

## Appendix 5: Discussion document: Proposed changes to using the National Student Number to support workplace-based learning

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### **Have your say on proposed changes to using the National Student Number to support workplace-based learning**

#### **Introduction**

The Education and Training Act (the Act) 2020 allows the Secretary of Education to issue national student numbers (NSNs) to any student enrolled with an education provider.

Currently however, the NSN cannot be used for work-based education and training when the funding is not administered through a registered provider. The inability to use the NSN has caused problems for government agencies tracking the monitoring and use of this funding.

Extending the scope of NSNs requires legislation change. Accordingly, we are seeking your views on allowing the NSN to be used when there is funding support for work-based learning when a student is not enrolled with a provider. Submissions are open from 21 April to 16 June 2021.

#### **Current situation**

The NSN ensures that funding is allocated effectively, efficiently, and equitably. It also allows for monitoring of the impact of learner support and the use of student loans and allowances.

The Act currently allows the use of NSNs only for the following purposes:

- monitoring and ensuring enrolment and attendance
- encouraging attendance at early childhood services
- ensuring education providers and students receive appropriate resourcing
- statistics
- research
- ensuring that student educational records are accurately maintained
- establishing and maintaining student identities to support online learning.

The NSN cannot currently be used for learners in work-place based education and training when the funding is not administered through a registered provider, including tertiary education organisations.

For instance, the Apprenticeship Boost Initiative provides funding directly to employers to support work-place learning, but NSNs cannot be used. Government agencies cannot use the NSN to monitor funding for the Apprenticeship Boost.

The inability to use NSN for learners in work-based education and training not connected to a provider requires time and resources to find alternative ways to collect, store, and share information.

As a result, there are:

- bespoke arrangements for each initiative with several agencies involved
- limits on Government's ability to assess the equity of particular initiatives.

### **Options analysis**

Options were explored to ensure student records are efficiently and accurately maintained, and funding is allocated effectively and equitably for learners in education and training not directly connected to a provider.

The option to maintain the current NSN legislation was discounted due to the current problems with the approach.

The proposed legislation change allows NSNs to be used when funding is not administered through a registered provider and the scope of the change addresses current problems.

Other options considered, such as using NSNs as a national identifier, extended the scope of the NSN unnecessarily and had risks to the privacy of individuals.

### **Proposed change**

We consider that the proposed legislation change will support the effective administration of public funding, strengthen assurance that resources to support workplace-based learning are being used effectively and efficiently, and will support learners in work-place based education and training, even if the funding is not directed through a provider.

The change also aligns with the Reform of Vocational Education which is intended to create a strong, unified, and sustainable system for all vocational education and training that better supports workplace-based learning.

Any legislation change to NSNs would have to consider the information privacy principles in the Privacy Act 2020, regulatory stewardship, and data management. Under the proposed legislation change, student privacy will be maintained. NSNs will be shared only between authorised government agencies for authorised administrative use. Employers will not be provided NSNs.

There are no other impacts anticipated as a result of the proposed legislation change.

**Questions**

Q.1. Do you agree it's important to ensure student records are accurately and efficiently maintained and funding is allocated effectively and equitably for learners in education and training no matter where their learning is based?

Q.2. Do you support the proposed approach for national student numbers to be used to support workplace-based learning when not enrolled with a provider? If so, why? If not, why not?

Q.3. What factors should be taken into account when deciding how to implement national student numbers to support workplace-based learning??

## **How to have your say**

We are seeking your views on the proposed change to allow NSNs be used to support workplace-based learning. You can email your submissions to: [legislation.consultation@education.govt.nz](mailto:legislation.consultation@education.govt.nz) or write to:

Education Consultation  
Ministry of Education  
PO Box 1666  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand

Submissions close on 16 June 2021 and will inform advice to the Minister on final policy proposals that would be submitted to Cabinet.

### *Purpose of feedback*

We are seeking your views on the suggested changes discussed above. Your feedback will enable us to make better informed decisions about possible changes to enable the use of NSNs for workplace-based learning.

Please be assured that any feedback you provide will be confidential to those involved in analysing the consultation data. We will not identify any individuals in the final analysis and report writing unless you expressly give permission for this. However, submissions, including submitters' names, and documents associated with the consultation process may be subject to an Official Information Act 1982 request.