Reform of Vocational Education

What the Government's proposals would mean for Iwi and Māori stakeholders

Thank you for taking an interest in the Reform of Vocational Education. We need to hear your views on these proposals. The changes we propose are complex, and we need the detailed knowledge and the different perspectives of people across New Zealand to get them right.

This fact sheet is a companion document to the Reform of Vocational Education consultation discussion document, which is published here: https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/reform-of-vocational-education/. It provides additional information on what vocational education is, and what the proposed reforms would mean.

You can also provide feedback by attending a face-to-face consultation event. Details on these events are available at the above link.

Partnership under the Treaty of Waitangi

This Government wants to work in partnership with Iwi and Māori employers, economic development organisations and other stakeholders. This is an important part of meeting obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi. In making improvements to vocational education, we want to work with Māori and Iwi to ensure the system works for Māori learners and whānau.

Māori learners can feel confident to enrol in vocational education in 2019

Māori learners can go ahead and enrol in vocational education courses in 2019, confident that the system will support you to proceed with your study throughout any future change process.

The proposals in this document may go ahead in this or another form, but the Government won't make any decisions until we have heard and carefully considered feedback from this consultation process. Even if the changes go ahead as currently envisaged, you should not notice any major changes to how the system operates in 2019. Education providers and ITOs would be gearing up for transformation, but it would be "business as usual" for their delivery to and support of learners. Ensuring all learners can complete their study as planned – during 2019 and beyond – will be a top priority throughout any change process.

A vision for NZ

A strong, unified vocational education system that is sustainable and fit for the future of work, delivering what learners, employers and communities need to be successful.

Have your say

The government is seeking feedback on the proposals for the Reform of Vocational Education by Wednesday 27 March 2019. The link above will also take you to our online survey where you can respond to the questions posed and more.

You can also provide feedback by attending a face-to-face consultation event. Details on these events are available at https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/reform-of-vocational-education/

More information on what the proposed reforms would mean for learners is available here: https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/reform-of-vocational-education/

How many Māori learners are involved in vocational education?

There are currently 52,000 Māori in vocational education and training across New Zealand, which is 21% of all the learners in vocational education. More information on Māori participation in vocational education can be found in the annex at the end of the document.

Key changes

- Industry Skills Bodies would be expected to work and be held accountable for their work with Māori stakeholders.
- Iwi and Māori employers and other stakeholders will have a greater voice in what's needed in their region through participation in Regional Leadership Groups.
- Māori learners will have a greater level of support in learning, including greater access to kaupapa Māori providers.

What should Iwi and Māori stakeholders understand about the proposed changes?

Why are changes being proposed?

At the heart of the Government's reform of vocational education is a goal to ensure that the needs of learners, employers and communities drive the system, to help us raise living standards for everyone in New Zealand. We want a system that truly delivers to the regions of New Zealand, and our proposals will help to ensure that there is greater availability of provision throughout New Zealand.

We need a vocational education system that delivers to the needs of all learners. The current system persistently under-serves some learner groups, including Māori. We need to ensure that Māori learners can access and succeed in a vocational education system that responds to their needs. Statistics New Zealand projects that the proportion of young people aged 15-24 who identify as Māori will increase from about one in five in 2018 to more than one in four by 2038.

This Government has taken action to address various immediate issues with skills supply in New Zealand, such as through the Construction Skills Action Plan, and by investing funds to address financial viability issues in ITPs. This work is important, but more fundamental change is needed if our vocational education system is to meet New Zealand's long-term needs.

The Government can't continue tinkering at the edges, or adding more layers of complexity and "Band-Aid solutions" to an already complex system. These problems call for decisive action to safeguard New Zealand's skills pipeline and economic development for the future. These issues with our current system are holding New Zealand back, and some groups bear the costs much more than others. New Zealand deserves better.

Specifics of the proposals for Iwi and Māori stakeholders

Redefined roles for industry bodies and education providers

The Government is proposing that vocational education providers (the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology described below, plus private training establishments and wānanga) would take on the role of supporting workplace learning and assessment that is currently done by industry training organisations (ITOs).

New "Industry Skills Bodies" would extend the leadership role of industry and employers across all vocational education, including provider-based vocational education. They would also provide industry with a purchase role across all vocational education, through advice to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), which TEC must give regard to.

Providers would be responsible for delivering and supporting all vocational education and training, whether it took place at a provider's facilities on campus or in a workplace. They would take responsibility for approximately 140,000 trainees and apprentices in addition to the approximately 110,000 vocational education learners they already serve (based on 2017 Ministry of Education figures). This would require increased capability and capacity.

Workplace learning would become part of the core business of vocational education providers, putting them in day-to-day contact with employers. Over time, programmes that integrate structured learning with the workplace would become the norm, making it easy for Māori and other learners to transfer between providers and between on-job and off-job training throughout their programme of study. More vocational education could resemble apprenticeships, with education providers and employers working together to help a learner meet industry skill standards via a mix of work-based learning occurring in the course of doing a job, and structured learning supported by a provider off-job where needed – regardless of whether the learner is employed.

The changes set out above would require significant change processes for providers and ITOs. If these changes proceed, Government will need to provide support for the change processes to ensure they are smooth and effective, including supporting existing trainees and apprentices and their employers to easily shift training arrangements.

A New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology to replace all 16 existing ITPs in New Zealand

The Government proposes to create a new New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology, bringing together all 16 existing ITPs to offer high-quality vocational education throughout New Zealand. The creation of a new institution will allow greater and faster improvements, compared to continuing with ad-hoc mergers of competing ITPs across New Zealand, as individual institutions run into financial difficulties.

A dedicated organisational charter in the legislation would set out the purpose and functions of the institution, including specific obligations to ensure it was responding to the needs and aspirations of regional New Zealand and of Māori as tangata whenua.

Alongside its vocational delivery, the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology would continue to deliver foundation education, non-vocational certificate and diploma delivery (eg, te reo and tikanga Māori provision) and degree and postgraduate education as ITPs currently do.

Each region would have a Regional Leadership Group to advise the Institute's "national office" and the TEC on local skills, to link with local and regional development strategies, and to advise on what mix of courses should be offered in that region.

The "New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology" is a working name, and we are interested in your feedback on the name. The Government would like the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology to be in operation from 1 January 2020. The process of transformation would be phased to ensure minimal disruption to learners.

Collaboration through Centres of Vocational Excellence

The Government envisages that the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology, and perhaps also wānanga, would host Centres of Vocational Excellence focused on teaching and learning, and possibly applied research, in areas of study of particular importance to New Zealand.

Centres of Vocational Excellence would cover key sectors and industries, which could be broad (eg, agriculture) or specific (eg, viticulture). They could potentially also cover key types of educational delivery or activity, for example kaupapa Māori delivery.

We envision these would be located across the country, including in regional New Zealand.

Centres of Vocational Excellence would bring together a critical mass of knowledge and expertise in their areas, helping drive innovation and lift quality, and improve links to industries and communities.

A unified vocational education funding system

The proposed changes above would need to be supported by a new funding system. Creating one funding system for vocational education would ensure learners get the skills, experience and support they need to be successful, providers have the funding they need to be sustainable and to support our regions, and Industry Skills Bodies can fulfil their roles.

How would the changes make the system better for Māori learners and whānau?

Some learners find, when they complete a qualification and enter the workforce, they aren't as well prepared for work as they expected to be, due to gaps in their skills. This can be frustrating for learner and for employers.

Some Māori enrol in courses at a level below their capability or complete multiple qualifications at the same level rather than progressing to higher levels of study. More hands-on support and a strengthened relationship between providers and employers would give all learners (including Māori) the confidence that they are developing the right skills to succeed in the workplace.

Our proposals also consider the unique contribution that Māori can make towards our vocational education model. We consider it important that iwi and Māori have the opportunity to be represented on Regional Leadership Groups to influence the behaviour and offerings of their local campuses of the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology. The new Industry Skills Bodies would also be expected to work with Māori stakeholders (including Māori employers and Iwi).

However, the Treaty partnership is and will remain with the Crown – so Māori also need ongoing opportunities to participate in vocational education policy and operational decision-making with central government.

What do the proposals mean for Wānanga

About a third of the learners at wānanga are in vocational education programmes. Wānanga would continue to play an important role in delivering vocational education for learners (including Māori learners) under these reforms.

We are committed to working in partnership with wānanga to determine how the proposals could best support their aspirations, and whether there are alternative approaches that should be considered for their sector. In particular, we need to ensure that we acknowledge the unique role of the wānanga throughout any vocational education reforms. Further information on the impact for the wānanga can be found in the "wānanga" factsheet at https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/reform-of-vocational-education/.

The Government wants to work with wānanga to understand where the biggest opportunities for them and their learners lie in these proposals, and what adaptations might be needed to reflect their unique role in the system.

There are opportunities for wānanga to strengthen their connections with employers and work-place vocational education, and to provide nationwide leadership in developing high quality teaching and learning that meets the needs of Māori learners, their whānau, hapū, and iwi. Wānanga may wish to adopt, adapt and contribute to national qualifications and vocational programmes so that they are appropriate and effective for unique local contexts.

What happens after I provide feedback?

We expect that many people will be interested in having a say on the future of vocational education in New Zealand. Everyone's feedback is welcome. We'll carefully consider what we've heard in engagement meetings, along with the feedback that is sent in to the survey, email address and phone line. The Minister and Cabinet will receive a summary of all the feedback, which will inform their decisions about the Reform of Vocational Education. You can expect to hear about these decisions around mid-2019. We'll also continue to draw on feedback and ask for more conversations as we work through how to implement the Government's decisions.

Are you looking for more detail?

Technical discussion documents that go into greater detail on the specifics of the proposals are available at https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/reform-of-vocational-education/. Questions on the details are available on the technical discussion documents and online when you indicate that you wish to provide specific feedback to the following topics:

» Proposal on roles of providers and industry bodies
» Proposal on a single New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology
» Proposal on a unified funding system

Annex One:
Additional information about Māori learners

Maori are active participants in vocational education

There are currently 52,000 Māori in vocational education and training across New Zealand, which is 21% of all the learners in vocational education.

Māori learners participate in industry training with ITOs, and at providers including ITPs, wānanga and private training establishments (PTEs).

The number and proportion of Māori learners in vocational education by provider type (including industry training)

	Industry training	ITPs	PTEs	Wānanga
Number of Māori learners in vocational education by provider type	22,500	15,800	8,800	6,400
Percentage of all Māori learners in vocational education in provider type	43%	30%	17%	12%

Māori learners are predominately in the North Island, with large numbers in both the cities and the provinces. The largest region is Auckland with 11, 000 Māori learners. Māori learners are large proportions of vocational learners in Northland, Hawkes Bay/Gisborne, and the Bay of Plenty with Māori men and women participating in about equal numbers.

The number and proportions of Māori learners in vocational education by region

Region	Number of Māori learners in VET	Percentage of vocational learners in the region who are Māori
Auckland	11144	16%
Bay of Plenty	7402	38%
Waikato	6432	29%
Wellington	5869	20%
Hawkes Bay/Gisborne	5734	42%
Northland	4186	48%
Manawatu	3499	28%
Canterbury	3310	11%