

Reform of Vocational Education

What the Government's proposals would mean for Pacific learners, their families and communities

Thank you for taking an interest in the Reform of Vocational Education. We want 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.

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

Pacific 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.

More information on what the proposed reforms would mean for learners is available here:

<https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/reform-of-vocational-education/>

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/>

How many Pacific learners are in vocational education?

There are currently 24,000 Pacific learners in vocational education and training across New Zealand, which is 10% of all the learners in vocational education. More information on Pacific participation in vocational education can be found in the Annex attached at the end of this document.

What should Pacific learners and their families understand about the proposals?

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 Pacific learners. We need to ensure that Pacific 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 Pacific will increase from about one in ten in 2018 to one in seven 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 Pacific learners and their families

Redefined roles for industry bodies and education providers

The Government is proposing that providers would take on the role of supporting workplace learning and assessment that is currently done by 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

Key changes

- » The system would be designed to be responsive to the needs of Pacific learners
- » Pacific learners would get more hands-on support that's tailored to their needs, even during on-the-job training
- » The proposed changes would help to boost the profile and reputation of vocational education among schools and Pacific communities

become the norm, making it easy for Pacific 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.

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 these changes make the system better for Pacific learners and their families?

Improving how the vocational education system serves Pacific learners

Pacific learners are under-served by the current vocational education system. They are less likely to be studying vocational education and less likely to choose career paths that will have the largest returns for themselves and their family.

Pacific learners are also more likely to enrol in courses at a level below their capability or to complete multiple qualifications at the same level rather than progressing to higher levels of study. There is also a need for improved transitions in vocational education pathways from multiple entry points, particularly secondary school. There is a lack of consistent support into good vocational education pathways from the many entry points, particularly secondary school.

More hands-on support and a strengthened relationship between providers and employers would give all learners (including Pacific) the confidence that they are developing the right skills to be successful in the workplace.

The proposed changes to the vocational education system would create a system that is capable of delivering tailored rather than a 'one size fits all' approach.

Improving how we look at vocational education

Pacific influencers do not always see vocational education as having the same value as university study. Vocational education is the right 'first choice' for some of our most talented and capable school leavers, but many are discouraged from making that choice. The proposed changes would help to boost the profile and reputation of vocational education among schools and Pacific communities.

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 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: Pacific learners by vocational education subsector and region

There are currently 24,000 Pacific learners in vocational education and training. This is about 10% of all learners in vocational education and training.

Vocational education providers are important providers for Pacific learners. Pacific learners participate in industry training with ITOs, as well as attend polytechnics, private training establishments (PTEs), and wānanga.

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

	Industry training	ITPs	PTEs	Wānanga
Number of Pacific learners in vocational education by type of provision	11,800	6,000	5,500	1,600
Percentage of all Pacific learners in vocational education in each type of provision	48%	25%	23%	7%

The majority of Pacific learners are in Auckland, where they are also a larger proportion of vocational learners. Pacific men and women participate in about equal numbers.

The number and proportion of Pacific learners in vocational education by region (included are the 9 major regions for Pacific learners)

Region	Number of Pacific learners in Vocational education	Pacific learners as a percentage of vocational learners in the region
Auckland	13756	20%
Wellington	2727	9%
Canterbury	1638	5%
Hawkes Bay/Gisborne	1372	10%
Waikato Region	1239	6%
Bay of Plenty Region	1025	5%
Manawatu-Wanganui Region	603	5%
Northland Region	425	5%
Otago Region	414	4%

The number Pacific learners in vocational education by region and Pacific ethnicity

Region	Cook Island Māori	Fijian	Niuean	Samoan	Tokelauan	Tongan
Auckland	2310	2100	960	5490	125	3075
Wellington	470	290	100	1440	200	280
Canterbury	230	420	35	615	10	225
Hawkes Bay/Gisborne	215	135	25	460	5	230
Waikato Region	345	260	65	330	25	170
Bay of Plenty Region	250	150	30	200	40	115
Manawatu-Wanganui Region	140	95	20	220	15	70
Northland Region	120	70	40	115	5	55
Otago Region	60	40	5	105	5	55