

Information for staff of institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs)

The Government has announced its plan to create a strong and sustainable vocational educational system for provider and work-based training. 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.

One vocational education system will:

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

prioritise learners who 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 it means for you

- » In the short term, activity at your ITP will continue as normal.
- » Staff of existing ITPs, including chief executives, will transfer to subsidiaries of the Institute on 1 April 2020.
- » You may be asked by your leadership to participate in a transition workstream.
- » During transition, you'll be provided the information you need to support you to continue educational delivery.
- » Over time, you'll likely experience change, but this transition will be carefully managed to ensure that disruption to students, staff and employers is contained and minimised.
- » An Establishment Unit for the new Institute will be put in place by 1 September 2019.
- » The Establishment Unit will have responsibility for determining operating parameters of the Institute and its subsidiaries, which will begin operation on 1 April 2020.
- » Some systems and processes will be reviewed over time, potentially leading to new ways of working across the new campus network.
- » We'll work with your leadership to provide supporting material to share with you.
- » Each subsidiary will have a board with around half of its members to be regional representatives.
- » All existing qualifications underway will be grandfathered (including brand).
- » Cash reserves (over a limit) will be ring fenced for reinvestment in your region.

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 the ITP sector?

The changes cannot be achieved without significant change to the existing vocational education sector. This will result in a number of changes for those working within current ITPs.

The Institute will be a completely new organisation specifically developed to support a new flexible and responsive vocational education system.

Focusing on learners' needs, it will be able to leverage across the resources of a strong and resilient network of campuses, developing new skills and capability to respond to the needs of the future of work. In time, this will result in changes to your ITP. However, these changes will be phased to ensure disruption to current staff and students is managed.

Developing new capability to respond to the changing needs of learners, communities, employers and New Zealand as well as building on the current capability and skills of the existing ITP network, the new Institute will be set up as follows:

Reform of Vocational Education

Information for staff of institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs)

- » as a tertiary Education Institution that has academic freedom
- » to uphold and enhance Māori-Crown partnerships and reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- » to focus on the needs of all vocational learners
- » to deliver foundation, degree and vocational education
- » to deliver to the needs of all New Zealanders, and the needs of regional New Zealand.

To enable this, the Institute will have:

- » a charter, which will ensure the Institute has an enduring commitment to preserving a strong network of regional campuses, supporting learners effectively and being responsive to the needs of industries, communities and Māori
- » subsidiaries which existing staff will transfer to, and which will replicate the operations of current ITPs for two years
- » boards for each subsidiary that will include regional representatives, eg, from existing ITP councils
- » a council of eight to 12 appointed by the Minister, with staff and student representatives.

The Institute's national office will be responsible for setting strategy, reducing duplication in areas such as consistent programme design and development, and ensuring that the regional operations take a network-wide view to investments. At the same time, the heads of the 16 regional operations will have sufficient financial delegations to be empowered and make decisions on behalf of their communities. To ensure regional responsiveness, there will be specific measures put in place that will mean the Institute will:

- » be required to spend existing reserves (above a set limit) on the regions in which they had been accumulated by the relevant legacy ITP
- » work through, with local communities, the future of existing ITP brands (potentially for a period of time)
- » not have a Wellington or Auckland national office.

What does this mean for me?

First, we want to thank you for your contribution towards tertiary education in New Zealand. While we understand that the decisions made are wide-reaching, they'll help to move us towards a more sustainable, responsive and relevant vocational education for New Zealand.

In the short term, activity at your ITP will continue as normal.

During the transition period, we'll ensure you're provided with the information you need to be able to support ongoing educational delivery.

Staff of existing ITPs, including chief executives, will transfer to subsidiaries of the Institute on 1 April 2020. At this point, the subsidiary operations will largely resemble the former ITPs, although ITP councils will be disestablished and be replaced by subsidiary Boards.

Over time, as you work within a subsidiary you'll likely start experiencing some change, but this transition will be carefully managed to ensure that disruption is minimised. It's expected that some systems and processes will be reviewed over time, which will potentially lead to new ways of working across the campus network.

An Establishment Unit for the new Institute will be put in place by 1 September 2019, and will have responsibility for determining many of the operating parameters of the Institute. The Minister will soon announce the members of the Establishment Board, including the Chair. It's likely that the Establishment Unit will seek key sector experts for specific workstreams on the proposed Institute. Your leadership team will be encouraged to nominate individual staff – when requested – to support this work.

We realise that this may be a difficult time for you. We'll work with your ITP to provide support and information as needed.

Questions and answers

Who will I be employed by?

When the Institute is put in place, your existing employment agreements will transfer to a subsidiary operation of the Institute. This subsidiary will, largely, reflect the current structure of your ITP. No other immediate changes to your employment terms and conditions will occur on this date.

Is everything going to change on 1 April 2020?

While staff employed at individual ITPs will have their employment agreement transferred to a subsidiary of the Institute on 1 April 2020, you shouldn't expect to see massive changes on this date.

What is the Establishment Unit?

An Establishment Unit will be put in place by 1 September 2019 that will lead the creation of the new Institute. It will focus on both the operational requirements for Day 1 plus starting work on understanding the new skills and capabilities required in the future.

When are changes to operations going to start?

When the Establishment Unit is in place, a series of reviews of current operations, both educational and financial, will take place. Once more information is known about the current operations of the ITPs – which will transfer to the subsidiaries – decisions about potential changes to the wider Institute can be made.

How is the Institute going to be structured?

It will be up to the council of the Institute, once it's appointed, to determine what organisational structure is most appropriate.

What will happen to the chief executive, and the current council and management team?

It's expected that senior leadership – including chief executives and management teams – will transition to subsidiary operations on 1 April 2020, alongside all other staff. All chief executives will become employees of the new subsidiary board. Some existing ITP council members will be appointed to this subsidiary board to ensure consistency during the change process.

We understand that this is a significant impact for existing ITP councils, and we would like to acknowledge the contribution they have made to vocational education in New Zealand.

What is going to happen to my students?

Your students will be supported throughout the change process. They will see minimal change over the next couple of years. On 1 April 2020, like staff, their enrolment will also be transferred to the subsidiary operations of the Institute. They'll be able to complete any study or training they start. All existing qualifications underway will be grandfathered (including brand).

Will graduates still get a qualification from my ITP?

The Establishment Unit will work through the detailed questions surrounding the awarding of qualifications, but it's expected that – for a period of time – subsidiaries will have the ability to award qualifications under the branding and identity of the local ITP from which they transferred.

Does this mean there will be no local teaching staff left at my local campus?

No. The changes are intended to strengthen the availability of teaching and learning throughout the regions of New Zealand, rather than to see this cut back. As a tutor or student-facing staff member, you'll continue to be able to be employed to offer local education.

Reform of Vocational Education

Information for staff of institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs)

Will I have to move to Wellington or Auckland?

The Institute national office won't be based in Wellington or Auckland. You won't be required to move from your local campus to any other campus, or the national office, although there may – in time – be opportunities to shift around the campus network or to national office roles if desired.

How can I learn about what people said during consultation?

On the Kōrero Mātauranga website, you can read the 'What we heard: Summary of public consultation and engagement' document, which provides an overview of feedback received during the consultation period.

What happens to the reserves my ITP has built up?

The Establishment Board will be tasked with ensuring that regional reserves are available for local campuses to draw down in relation to specific regional priorities. The Institute will be required to spend existing reserves (above a set limit) on the regions in which they had been accumulated by the relevant legacy institute of technology or polytechnic.

I'm feeling worried about this decision – is there someone I can talk to?

Individual ITPs will be able to advise staff on where they can go for assistance during this time. Agencies will provide material designed to help staff through the FAQs on the Kōrero Mātauranga website

I'm interested in being involved in design work on the Institute. How can I get involved?

Once the Establishment Unit is established, we'll provide information on the Kōrero Mātauranga website on how you can register your interest in becoming involved. The Establishment Unit may, in time, request recommendations from ITPs for specific staff who have subject matter expertise to support workstreams. They'll contact ITPs directly for nominations when these are required.

What's next?

We'll continue to work with your ITP in the coming months to ensure you are supported throughout this process.

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. You can sign up through the following email address: RoVE@tec.govt.nz.