whānau, hapu and iwi towards these goals.

Strong partnerships between Māori communities and tertiary education providers focused in particular **on contributing to the achievement of economic aspirations** will be critical. Priority areas for skill development include areas such as governance, management and skills at all levels that enable Māori to capitalise on their development opportunities. Education and training for the trades, technical skills and professions will remain a high priority for Māori. Nurturing and delivering comprehensive, high quality Māori language and content provision must also continue to be a focus.

Close working relationships between Māori and tertiary education providers will enable better identification and delivery of the particular skills needed to make the most of economic development opportunities. Tertiary providers will also need a learning culture that supports Māori learners.

An example of a successful partnership based on mutual trust and support for Māori learners is Turanga Ararau based in Gisborne, the tertiary education provider of Te Runanga o Turanganui a Kiwa, which was established to provide and promote the skills, knowledge and qualifications to enable iwi to manage, advance and control their economic and cultural resources.

Meeting the development aspirations of Pasifika

For Pasifika communities to thrive it is **important that participation and achievement for Pasifika learners continue to increase across the spectrum of tertiary education qualifications**. A major concern, reinforced by recent research, is that Pasifika learners are concentrated in certificate and diploma level courses which do not deliver a good economic return in terms of increased earnings potential.



Research undertaken in 2002 also found that an important influence for success for Pasifika students was the level of support from family, teachers, community and peers.² This indicates the importance of pastoral as well as academic support, and of looking wider than the tertiary education system to what is happening in schools and communities to support Pasifika tertiary students to achieve.

Providing a learning environment and pathways that reflect the needs and circumstances of Pasifika learners (including recognition of the different Pacific ethnic communities) is therefore something that providers in areas with Pasifika communities need to focus on.

Given the high concentration of Pasifika communities in the region, it is essential to build a strong network of Auckland providers with effective models of tertiary education provision that address the key retention and achievement issues for Pasifika learners, and that these are well integrated into parallel initiatives in the secondary school system.

Managing the learning process to improve retention and completion

Successful participation in tertiary education brings immense benefits to many New Zealanders. However, there are some whose contact with the system bears little fruit. Recent analysis of the cohort of learners entering tertiary study in 1998 showed that in approximately 50 percent of cases it resulted in the completion of a qualification by 2002, with partial completion in a further 10 percent, and withdrawal without completion in around 40 percent.³ It is important to recognise that learners may leave the tertiary system prior to completion for a variety of reasons. However, one of the key reasons for the tertiary reforms was a concern that the system had become too focused on increasing enrolments, and that a significant number of learners were not meeting their goals.

Ways to manage the learning process in order to improve retention and completion include:

- the tertiary education sector connecting with the rest of the education system in order to assist school leavers to move into tertiary education that suits their needs;
- ensuring that learners make informed choices, based on accurate factual information about course options and career paths, with tertiary education organisations effectively assessing the needs and motivations of learners;
- assisting learners at key transition points during the educational process, such as consideration of further options, response to negative experiences, and assessment of post-graduate options; and
- involvement of other stakeholders such as employers and industry who can contribute to the process of shaping programmes of study to ensure relevance to the future needs of the economy and the workforce.

In order to raise retention and completion, a **learning culture within tertiary education organisations is also needed which better accommodates, and encourages success for the diversity of learners**, be they mature students, Māori and Pasifika learners or those from family backgrounds in which tertiary study has not been a strong feature.

² Pacific Peoples and Tertiary Education: Issues of Participation report 2002. A Pasifika tertiary education resource was developed for potential Pasifika learners, families and communities in 2003 in response to this.

³ *Retention, Completion and Progression in Tertiary Education 2003*, Ministry of Education, March 2004.

Currently there are stronger links between outcomes and funding in some parts of the system (e.g. Training Opportunities, industry training) than in other parts (e.g. the Student Component, which is the main funding stream for teaching and learning for tertiary education providers). The Student Component funding is currently based on student/learner enrolments and is largely demand-driven. This has acted as a powerful incentive to increase participation. However, incentives to encourage student success are less direct (i.e. success leads to more or higher quality enrolments). A proposal is currently under development that will tie a proportion of funding to aspects of provider performance, such as measures of course retention, successful course completion and learner opinion.

YOUR VIEWS ON WORKING TO NATIONAL GOALS

Please tell us your views on the suggested range of actions and priorities to support national goals.

3

Enhancing Capability and Quality

Introduction

A reputation for excellence is essential to a thriving tertiary system, and a key asset to be maintained in a global education market. Ensuring high levels of quality is not simply a matter of ensuring the success of individual teachers, although that is a central issue. There are broader issues around the learning environment, course design, relevance, pastoral care and pedagogy which impinge upon quality. There is also growing pressure for education quality to be demonstrated by appropriate performance measures.

Strengthening the tertiary sector

The tertiary sector operates in an environment shaped by complex demographic, technological, commercial and social forces. The charters and interim profiles process has encouraged tertiary Councils, boards and management to consider more closely the particular strengths and contributions of their organisation and the needs and priorities of the communities they serve. Current challenges include a **much stronger focus on external stakeholder relationships, planning and quality systems which reflect a shift in emphasis away from participation towards course completion and stronger learning pathways, and the development of stronger, more focused research programmes.**

A shift towards greater differentiation and specialisation creates some difficult choices for tertiary providers, requiring careful analysis of institutional capability and the demands of external stakeholders. Providers have to decide whether to concentrate on a small number of niche specialties or to maintain a broader portfolio of courses and research activities. This will involve some difficult choices around new versus established courses, and requires innovative thinking about delivery options and varying pedagogical approaches. All of these developments will place increasing pressure on tertiary provider management to strengthen their capability.

In addition to the challenges to tertiary education organisations, the central education agencies (the Tertiary Education Commission, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Career Services, and the Ministry of Education) need to develop new abilities and systems to support tertiary organisations and learners, while avoiding imposing unnecessary compliance burdens on them.

Case Study: Bay of Plenty 'Tertiary Village'

The 'tertiary village' concept under development by the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic aims to offer seamless and comprehensive tertiary education at a shared campus, in collaboration with a wide range of other tertiary providers and possibly industry training organisations. It has several elements which may be applicable more widely:

- it arose out of a regional economic development plan which identified major trends in the regional population and hence in the needs of the Bay of Plenty economy;
- it involves several tertiary providers working together seamlessly to provide more customised options for learners, in a convenient location, leading to joint qualifications;
- it provides greatly enhanced opportunities for stair-casing, through, for example, university partners using the 'village' for initial year tuition;
- local Māori were included in the planning, and execution (through participation of kaupapa Māori providers);
- it is an example of tertiary education organisations collaborating to provide better service to the region.

Enhancing links between research and teaching quality

As part of providing an excellent learning experience, it is important that tertiary teachers are up to date with developments in their field, and this includes knowledge of recent research. While it is a legislative requirement that degrees are taught mainly by people actively engaged in research, there are questions around whether this is appropriate in all circumstances, as the nature of degrees has become broader.

There is a close relationship between research and teaching, particularly in universities. The Tertiary Education Commission consulted on this issue, among others, as raised in its paper on the distinctive contribution of tertiary education organisations.⁴

All teaching should be informed by an understanding of relevant research so that the learning that takes place is well-grounded and up-to-date.

Measuring and enhancing quality in teaching and learning

Promoting excellence in teaching has been one of the key objectives of the reforms. The major current initiative around quality in teaching and learning in tertiary education is the Enhancing Quality Project. This scoping exercise is considering **how excellent tertiary education can be attained through a strong focus on effective teaching and learning.**

One way of recognising excellence in teaching is the annual Tertiary Teaching Awards, which has been rewarding excellent teachers since 2001. The achievements of the 2003 award winners were celebrated in the publication *Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards: Supporting excellence in tertiary education*⁵ which profiled each winner, discussing what it was about the way that they practiced teaching that was so successful.

The Tertiary Education Commission will lead a strategic review of the tertiary education workforce, in order to identify initiatives to ensure that the workforce meets the future needs of the reformed tertiary education system. Scoping work will take place in 2004/05, leading into the development in 2005/06 of appropriate initiatives. The involvement of key stakeholders in the tertiary education workforce review is essential, and will involve advice from groups comprising representatives from tertiary sub-sectors and stakeholders.

Providing more accessible and usable information and analysis

The tertiary sector and stakeholders need the best available information and analysis if they are to drive effective change in the system. Significant progress has already been made in this regard, for example:

- the Qualifications Authority will shortly publish on its website a summary of each private training establishment's current audit report, comment on compliance against the relevant quality assurance standards, details of their audit cycle and other contextual information. It is also likely that the other quality assurance bodies will publish the same information on their websites in relation to the colleges of education and the polytechnics;

⁴ http://www.tec.govt.nz/about_tec/consultation/distinctive-contributions-consultation.htm

⁵ www.nzqa.govt.nz



- the Skill New Zealand Campaign: Business NZ, the Council of Trades Unions and government are working together to raise the profile of recognised learning in the workplace and helping enterprises, particularly small and medium sized businesses, to engage in workplace learning;
- learning representatives, a recent initiative that promotes improved participation and quality of workplace learning at the grass roots level and will help to ensure that learners in the workplace are equipped to make informed choices about careers and learning; and
- local authorities (for example, the Manukau City Council) are incorporating skills forecasting into their long-term planning, using vacancy data collated by the Department of Labour, demographic information and other sources, to quantify the skills required in the region over the coming decade.

Further work is needed to **provide high-quality overview information and analysis in a form that enables employers, learners and other stakeholders to work more effectively with tertiary providers to achieve their long-term goals.**

YOUR VIEWS ON ENHANCING CAPABILITY AND QUALITY

Please tell us your views on the suggested range of actions and priorities for enhancing capability and quality in the tertiary education sector.



ANY OTHER COMMENTS

A large, empty white rectangular area intended for providing additional comments or information.

