

Murray Strong  
Chair  
Te Pūkenga  
PO Box 19400  
Hamilton 3244

Dear Murray

### **Letter of Expectations for Te Pūkenga**

I am writing to inform you of the Government's expectations of Te Pūkenga. This replaces the Letter of Expectations (LoE) that was sent to you by the previous Government in May 2023. I expect the council to respond to the priorities and expectations in this letter effective immediately.

### **The Government will begin disestablishing Te Pūkenga within its first 100 days**

On 29 November 2023, Cabinet agreed as part of the Government's 100-day plan to begin disestablishing Te Pūkenga. To disestablish Te Pūkenga, legislative change will be required, and further work is needed to establish the future state we are moving towards. I am working with officials to develop a programme of work that will support the Government's policy direction. Once further Cabinet decisions are made, I am likely to send a new LoE to the council to update my expectations.

### **I expect Te Pūkenga to operate in a manner consistent with the Government's plans**

It is no longer the Government's priority to have a centralised organisation for delivering vocational education and training. While Cabinet decisions are still to be made on the disestablishment process for Te Pūkenga and the configuration of the future network, my intention is to establish regionally based, individual institutions (subject to legislative processes).

In light of the change in priorities, I expect Te Pūkenga to consider what activity it has planned that is inconsistent with this direction, particularly those that reduce integral capability in the former ITP business divisions. I also expect Te Pūkenga to review whether the large number of new, national roles that have and continue to be recruited for (at the expense of individual business division roles) and other restructuring activities are appropriate.

Any major financial transactions or investments should also be carefully considered in light of the proposed disestablishment of Te Pūkenga. In general, Te Pūkenga should not be making any decisions that would make disestablishment more difficult or more costly.

### **I expect Te Pūkenga to support as much regional decision-making as possible**

The Council will remain ultimately responsible for Te Pūkenga's performance and will need to continue to deliver on its legislated charter. However, in delivering on its charter, and clause 3 of the charter in particular, I expect Te Pūkenga to consider how much decision-making and authority can be given to its business divisions to support the needs of the respective regions. I would like Te Pūkenga to determine how this can be best achieved and report back to me by 15 December 2023.

**I expect Te Pūkenga to ensure vocational education and training continues and staff and learners are supported**

There will be significant uncertainty across the network given the Government's announcement to disestablish Te Pūkenga. I expect Te Pūkenga to focus on supporting staff, learners, and stakeholders through this transition period as much as possible. I also expect that Te Pūkenga and its business divisions continue to be empowered to deliver high-quality education and training across New Zealand.

**I expect you to have a close working relationship with me and officials**

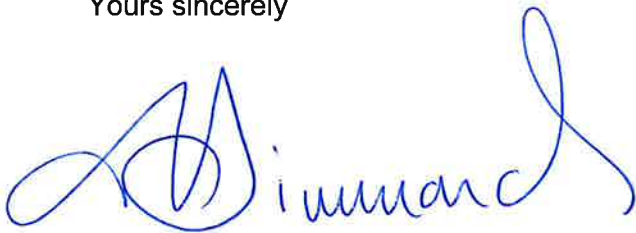
Through the immediate period, I expect Te Pūkenga to take a collaborative and partnership approach to working with officials, particularly the Tertiary Education Commission and the Ministry of Education. To support the Government's intended process, there will be considerable work that Te Pūkenga needs to undertake. I also expect to receive regular updates directly from the Council.

I would like Te Pūkenga to report back to me by 15 December 2023 on the status of its current work plan in light of the contents of this letter. This should outline the key decisions facing the organisation in coming months that may impact on the proposed disestablishment.

**Next steps**

I would like to meet with you, your Deputy Chair, and the Chief Executive to discuss this letter and my priorities further when we next meet.

Yours sincerely



**Penny Simmonds**  
**Minister for Tertiary Education and Skills**

Cc Peter Winder, Chief Executive, Te Pūkenga  
Tim Fowler, Chief Executive, Tertiary Education Commission