

Funding, freedom, and fairness

Briefing to the incoming
Minister of Tertiary Education
February 2021



TEU | TE HAUTŪ
KAHURANGI
TERTIARY EDUCATION UNION



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TERTIARY EDUCATION



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Foreword

Knowledge, training, scientific exploration, and ingenuity continue to drive Aotearoa's successful response to COVID-19. Tertiary education staff are one of the essential workforces during Alert Level restrictions. The quality of advice and action during 2020, and which continues today, is only possible because of the nation's strong tertiary education system. If we are to 'build back better' we therefore must ensure quality vocational and higher education is adequately resourced.

During this next term of government, Labour must further address over two decades of commercialisation, competition, and the severe underfunding of the tertiary education sector. The creation of Te Pūkenga as a network of vocational education provision is a strong start, but much more is needed to ensure all living in Aotearoa have access to quality, life-long learning so we can collectively address the pressing economic, environmental, and social issues of our age.

We thank the Minister and his Labour colleagues for their commitment - set out in the Tertiary Education Strategy - to building an inclusive and accessible education system, and one which genuinely recognises Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We too are committed to improving the lives of all New Zealanders. But without a significant lift in the funding of tertiary education and the simultaneous rejection of the commercialisation of provision, the words expressing this commitment will ring hollow.

With a shift in the funding approach, there is also a need to recover some of the freedoms crucial for quality tertiary education to flourish. TEU members have repeatedly provided evidence of the clash between academic freedom and commercial approaches to education.

The Government must use funding and auditing levers to ensure the empowerment of staff and learners across the tertiary education system.

Finally, the values of equity and fairness can be seen throughout government documents. But current resourcing and management approaches do not allow fair outcomes for all learners, nor does it enable institutions to provide fair and equitable working conditions for staff.

A vision of tertiary education that works for all New Zealanders, is one where we all contribute to decision-making, and one to which we all have equal access and that meets our needs. We know you, as the Minister of Tertiary Education, share this vision, and we trust you will make sure all in the system can realise the aspirations we hold together.

Tina Smith, TEU Te Tumu Whakarae | National President, and **Sandra Grey**, National Secretary

Acknowledgement:

Thank you to members for insightful contributions and thoughts and thank you to Enzo and Slmon for photos.

Executive Summary



“Building back better” requires concrete solutions to ensure stabilisation of the sector in the short-term, as well as the long-term transformation of the sector.

We need the tertiary education sector to meet the changing needs of Aotearoa and to advance the wellbeing of all New Zealanders. To do this the sector needs both immediate stabilisation and long-term transformation. We need improved funding, freedom, and fairness.

Actions needed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 have highlighted a raft of pre-existing problems in the tertiary education sector including: two decades of persistent underfunding; commercialisation which constrains academic freedom and staff involvement in decision-making; and structural discrimination. These problems undermine the true objectives of tertiary education – the provision of quality education to all learners that contributes to the social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing of Aotearoa.

We commend Labour’s moves to re-orient the vocational education and training system so that its primary focus is on understanding and meeting the true needs of learners, communities, hapū, iwi, and industry. It is now time to build on that momentum and ensure the whole tertiary education sector is supported to realise these aspirations.

“Building back better” requires concrete solutions to ensure stabilisation of the sector in the short-term, as well as the long-term transformation of the sector. We set out the required actions in this Executive Summary and provide a fuller rationale and set of actions throughout the full Briefing.

Te Hautū Kahurangi | Tertiary Education Union is committed to quality public education provision founded on Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We know the critical role education plays in improving lives, and how central it is to advancing social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing.

Immediate actions with regard to funding of the tertiary education sector

- Increase the student achievement component for the entire sector to ensure funding meets the actual cost of provision;
- Confirm that publicly funded Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) are not required to meet the Tertiary Advisor Monitoring Unit (TAMU) guidelines on surpluses for 2021 and 2022;
- Review the Ministerially appointed membership of TEO boards/councils with a view to ensuring those appointed are committed to the aims of the new Tertiary Education Strategy (TES);
- Expand the current review of SAC funding to include Levels 1-10 and the current review of the funding system for mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori in the wānanga and polytechnic sectors to include universities.

Future actions with regard to funding of the tertiary education sector

- Change the approach to international education; discontinue PBRF; and, implement a new funding model that enables accessible and inclusive provision (see pages 9 to 12 for details).

The Government must also take actions which advance the freedoms that enable staff and students to engage in critical thinking, speaking up on workplace matters, and decision-making across the sector.

Immediate actions to improve freedoms in the tertiary education sector. In partnership with TEU, NZUSA, and TEO leaders, the Government must:

- Develop guidelines on the limits of loyalty and fidelity within tertiary education employment arrangements so that they do not interfere with academic freedom;
- Develop and implement accountability mechanisms for TEOs about the preservation and enhancement of academic freedom.

Future actions to improve freedoms in the tertiary education sector

- Expand opportunities for staff to decide on matters of teaching, learning, research, and support; elevate the place of academic freedom in institutional reporting; use legislative policy, and funding levers to require institutions to empower staff and learners in decision-making (see pages 13 to 16 for details).

Finally, when it comes to fairness in education – a core aspiration for TEU members and this current Government – there are a range of actions needed:

Immediate actions to ensure fairness in the tertiary education sector

- Require TEOs to co-design and co-produce strategies to advance equality and eliminate racism;
- Ensure all TEOs have in their investment plans strong Te Tiriti o Waitangi actions;
- Pay a Living Wage across the sector;
- Require investment plans to include equity implementation protocols.

Future actions to improve fairness in the tertiary education sector

- Require TEOs to report annually on the institutions' equity gaps; put in place actions which prioritise the wellbeing of students and staff in legislation, policy, and auditing; put in place numeric targets for kaimahi Māori; hold tripartite discussions surrounding TEOs adhering to the "good employer requirements" outlined in the [Public Services Act](#) (see pages 17 to 21 for details).

We look forward to working with the government, TEO leaders, and student associations to make sure our tertiary education system is truly accessible and inclusive, and one that delivers high quality teaching, learning, and research for the good of all New Zealanders.

Our Whāinga

Tū kotahi, tū kaha:

We are strong and unified; we are committed to actions which will leave no-one behind; we create spaces where all people can fully participate, are fairly represented, and that foster good relationships between people.

Ngā piki, ngā heke

We endure through good times and bad; we work to minimise our impact on the environment; we foster ahikā – the interrelationship of people and the land, including supporting tūrangawaewae – a place where each has the right to stand and belong.

Awhi atu, awhi mai:

We take actions that seek to improve the lives of the most vulnerable; we give and receive, acknowledging that reciprocity is fundamental to strong and equitable relationships; and we work to advance approaches that ensure quality public tertiary education for all.

Tātou, tātou e:

We reach our goals through our collective strength and shared sense of purpose, which are supported through participatory democratic decision-making processes and structures.



About the TEU

Te Hautū Kahurangi | Tertiary Education Union (TEU) is the largest union and professional association in the tertiary education sector representing 10,000 academic and general/allied/professional staff in the tertiary education sector (universities; Te Pūkenga network; wānanga; private training establishments; and rural education activities programmes).

TEU actively acknowledges Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundation for the relationship between Māori and the Crown. We accept the responsibilities and actions that result from our nation's signing of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

TEU expresses its commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by working to apply the four whāinga (values) from our Te Koeke Tiriti framework to advance our TEU Tiriti relationship in all our work and decision-making – with members and when engaging on broader issues within the tertiary sector and beyond:

Tū kotahi, tū kaha

Ngā piki, ngā heke

Awahi atu, awahi mai

Tātou, tātou e

TEU is committed to publicly funded, controlled, and valued tertiary education that:

enhances cultural and intellectual life; develops a skilled and knowledgeable population; promotes sustainable economic and social development (as per the Education Act 1989);

enables the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Article 26), and ensure social mobility and the reduction of inequality;

ensures the advancement of a strong Te Tiriti o Waitangi relationship;

gives Māori, as the Indigenous people of Aotearoa, the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own language, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning

The right of Māori to access all levels and forms of education without discrimination, and to have access to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language (UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 14); and,

enables us to address, collectively, the pressing issues of our age; and that advances social, economic, and environmental wellbeing.

These objectives align with those set out in Aotearoa's [Education Act](#) as well as other internationally agreed conventions concerning the importance of tertiary education such as UNESCO's [Recommendations Concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel](#).


With these whāinga and objectives as the foundation, we seek the Minister's support to:

Develop a new funding approach;

Make academic freedom and empowerment a reality in the sector; and,

To resource the actions needed to overcome inequality in the tertiary education sector.

Introduction



Our tertiary education sector educated and trained the scientific advisors guiding the Government's COVID-19 response, as well as the frontline workers and professionals who met the nation's daily needs. The tertiary education sector will also provide future opportunities for those that have had their livelihoods affected due to the unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 response. Added to this, tertiary education is pivotal to fostering social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing for all New Zealanders.

If the tertiary education sector is to achieve these things, we need immediate actions to stabilise the sector followed by longer-term plans and actions. This Briefing outlines the issues facing the sector and concrete strategies for addressing the fundamentals of **funding, freedom, and fairness.**

Funding



If we are to build back better and have a New Zealand tertiary education system that contributes to wellbeing, immediate and longer-term changes to the funding system are crucial.

• The lack of funding and forced competition for funds has created a mindset in management that we are a corporation. This negatively affects students and staff, as well as research ...

Academic staff, university

Reviewing Performance Funding in the Tertiary Education Sector (2019)

Our sector has been persistently underfunded for more than two decades. The funding system has been oriented toward the commercialisation of education and inefficient competition between institutions. It does not account for the real costs of tertiary education provision and fails to recognise the true value of international students and the internationalisation of education. The result has been cuts to staffing, courses, and programmes of study; micro-management and unwieldy auditing measures; and reductions to student support provisions (academic support and pastoral care).

As a result, the funding system has worked against realising the broad objectives and transformative possibilities of tertiary education.

The Office of the Auditor general [report](#) on Auckland University's decision-making processes in purchasing a house in Parnell vividly exposed the deficiencies of the commercial model and the extent to which it is embedded in university governance and senior management. If we are to build back better and have a New Zealand tertiary education system that contributes to wellbeing, immediate and longer-term changes to the funding system are crucial.

Developing a new funding model which rectifies these issues will result in the freeing-up of resources so that they can be utilised in realising the core objectives of tertiary education and the wellbeing of the sector.



TEU's [Funding Our Future](#) report outlined principles that should underpin the new funding system.

- | Tertiary education is a public good;
- | Tertiary education must be inclusive and equitable;
- | Teaching, research, and human wellbeing must be prioritised;
- | Funding must foster collaboration and long-term systems thinking; and,
- | Public investment is progressive and equitable.

The Government must fully review its funding models; change what is counted and measured in the sector; and, reset international education.

Expanding current funding reviews

The tertiary education sector's Student Achievement Component (SAC) funding sees providers get the same funding per student per course regardless of student background and needs, mode of delivery, geographic location, and expense associated with the qualification in question.

This approach and the level of funding is not adequate to meet the needs of Aotearoa and we welcome the reviews of tertiary education funding currently underway. But more is needed.

In order to meet the diverse needs of learners, and to promote equity and ensure quality education, it will be necessary for the review of SAC funding to be expanded to include Levels 1-10.

The [current review](#) of funding rates for mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori across the wānanga and polytechnic sectors must also be expanded. TEU Te Pou Tuara, Lee Cooper, states: "Wānanga play an integral role in the protection and revitalisation of te reo Māori and mātauranga Māori, but we must include universities in the review. The Government has stated the new funding rates resulting from the review will be applied to delivery across the entire system, not just to one institution and wānanga, therefore everyone needs to be involved."

To ensure the process and outcomes of any funding review are transparent, future-focused and sustainable, full consultation with TEU, TEO leaders, staff, students, communities, hapū, iwi, and industry is essential. Outcomes from any reviews must put at the centre the wellbeing of staff and students, and the future social, economic, and environmental growth and wellbeing of all communities, hapū, and iwi.

Change what we count and measure

☞ Ideally the process should be simple, stable, inclusive, responsive, and transparently supportive of what we want to achieve. It should also recognise non-academic outcomes that are hard to measure but are important.

Academic staff, polytechnic

Reviewing Performance Funding in the Tertiary Education Sector (2019)

The commercialisation of tertiary education in Aotearoa has produced metric-based accounting processes that ignore the full benefits of quality tertiary education. The last government recognised the need to disentangle funding from metrics and did so with the de-coupling of Educational Performance Indicators (EPis) from funding. But more is needed.

The Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) has been a significant constraint on the tertiary education sector for some time now¹. It is a system which has given rise to several unintended outcomes and undesirable consequences, including high transaction costs and mechanisms of assessment which mean that Māori, Pasifika, women, and early-career researchers have been disproportionately disadvantaged in their capacity to contribute to the global knowledge-base through the research process. The PBRF is also a system that is detrimental to staff in terms of the resources, time, and energy required to produce PBRF portfolios.

I am a Senior Lecturer and the PBRF is one of the worst things about the sector. It is enormously time-consuming, has been intellectually bankrupt from the start, and is now an immoral and cynical exercise.”

“PBRF takes an extraordinary amount of time to complete – an added burden when carrying a challenging workload. It took days to work through my PBRF portfolio – this is time away from teaching, postgrad supervision of students, and research. The system is way too complex!

The PBRF does not align with the core objectives of tertiary education nor the funding principles outlined in pages 9 to 11. The Government, TEO leaders, and TEU must work together to find more appropriate accountability measures. We propose the conversation begins by looking at models of research funding allocation based on the un-weighted full-time equivalent numbers of research active staff in a TEO and accounted for through annual reports.

Rethinking international education

Universities are in a strong and stable financial position, there isn't any reason for them to be making sudden kneejerk reactions to having fewer international students coming in at the moment. This will pass, we will get through it and the universities need to be showing some leadership.

Minister of Education, Hon. Chris Hipkins, 2020

COVID-19 has exposed the major risks of being over-reliant on international student “revenue.” The drop in international student numbers due to border restrictions has severely impacted the revenue of the tertiary education sector with TEOs scrambling to cut costs as a result. There are ongoing job losses – in turn, the capacity, expertise, and institutional knowledge of the sector is being reduced. We need immediate actions to address the shortfall in funding.

Te Pūkenga has successfully adopted a system - overseen by Treasury - of internal transfers between subsidiaries to maintain cashflow across the network. But the Government's calls for universities to use previous surpluses, cash reserves, and run significant deficits in 2021, and possibly in 2022, in order to maintain capacity have fallen on deaf ears. University governors and managers seem determined to maintain what they call ‘institutional autonomy.’ From their commercial point of view, that means balancing the books at all costs (because ongoing deficits make them vulnerable to government buy-out), while calling for the status quo ante to be reinstated (that is, bring back international students en masse, as quickly as possible). In the short-term, the Government must work with TEOs to stop the kneejerk reactions to the short-term border closures which are seeing job cuts that drain the capacity of the sector.

There are also long-term changes needed in international education. At the 2020 Voices of the Sector forum, participants agreed that re-thinking the ‘why’ of international education will be crucial to building back better. An initial list of factors that illustrate the importance of international education was developed during the forum:

- travelling to, and learning in, Aotearoa offers a unique cultural and educational experience;
- international students contribute to the research environment;
- domestic and international students build life-long relationships, diversity of thought, and connections through the education environment;
- international education leads to global citizenship and reciprocal benefits for all students and their respective countries; and,
- local communities, whānau, hapū, and iwi offer socio-cultural and educational benefits that are unique to Aotearoa and, in turn, local communities are also enriched through their engagement with international students and their networks abroad (State of Sector Forum Statement 2020).

1. See our [submission](#) on the review of the PBRF.



In order to mitigate the effects of COVID-19, to stabilise the tertiary education sector, and to ensure TEOs can maintain their capacity and staff expertise, the Government must take several steps before 01 July 2021:

Immediate actions with regard to funding of the tertiary education sector

- Increase the student achievement component for the entire sector to ensure funding meets the actual cost of provision;
- Confirm that publicly funded Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) are not required to meet the Tertiary Advisor Monitoring Unit (TAMU) guidelines on surpluses for 2021 and 2022;
- Review the Ministerially appointed membership of TEO boards/councils with a view to ensuring those appointed are committed to the aims of the new [Tertiary Education Strategy](#) (TES);
- Expand the current review of SAC funding to include Levels 1-10 and the current review of the funding system for mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori in the wānanga and polytechnic sectors to include universities.

To ensure the tertiary education sector is able to fulfil its transformational role in the future, the Government must implement the following funding recommendations over the remainder of its current three-year parliamentary term:

By July 2022

- Develop and implement a managed approach to international education which recognises the true value of international students and the internationalisation of education.

By July 2023

- Discontinue the PBRF and codesign a new system of allocating research funding;
- Develop and implement a new funding model based on collaboration between public providers which recognises the true costs of quality, accessible tertiary education provision.

Freedom

Creating new ways of working, living, and caring for the planet requires room for all working and studying in the tertiary education sector to speak out and be bold. The Government has a role in setting the framework for this in law, policy, and funding frameworks.

The [New Zealand Education Amendment Act 1990](#) requires both the preservation and enhancement of academic freedom in research and teaching spaces. The Act also states that a defining characteristic of our universities is that they accept a role as critic and conscience of society.

The Education (Vocational Education and Training Reform) Act also states that staff and students must be empowered on academic, non-academic, and wellbeing matters, and matters relating to the organisation's practices and services.

And the [Education and Training Act 2020](#), Section 9 (2) (c) and (e), has provisions related to Te Tiriti o Waitangi that provide for Māori to contribute to decision-making in tertiary education and vocational education and training from councils and Māori advisory committees to Workforce Development

Councils (WDCs). The Act also provides for consultation with Māori, iwi partners, interested persons or bodies, and Māori employers, and improving outcomes for Māori learners and Māori communities in collaboration with Māori. TEOs need to ensure Māori are at the governance table and are afforded all the opportunities and associated responsibilities of decision-making across the board, not just for matters pertaining to Māori.

Despite the legislative provision for academic freedom, research ([State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018](#)) shows that staff are experiencing increased pressure to change their teaching delivery modes, pass higher proportions of students, and admit students who are not adequately prepared for tertiary-level learning into their programmes. Current auditing and accountability measures (notably PBRF); senior leadership management styles; and rejection of full involvement of staff in decision-making is hampering the sector.

🔗 University management seems to shift the goal posts frequently in terms of their objectives or to expect contradictory objectives to be achieved (i.e. high pass rates with less student support; accepting only high achieving students in student intakes) – until they see the overall student numbers and then they panic and tell us to take all-comers no matter how poor the applicants are.

Academic staff, university

State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018 (2019)

Freedom, auditing, and accountability

TEU applauds the Government for signalling the reorientation of the tertiary education sector, as set out in the TES, to one which provides service to broad societal and economic goals. However, the orientation of previous government policy toward commercial gain, private interest, centralised decision-making, and micromanagement has led to unsustainable workloads, alienation, and a lack of staff voice and expertise in decision-making (see [State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018](#)).

The tertiary education sector needs more positive, productive, and genuinely supportive systems for the future that recognise the social and collaborative nature of research, and the “closely interdependent” nature of teaching and research as defined in the [Education Act](#). Research is about knowing truths in common that we cannot know alone. And a sector which has the broadest possible range of courses, subjects, and skills taught will put Aotearoa in a better position to address the widest range of social, economic, and environmental issues.

🔗 I believe it has side-lined the achievements of some of our most committed teaching staff. They're the ones who have dedicated their lives to helping students learn and grow. Focussing academic funding on research side-lines their achievements and relegates teaching to a lower level than research. I don't think these hierarchies are helpful.

TEU member, anonymous

Reviewing Performance-Funding in the Tertiary Education Sector (2019)

Academic freedom

🔗 Academic freedom has been compromised by teaching and assessment directives from faculty dictators and processes. We could be doing a much better job with our students and programmes if we were trusted by our faculty to do our jobs as qualified, experienced, and highly capable staff.

Academic staff, university

State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018 (2019)

It is critically important that TEO leaders, government, TEU, and learners work together in protecting academic freedom in research, teaching, and operational matters.

🔗 We don't even get a say in what or how we teach. We are told what methods to use and what the teaching material must look like. Then we are locked out from changing anything in the system by the manager.

Academic staff, polytechnic

State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018 (2019)

Many institutions have become focused on the defence of ‘commercial’ reputations and, in doing so, have moved to silence public critique. The chilling effect on the sector means that the role of critic and conscience, academic freedom, and good decision-making has suffered because staff don't feel safe to question and critique the decisions of TEO leaders.

🔗 We need to aspire toward a mature relationship with government and with university management, in which we are not working in opposition, but cooperatively towards better outcomes and experiences for our students, and everyone who works in our organisations.

Academic staff, university

Reviewing Performance Funding in the Tertiary Education Sector (2019)

In line with the Education Amendment Act (1990), academic freedom must be both preserved and enhanced. This can be achieved by ensuring academic freedom – related to research, teaching and learning, and matters relating to the organisation's practices and services – is part of investment plans and reporting requirements.



Staff, student, hapū, iwi, and union voice

Unit Management and Executive are now much worse, unwilling to listen, or willing to accept differing viewpoints. Autocratic Managerialism, and micro-management by senior management of the faculty and school has destroyed collegiality.

Academic staff, polytechnic
State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018 (2019)

For over a decade, many staff and students have felt under-valued and ignored by the senior leaders of TEOs. [The State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector Survey, 2018](#) indicates a shutting down of collegial structures within our tertiary education institutions and high levels of bullying.

Actions must continue to be taken to put staff, students, and Māori voice back into the heart of decision-making in the tertiary education sector.

All of these universities like to be the bastion of critic and conscience of society until [staff] critique them.

Heather Warren, TEU Organiser

Things seem to regularly be happening ‘to’ us. At [the] institution level, things are often a ‘done deal’ before staff even hear about them.

Academic staff, polytechnic
State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018 (2019)

We can’t have teaching, learning, and research that takes on all COVID-19 is throwing at us, if we can’t challenge the ways in which our institutions operate, the ways our institutions set up teaching, learning, and research.

TEU, Tertiary Update

Building upon the principles of staff voice and academic freedom enshrined in the Education (Vocational Education and Training Reform) Amendment Bill, we must ensure all TEO leaders make space for staff, student, and union voice, and put in place policy requirements that protect and encourage staff and student voice and democratic participation across the tertiary education sector.

I find my students are kept waiting for care for several weeks when they need it most. This can mean the student fails or drops out of their courses. The services are high quality, but I get the impression that they are under-resourced in general, particularly to meet the increased demands generated from higher numbers of students with mental illness and learning difficulties.

Academic staff, university
State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018 (2019)

We must also encourage TEO leaders to begin a review of management layers which currently act as a barrier to staff and student involvement in the



co-creation and co-production of healthy teaching, learning, research, student academic support and pastoral care, and administration.

To provide a framework for the tertiary education sector to be transformative, and which ensures the right breadth to cover STEM subjects and the arts, social sciences, and humanities, the Minister must make a range of changes to the current policy and funding approaches.

Immediate actions to improve freedoms in the tertiary education sector. In partnership with TEU, NZUSA, and TEO leaders, the Government must:

- Develop guidelines on the limits of loyalty and fidelity within tertiary education employment arrangements so that they do not interfere with academic freedom;
- Develop and implement accountability mechanisms for TEOs about the preservation and enhancement of academic freedom;
- Set requirements for all TEOs to empower staff and students. This will mean reviewing the top-down management and decision-making styles used in the sector.

We ask that the Government implement a number of further changes over its three-year parliamentary term, either by 01 July 2022 or 01 July 2023:

By July 2022

- Expand opportunities for staff to decide on matters of teaching, learning, research, and support, in ways that meet the needs of students, hapū, iwi, communities, employers, and the future needs of Aotearoa;
- Elevate the place of academic freedom in institutional reporting – and ensure it relates to academic output and matters pertaining to the organisation’s practices and services – into investment plan requirements. This will assist in creating spaces of genuine debate.

By July 2023

- Ensure all TEOs establish policy requirements that protect and encourage staff and student voice and democratic participation across the tertiary education sector.

Fairness



We need to face facts and ask some hard questions of why across our sector Pasifika peoples continue to be under-represented.

We need to continue to fund public services and institutions well so that everyone can access decent, secure work that pays them enough to live with dignity. We also need to ensure that everyone, regardless of their background or socio-economic status, can access the public services they need, when they need them. This underpins my view of the education sector as well.

Labour MP Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan
TEU Empowering Women in Union Political Panel
Supplementary Questions

Tertiary education is a common good that improves the lives of citizens. The system must be based on active Tiriti relationships that ensure the principle of mana motuhake is adhered to in the fullest sense with appreciation also of the United Nations [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#). The sector must also produce transformative, lifelong experiences that develop the social, cultural, intellectual, and technical capabilities and knowledge of individuals. All who engage in tertiary education will then be able to contribute to the common good of Aotearoa and more broadly in the world as active citizens.

Education and Te Tiriti

In addition to the objectives outlined in the Education Act, Te Tiriti o Waitangi challenges us to continue to work towards a society that genuinely reflects the intention of its Articles, in particular Article 3 which gives Māori “the same rights and duties of citizenship as the people of England.” Therefore, one of the core purposes of tertiary education in Aotearoa should be to advance us as a nation towards a true Tiriti relationship that seeks to realise tino rangatiratanga fully – the sovereignty of iwi Māori (Article 2).

The emergence and continued growth of wānanga in the tertiary education sector provides a defined space where kaupapa Māori and mātauranga Māori can flourish in a setting determined by āhuetanga Māori and tikanga Māori. Wānanga have made a substantial contribution to improvements in educational outcomes for Māori in the sector, but equally importantly to social and cultural wellbeing indicators that underpin productivity for wellbeing (BERL 2014)².

Pihama et al. (2004: 10)³ note, “Kaupapa Māori challenges the political context of unequal power relations and associated structural impediments.” Thus, wānanga also serve as transformative spaces where Māori can make sense of the widespread disparities between whānau Māori and other citizens. They are also spaces where mātauranga Māori is nurtured, created, and re-created.

From TEU’s 2016 submission to the Productivity Commission

Racism and mana at work and in education

Sadly, institutional, structural, and systemic racism is endemic in the tertiary education sector. TEU voiced our support of the independent review into structural, systemic, and casual discrimination and racism at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. However, this issue will not be fully addressed by a one-off review with limited [Terms of Reference](#).

It is time for TEO leaders, iwi, students, TEU, and government to work together to design and implement a plan to address structural, institutional, and overt racism across all TEOs.

While the TES places emphasis on valuing accessibility, inclusivity, and diversity, meaningful change in incorporating te reo Māori and tikanga Māori will only occur through a clear plan involving meaningful engagement with Māori; an improved funding model that provides for the time, resourcing, and capabilities to meet these objectives; and greater representation by both ākonga and kaimahi Māori in the tertiary education sector. Added to this, TEOs must be required to demonstrate in their investment plans how they will progress the TES priorities.

[There has been] increasing numbers of Māori students but [no] equivalent increase in numbers of Māori support and academic staff.

General staff, university

State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018 (2019)

TEU proposes the Government’s numeric targets for recruiting and retaining ākonga Māori be extended to numeric targets for kaimahi Māori. It is also crucial that public funding be provided to address racism and other actions needed to promote equity, accessibility, inclusivity, and fairness for Māori.

Pay transparency and gender pay equity

Pay transparency and gender pay equity continue to be issues of concern across the country, including in our TEOs. Aotearoa does not currently have a legal requirement for businesses to report on their gender or ethnic pay gaps. For women, pay secrecy is particularly harmful and perpetuates gender inequality in pay rates.

In the tertiary education sector, research out of the University of Auckland found both Māori⁴ and Pasifika⁵ staff are underrepresented in senior roles, and overrepresented in lower, less secure levels of the academy. The research also found that Māori and Pasifika women are making up the lower ranks within academic positions. A more recent study, [Glass Ceilings in New Zealand Universities](#)⁶, found Māori and Pasifika academics make up less than 4% and 1%, respectively, of New Zealand professors; earn on average \$7700 less than non-Māori and Pasifika men; and were 65% less likely to be promoted to associate professor or professor.

2. See https://www.twoa.ac.nz/te-whare/publications-and-reports/2014-berl-wananga-sector-economic-report?sc_lang=en, accessed 21 December 2020.

3. See <https://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A51803>, accessed 21 December 2020.

4. See http://journal.mai.ac.nz/sites/default/files/MAIJrnl_8_2_McAllister_FINAL.pdf, accessed 21 December 2020.

5. See <http://www.journal.mai.ac.nz/content/why-isn%E2%80%99t-my-professor-pasifika-snapshot-academic-workforce-new-zealand-universities>, accessed 21 December 2020.

6. See <http://www.journal.mai.ac.nz/content/glass-ceilings-new-zealand-universities-inequities-m%C4%81ori-and-pacific-promotions-and-earnings>, accessed 21 December 2020.



📌 We need to face facts and ask some hard questions of why across our sector Pasifika peoples continue to be underrepresented. The reality is Pasifika staff and students find it hard to get a foot in the door of our institutions. There are multiple barriers for Pasifika students and staff in the accessibility and equity of tertiary education.

Maria Meredith

Pasifika representative on TEU Council

To promote equitable workplaces, we must ensure TEOs are exemplary state employers. All investment plans must be required to include equity implementation plans for Māori, women, and Pasifika staff and learners. Additionally, the Government must require TEOs to report publicly on equity actions and the data needed to evaluate the success of innovations aimed at improving equity in the sector.

Staff conditions of work are students conditions of learning

📌 Pretty much every academic and admin staff I know works well in excess of their contracted hours – many of us do far in excess of our contract hours and we still can't keep up or feel that our efforts are recognised and valued.

Academic staff, university

State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector, 2018 (2019)

Staff conditions of work are students' conditions of learning. But year after year conditions of teaching, learning, and research have come under attack.

TEU's [State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector Survey, 2018](#) showed a majority of staff surveyed reported that their level of satisfaction had gotten worse or much worse over the preceding three years as a result of deteriorating working conditions in terms of workload, management, and leadership. The report also revealed serious concerns about a decline in student support services (academic support and pastoral care) in the tertiary education sector, and a decline in wellbeing.

More recently, TEU's pulse surveys ([Tertiary Lives | COVID-19](#) and its [follow-up survey](#)) illustrated how COVID-19 had exacerbated these concerns. The surveys showed increased stress levels amongst staff related to workload, staff concern for students, technology support and availability, concern for whānau and home life, and management responses. These results match the commentary found in the Controller and Auditor-General's [Tertiary Education Institutions: 2019 Audit Results and What We Saw in 2020](#). The Auditor General's report states that the operational response from institutions was 'variable,' with some TEOs finding responding to the consequences of COVID-19 'challenging,' and many staff finding alternative teaching arrangements 'stressful.'

I am anxious and stressed as a natural response to this global pandemic. I am anxious and stressed thinking about job security after the pandemic.

University staff

Tertiary Lives | COVID-19: A Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on Tertiary Education Staff (2020)

Staff and students now face carrying the financial burden of COVID-19 through personal sacrifices which save the institution money in the short-term, yet negatively impact working conditions and students' learning.

Fight for every job: we can't sacrifice our way to rebuilding public education. "Voluntary" redundancies cut jobs, raise workloads, and hurt students and community. We can't pay for their crisis, but we can say: tū kotahi, tū kaha. Stand for education.

TEU co-branch president Dougal McNeill

Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington

While the Controller and Auditor General's report found 'good' levels of support by TEOs for the wellbeing of students in response to COVID-19, the student body's own research, conducted by [Te Mana Ākonga](#)⁷ and the [New Zealand Union of Students' Associations](#)⁸, identified the negative impacts that COVID-19 and the national lockdown has had on Māori learners and university students.

Institutions must be required to include staff and student wellbeing measures in auditing approaches in the tertiary education sector to protect staff, students, and the future of tertiary education in Aotearoa.

As the Controller and Auditor-General's report notes, "many [TEOs] are still in a 'get-through' phase. They are focussing on short-term measures to address immediate issues, such as revenue shortfalls. As part of its recovery strategy, the Government intends further actions to achieve its policies of strengthening the sector and transforming to a more sustainable future state." The report continues, stating that without consensus around recovery, "there is a risk that tactical response decisions being made now might be detrimental to successful outcomes in the long-term" (5), and reaches the conclusion that "[d]uring the recovery period, focussing on longer-term strategic goals and priorities will be critical in guiding short-term decisions" (22).

[Many TEOs] are still in a 'get-through' phase. They are focussing on short-term measures to address immediate issues, such as revenue shortfalls [...]. During the recovery period, focussing on longer-term strategic goals and priorities will be critical in guiding short-term decisions.

Controller and Auditor-General

Tertiary Education Institutions: 2019 Audit Results and What We Saw in 2020

With [forecasting by the Ministry of Education](#) indicating full-time equivalent student numbers rising across the board over the next few years – despite more immediate drops in international students – we need to ensure TEOs are doing all they can to prevent short-sighted cuts. TEO leaders and government must also continue to improve the engagement with TEU, staff, students, hapū, iwi, and communities in re-thinking the best fiscal approach needed in order to stabilise the sector now and into the future.

Furthermore, a key issue in universities remains the over-emphasis on institutional autonomy at both the financial and operational levels. The Controller and Auditor-General's Tertiary Education Institutions: 2019 Audit Results and What We Saw in 2020 report notes that balancing the autonomy of universities will be critical to building consensus around improving the financial sustainability of the sector" (22). While institutional autonomy has a crucial role to play in ensuring academic freedom, the emphasis on financial and operational autonomy serves to steer decision-making towards asserting and maintaining managerial power over the interests of staff, students, and the future of tertiary education in Aotearoa.

A tripartite discussion must be held between government, TEO leaders, and TEU on the issue of institutional autonomy to ensure decisions are made in service to, and in the best interests of, staff, students, and the future of our tertiary education system.

The tertiary education sector must be an environment founded on the co-creation of learning and knowledge. Only when the teacher-student relationship and the wellbeing of all in the system is at the heart of institutional actions can the tertiary education sector make an unimpaired contribution to the creative, social, human, scientific, economic, cultural, and intellectual

7. See <https://www.temanaakonga.org.nz/nga-puka>, accessed 21 December 2020.

8. See <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f0515b1b1a21014b5d22dd6/t/5fa218b297ec03254a8fc9b3/1604458682311/COVID-19+and+Tertiary+Students+The+impact+on+the+wellbeing%2C+finance%2C+and+study+of+students+at+tertiary+institutions+in+Aotearoa+New+Zealand+.pdf>, accessed 21 December 2020.



growth of all communities and regions, as well as that of Aotearoa as a whole.

When it comes to fairness in education – a core aspiration for TEU members and this current Government – there are a range of actions needed:

Immediate actions to ensure fairness in the tertiary education sector

- | Require TEOs to co-design and co-produce strategies to advance equality and eliminate racism;
- | Pay a Living Wage across the sector;
- | Require investment plans to include equity implementation protocols;
- | Work with TEOs to find a funding approach which will stop cuts to jobs and courses.

By July 2022

- | Require TEOs to report annually on the institutions' gender pay gap – including the ethnicity/gender pay gap – and ensure such information is made publicly available;
- | Require TEOs to work with TEU to introduce the expansion of numeric targets for recruiting and retaining ākonga Māori to numeric targets for kaimahi Māori in order to ensure an increase in Māori staffing levels;
- | Design with iwi and staff plans to address structural and institutional racism, as well as instances of overt racism across all our TEOs;
- | Require TEOs to include staff and student wellbeing measures in all investment plans and auditing mechanisms in the tertiary education sector;
- | Initiate tripartite discussions surrounding TEOs adhering to the “good employer requirements” outlined in the [Public Services Act](#).

By July 2023

- | Implement a significant funding shift to realise the objectives and priorities set-out in the [TES](#) – this includes ring-fenced funding for initiatives to address racism and other objectives pertaining to the promotion of equity, accessibility, inclusivity, and fairness;
- | Hold a tripartite discussion on the issue of institutional autonomy to ensure decisions are made in service to – and in the best interests of – staff, students, and the future of our tertiary education system.

We look forward to working with the Government, TEO leaders, and student associations to make sure our tertiary education system is accessible, inclusive, and delivers high quality teaching, learning, and research for the good of all New Zealanders.

Supporting Documents

Academic Freedom is at the Heart of Innovation and Creativity (2016)

This research note outlines the current state of academic freedom in our tertiary education system. By examining the historical context of academic freedom in Aotearoa in conjunction with recent shifts toward new forms of management and neoliberal policy implementation, this research illustrates the ways in which the capacity of staff to test received wisdom through the exercise of academic freedom is being heavily undermined.

Funding Our Future: A Report on the Funding of the Tertiary Education System (2018)

This report argues that the current funding system for the tertiary education sector is not working. As an alternative, the report outlines principles which need to underpin the funding system if the sector is to realise the objectives of tertiary education.

Reviewing Performance Funding in the Tertiary Education Sector (2019)

In this report, TEU members detail the distorting and negative effects of PBRF and EPIs. These effects include excessive compliance costs; diverting valuable resources from research itself; the devaluing of local research, community engagement, and collaboration; an over-focus on publishing in highly ranked international journals rather than outlets that are more suited to a community of interest; and the use of the PBRF as a disciplinary tool for academic staff.

Te Kaupapa Whaioranga: The Blueprint for Tertiary Education (2013)

Te Kaupapa Whaioranga: The Blueprint for Tertiary Education is TEU's line in the sand for a high quality democratic public tertiary education system that provides life-long learning opportunities for all New Zealanders. It calls for us to focus on the public good that tertiary education provides, to restore over a billion dollars of funding cut from the sector in recent years and to replace current managerialism and private corporate models with democratic, representative governance.

Tertiary Lives: A Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on Tertiary Education Staff (2020)

Conducted during April-May 2020, this survey report outlines the early impacts of COVID-19 on the lives of more than 800 staff members working throughout our tertiary education sector. The increased levels of stress and uncertainty associated with the nationwide lockdown were reported as being exacerbated by unrealistic expectations from managers and a persistent lack of genuine leadership on the part of university leadership teams across the tertiary education sector.

Tertiary Lives: Part II: A Follow-up Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on Tertiary Education Staff (2020)

This survey report, conducted during August-September 2020 as a follow-up to our initial survey, identified concerning trends involving increased workloads, stress, and COVID-19 being used, by managers, to justify restructuring and potential job cuts.

The State of the Public Tertiary Education Sector Survey, 2018 (2019)

This report outlines the changing systemic and institutional pressures across our tertiary education sector and the ways in which these factors have shaped the values, experiences, and relationships of staff, as well as the teaching and learning conditions of students in recent years. The research found that: academic autonomy is diminishing; student service provision is worsening; workload expectations are increasing; bullying and discrimination is embedded throughout the tertiary education sector; and levels of work satisfaction are lessening.





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