

The Five Principles of Te Kaupapa Whaioranga

MANA ATUA, MANA TANGATA

1 Decision-making must be democratic, equitable and inclusive.

MANA WHENUA

2 Tertiary education should foster a sense of belonging, innovation and creativity.

MANA MOTUHAKE

3 Staff and students must have authority and influence over their work. Tertiary education institutions and their people must act as a critic and conscience of society.

AHU KĀWANATANGA

4 Staff and students must be able to collaborate and share their collective work with their communities.

MANA TIRITI

5 Tertiary education should promote participation, protection and partnership for all people.

Our public tertiary education system **belongs to all New Zealanders**.

We must ensure that tertiary education provision receives adequate **funding at all levels, in all communities**, and for all learners, whatever their current skill, aptitude and knowledge levels.

We must ensure that within our tertiary education institutions all staff and students have responsible **autonomy and academic freedom**.

READ TE KAUPAPA WHAIORANGA: TEU.AC.NZ/BUEPRINT

the BLUEPRINT for Polytechnics TE KAUPAPA WHAIORANGA



Te Kaupapa Whaioranga – the blueprint for the ITP sector

Te Kaupapa Whaioranga, the blueprint for tertiary education asserts that tertiary education has a crucial public good function, beyond simply generating economic benefits. Institutes of technology/polytechnics (ITPs) are an integral part of the tertiary education sector, providing a wide range of vocational education and training - from foundation to degree-level - in their communities and regions.

In the past vocational education and training was mainly associated with core trades. However today it has a much broader occupational reach and is offered at all levels of the Qualifications Framework. Polytechnics provide much of our vocational education and training, delivering foundation to degree level programmes (with some also offering post-graduate level qualifications). Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) are responsible for arranging workplace training across a range of occupations and industries, often in partnership with the local polytechnic.

This blueprint for polytechnics provides a way to think about, understand and present the challenges that face this particular part of the tertiary education sector. The blueprint also provides a plan to ensure polytechnics can continue to serve their communities and regions, while working together to meet broader national goals and priorities.

Polytechnics exist to serve their regions and communities

The ITP sector (which includes 18 institutions and their outreach campuses) provides vocational education and training for over 130,000 students. The sector has experienced a steady decline in funding over the past few years, placing enormous pressure on institutions and their staff. Funding pressures

and changes in government policy (such as contestable funding for level 1 and 2 programmes) have forced many polytechnics to limit provision primarily to those areas dictated as priorities by government. This does not necessarily align to the local skill needs of each region.

To ensure that polytechnics are able to respond to a broad range of skill needs they should be supported to provide for:

1. the needs of their local communities and employers;
2. specific and unique regional needs (relating to business or community activity, services, and industry); and
3. national skills strategy requirements.

The ITP sector should be structured in such a way that these three aspects are clearly represented, understood, resourced and implemented.

The core or community curriculum

Each institution should provide a set of nationally agreed core skills and knowledge that meet the needs of the communities in their region, beyond the capability of compulsory education. This also ensures all members of

its community have the critical, literacy and numeracy skills that allow them to participate fully in their community.

A national conversation (or series of conversations) between polytechnic staff and students, in conjunction with their communities - including iwi and hapū, social service providers, businesses, industries, and relevant ITOs - will identify these core skills and knowledge.

The baseline skills and knowledge will reflect all aspects of New Zealand community life, whether urban or rural. They will have the flexibility to reflect the various needs in each community, determined by that community and by polytechnic staff both nationally and from each institution.

The regional curriculum

In addition, urban polytechnics should be responsible for offering vocational education and training in particular specialties which reflect needs for those in metropolitan areas. Regional polytechnics should offer vocational education and training which reflects their region's specific needs.

These needs may be reflected in local industry or enterprise workforce development planning, local body strategic planning, iwi development plans, community development plans and so forth. They should provide a seamless link between compulsory education and later



UCOL staff campaigning for fair pay

employment. This approach allows specialised courses to exist to meet regional need, whilst ensuring that a strong framework of core skills and knowledge is in place across the ITP sector. Creating a greater regional focus within a broad national strategy will also reduce unnecessary duplication and competitiveness within the sector.

A national skills strategy

New Zealand needs skilled workers across a range of industries and services.¹ However, the ITP sector's ability to respond to the education and training needs of industry and social service providers is hampered by the government's use of macroeconomics (primarily national-level economic analysis) for decision making about workforce and tertiary education sector planning. A macro-economic approach (such as the Government's national focus on funding STEM provision) lacks the specificity we need to consider local and regional skill demands, and the role polytechnics play in meeting these. Even though most agree that broad investment in skills and knowledge improves labour and capital productivity, some polytechnics are limited in the extent that they are able to do this, because of funding restrictions and government policy directives.

While it is not possible to create a highly-detailed, centrally planned and organised system to meet all education and training needs, we do need a more coordinated national approach to ensure that we can plan for current and future skill and knowledge requirements and changing population demographics.² For example, the recently released Statistics New Zealand report "Te Āo Marama" notes changing demographics for the Māori population which will not only impact on actual numbers in the tertiary education sector and labour market in the future, but are also likely to impact on the provision of education and training.³

- 1 <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/work/skilledmigrant/LinkAdministration/ToolboxLinks/essentialskills.htm?level=1>
- 2 A useful start was made in 2008 with the implementation of the national Skills Strategy however this initiative has largely lapsed.
- 3 http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/

Such a national approach must recognise the important role polytechnics play in ensuring we can meet our skill and knowledge requirements, even during economic downturns when business and industry may be more reluctant to invest in education and training.

The strategy must encourage polytechnics to collaborate and support each other and ITOs (who also have an important role to play) to form collective and supportive links, rather than imposing models (particularly funding models) that force these institutions to compete with each other.

Additionally, the role confusion between polytechnics and ITOs needs to be resolved – we agree with the Metro Group of ITPs⁴ proposal to refocus ITOs "...to concentrate on strategic issues and standards setting...". However, public providers should have responsibility for all provision, whether this is work-based, institution-based, or a mix of both. Within this public provision there should also be space for not-for-profit and community providers, complementing the work of the larger institutions.⁵

To support this, a coordinated national skills strategy, identifying short, medium and long-term need must be a priority, to ensure that the tertiary sector can continue to contribute skilled and qualified graduates to our communities, social service providers, industries and businesses.

Cooperative government-funded research could determine the broad priorities for the strategy, with expert input from central government, ITOs, the tertiary sector (including staff and student representatives), iwi and hapū, key service providers (health, housing and so forth), professional associations, Business NZ (as the representative of employers) and the Council of Trade Unions (as the representative of workers).

- 4 [snapshots-of-nz/te-ao-marama-2014.aspx](http://www.metrogroup.co.nz/snapshots-of-nz/te-ao-marama-2014.aspx)
- 5 The Metro Group of polytechnics includes CPIT, MIT, Otago, Weltec, Wintec and Unitec
- 5 Metro Group, September 2011. "A new policy framework for vocational education" pg. 6

Government funding to regional polytechnics 2010-2014:

↓ \$60m

That is a cut of

20%

Meanwhile inflation (CPI) 2010-2014 was:

8.7% ↑

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Funding to support each polytechnic's unique features

- a. Each institution must receive adequate funding to provide a broad range of subjects/disciplines at a range of levels, and to ensure that the necessary research to support these programmes can be undertaken.
- b. There must be adequate funding to ensure staffing levels ⁶, staff student ratios ⁷, working conditions and facilities are appropriate to service all core courses and any regionally specific courses offered by the particular institution.
- c. When institutions elect in consultation with their sector to offer nationally needed education and training, there must be adequate funding to provide appropriate staff, facilities for students, as well as resources for building and maintaining relationships with social service providers, industry/business and ITOs. Regional polytechnics may need extra funding in situations where they have critical course offerings but low student numbers.
- d. Funding must also allow for regular professional development for staff in core and specialty areas so that these staff can keep up-to-date with changing technology or industry developments. Realistic workloads must permit staff to engage fully in their communities and local professional networks.
- e. Funding must also recognise that staff must be able to undertake research, not only in their area of expertise but reflecting the needs of local communities and regions. Staff are in the best position to consult with community, local government, industry and business to determine the direction of this research.
- f. Student loans and allowances should reflect, in addition to those requirements for change already outlined in the Te Kaupapa Whaioranga, specific needs that might result from attendance at any particular institution for regional or national education and training

6 Academic staff numbers in 2012 were 4,440; general/allied staff were 3,970

7 The student-staff ratio in 2012 was 18.1 across this sector

specialties. For example, a student who needs to enrol outside of their locality to take up a training opportunity may have different student allowance needs.

Decision making that supports participation by polytechnic staff and students

- a. The importance of each polytechnic's links to their communities and regions must be acknowledged in decisions about funding, governance and management of this part of the tertiary education sector.
- b. Decision-making processes in polytechnics must reflect the experience, skills, expertise and autonomy of staff and students. This means Parliament must reinstate staff and student representation to polytechnic councils and that staff and students must be involved in developing strategic plans for their institutions.
- c. In addition, staff, communities and regions should be collectively responsible for the design, implementation and decision-making that is needed to undertake teaching, learning, training and research.



George Tongariro, Whitireia NZ

'Local polytechnics need to support our *unique* regional needs.'