

## What the Reform of Vocational Education means for schools and wharekura

The Government has announced its plan to create a strong and sustainable vocational education system. It will help improve the skills of all New Zealanders no matter where they are in their education or career, and will support a growing economy.

The world of work is changing significantly, and vocational education needs to adapt to stay ahead of these changes. A unified, strong vocational education system will help improve wellbeing for all New Zealanders and support a growing economy that works for everyone.

All regions deserve to be backed to succeed. We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a system that enables regional training and education that has a nationally consistent strategic direction and adapts to suit the jobs of today and the future. Your input into the design of the new system is vitally important and this will continue throughout this change.

We want schools better linked into the vocational education system and the world of work, and vocational learners in school to have clearer and more direct pathways into vocational education in the workplace and the tertiary system.

### One vocational education system will:

**give all learners the education and training they need** for the workplace

**prioritise learners the system currently doesn't serve well**, especially Māori, Pacific peoples, disabled people and people with low levels of previous education

**give employers greater access to a skilled, work-ready workforce** across all regions of New Zealand

**give industry the lead** in ensuring New Zealand's workforce is fit for today's needs and tomorrow's expectations

**ensure all the regions of New Zealand have collaborative, flexible, innovative and sustainable** providers

**build on New Zealand's reputation internationally** as a great place to study

**be culturally responsive** to learners at work and on campus, particularly to Māori and Pacific peoples

### What this means for you

- » Schools will continue to be a crucial part of the vocational education system.
- » There won't be big changes for learners and trainees when the reforms become official on 1 April 2020.
- » Existing programmes, qualifications and credentials will continue.
- » You should continue to support learners as they study vocational learning options (such as STAR, Gateway and Trades Academies) and to work with your local partners, including polytechnics, industry organisations and employers.
- » Trades Academy and Gateway allocations processes will remain unchanged for 2020.
- » New Trades Academy Lead Provider and Programme applications won't be considered at this time.
- » We are going to review how we fund secondary-tertiary learning arrangements to address inequities and disincentives in the current system.
- » We want to do this work with you.

**help young people more easily transition** from secondary school to good jobs with training or to high-quality and relevant online or on-campus learning

**support all people to continue employment** by ensuring they always have the new, relevant skills that employers need through retraining, upskilling and reskilling

**help whānau** by ensuring that everyone in the family who is able to earn can, even while they continue learning new skills to help them advance into more rewarding jobs.

## What the Government has decided

The Reform of Vocational Education will allow learners to study for qualifications delivered throughout New Zealand, with greater assurance that they meet industry-approved standards, and with high-quality teaching and learning support.

The main changes the Minister of Education announced on 1 August 2019 are:

1. *Create Workforce Development Councils (WDCs)*: Around four to seven industry-governed bodies, to give industry greater leadership across vocational education.
2. *Establish Regional Skills Leadership Groups (RSLGs)*: RSLGs would provide advice about the skills needs of their regions to the Tertiary Education Commission, WDCs, and local vocational education providers.
3. *Establish Te Taumata Aronui*: A group to help ensure that the Reform of Vocational Education reflects the Government's commitment to Māori-Crown partnerships.
4. *Create a New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology (the Institute)*: A unified, sustainable, public network of regionally accessible vocational education, bringing together the existing 16 institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs).
5. *Shift the role of supporting on-the-job learning from industry training organisations (ITOs) to providers*: The Institute and other providers would support on-the-job training like apprenticeships and traineeships as well as providing education and training in off-the-job settings, to achieve seamless integration between the settings and to be well-connected with the needs of industry.
6. *Establish Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs)*: CoVEs will bring together the Institute, other providers, WDCs, industry experts, and leading researchers to grow excellent vocational education provision and share high-quality curriculum and programme design across the system.
7. *Unify the vocational education funding system*: A unified funding system will apply to all provider-based and work-integrated education at certificate and diploma qualification levels 3 to 7 (excluding degree study) and all industry training.

## What does this mean for you?

For now, learners will still be able to study through their chosen providers. Existing programmes and qualifications will continue. They can continue enrolling as they normally would in 2019 and 2020.

Schools are encouraged to continue supporting learners as they study vocational learning options, including those undertaken through funding and programmes such as STAR, Gateway and Trades Academies. You should continue to work with your local tertiary education partners, including institutes of technology and polytechnics, and industry training organisations, as well as employers.

Schools will begin to see changes from 2020, but many of the changes (particularly to the roles and responsibilities of different organisations) will be phased in over the next few years. The Government is committed to a managed transition to minimise disruptions during these changes.

The Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) will work with schools and tertiary education organisations involved in secondary-tertiary learning arrangements to keep you informed and support you as part of the transition to the new system.

The Ministry will make Trades Academy place allocations to Lead Providers for 2020 following the usual processes and timeframes as previous years. In preparation for the transition to the new vocational system, new Trades Academy Lead Provider and Programme applications won't be considered at this time.

The TEC will make Gateway funding allocations to schools for 2020 following the usual processes and timeframes as previous years.

### **For school leavers enrolling in tertiary education in 2020**

School leavers can proceed with their plans to enrol in their chosen provider as they normally would in 2019 and 2020, including in multi-year programmes.

Fees Free tertiary education, along with financial support available through StudyLink, will continue.

For learners enrolling in institutes of technology and polytechnics, when they complete their qualification or credential in the next few years, it may be awarded by the institution they enrolled with, or by the new Institute. For those undertaking on-the-job learning, support for their learning will continue, but it will come from a vocational education provider rather than an industry training organisation by the end of 2022.

### **We want to strengthen the vocational learning school learners undertake and provide more direct pathways into higher-level vocational education**

As we implement the reforms, alongside the NCEA Review, there will be opportunities to strengthen vocational learning school learners undertake. This includes working with the new workforce development councils to ensure the development of vocational standards and packages of learning that are appropriate for delivery to students enrolled in school, but which are still industry-relevant.

A Vocational Entrance Award will also be developed in collaboration with schools, Workforce Development Councils, vocational educational providers, employers and NZQA to learners to begin meaningful study towards vocational qualifications while at school and support direct entry into higher-level vocational education.

### **We are going to review how we fund secondary-tertiary learning arrangements**

The reforms will fundamentally change how vocational education is provided and funded. So it's timely to review our funding and other arrangements at the secondary-tertiary interface to make sure they're fit for purpose. To ensure we can realise the full benefits of changes being progressed through reforms and the NCEA Review, the Ministry is planning to review secondary-tertiary funding arrangements, with a view to increasing access to secondary-tertiary learning opportunities.

This review will look at how secondary-tertiary learning programmes are funded and supported, and will address disincentives and inequities faced by schools to enable them to offer more meaningful vocational education options for school learners. We'll work with schools, vocational education providers, communities and employers on the development of this work.

### **What's next?**

If you'd like us to keep you up to date directly, please sign up for more information and we'll send you regular updates, information about the progression of the changes, and how you can get involved as things progress.

[Sign up to our newsletter update.](#)

**For more information on the Reform of Vocational Education, and the full series of factsheets, please visit [Kōrero Mātauranga – the Education Conversation.](#)**