

TAKING THE LEAD

Strategic Management for e-Learning

e-Learning is transforming the way New Zealand tertiary education institutions teach and support their students. To make the most of these exciting opportunities, chief executives and senior managers need to work in partnership with specialist staff and provide strong strategic leadership.

A study into e-learning practices in New Zealand tertiary education institutions has revealed a variety of ways that senior managers are meeting this challenge. The full report and a summary version are both available online (www.akoatearora.ac.nz/takingthelead).

The study highlighted a number of key strategic areas which are relevant to all tertiary institutions:

Strategy

Ensuring e-learning solutions meet the strategic goals of your institution

Structure

How to organise and manage for e-learning

Resourcing

Different approaches to funding e-learning

Decision-making

Who decides which courses and programmes will make use of e-learning

Collaborating and outsourcing

Working with others to develop e-learning activities

Selecting technologies

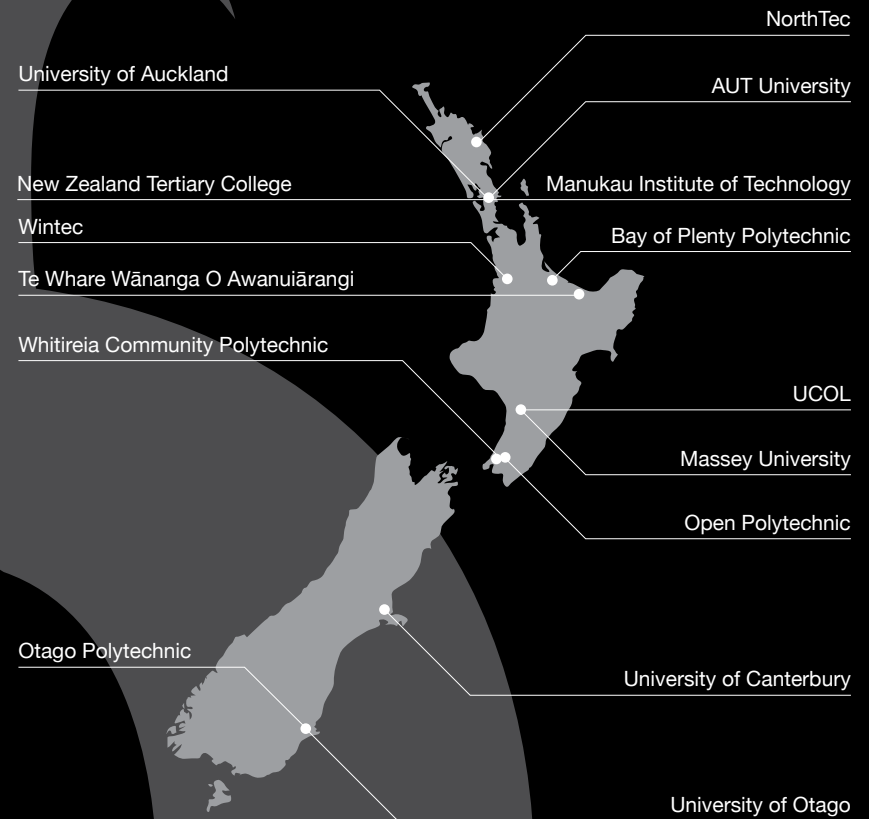
Investing wisely in new technology

www.akoatearora.ac.nz/takingthelead



Case studies

For a full appreciation of these issues, please read the following case studies. They contain many useful insights and ideas for discussion within your organisation (www.akoatearora.ac.nz/takingthelead).



TANZ
A further case study explores the TANZ (Tertiary Accord of New Zealand) initiative, which involves collaboration between six regional polytechnics.

Key questions to consider

Strategy

What are the medium and long-term strategic goals and objectives of our institution?

How are these strategic goals reflected in our institution's Learning and Teaching Plan?

How are these strategic goals reflected in our institution's more specific plans for e-learning?

Structure

How should we organise and manage for e-learning?

More specifically, who should be responsible for what and how should our various efforts be integrated and led?

Resourcing

How should e-learning be resourced within our organisation?

What will it cost?

Decision-making

Who makes the decisions about which courses and programmes will use e-learning and how they will do so?

Selecting technologies

STRATEGY QUESTIONS

What is the problem that this technology will solve or help us with? What sort of priority is it?

Do our teachers/students wish to teach/study in this way? How do we know students will achieve their learning outcomes?

Will we suffer if we simply don't adopt it?

STAFF DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

What are the implications for staff workload? Can this be managed? Can our teachers use and manage this technology themselves or will they be dependent on support personnel? What are the implications for staff development?

MARKETING QUESTIONS

Will the technology open up new markets (geographic, demographic, subject) for us?

How does this technology impact on the existing mix of technologies both for supporting and delivering teaching and for administrative/support systems? Does this technology offer the necessary range or quality of functionality and interoperability?

What are collaborators and competitors using? Why would we want to use the same or a different system?

FINANCE QUESTIONS

Is it a cost-effective solution in terms of capital and recurrent costs?

- how do the anticipated costs compare with current technologies?
- will it displace any current services and associated costs?
- can we control and/or anticipate future costs?

TECHNOLOGY QUESTIONS

Is it a robust technical solution?

- is it emerging, 'bleeding edge,' established or 'twilight edge'?
- what is the size of the user base?
- can we access support both locally and remotely?

Is this technology readily scalable?

Can we support/maintain this technology ourselves or will we be dependent on an outside supplier?

What infrastructure will be needed to support this system? Do we have it already? If not, what will it cost to develop?

What level of disruption will this technology bring to our operations?

How dependent will this technology make us on outside providers? To what risks are we exposed?

Have we an exit strategy for this technology?

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY/PRIVACY QUESTIONS

What implications does this technology have for intellectual property – both our use of others' IP in the technology itself, and others' use of our learning materials developed using this technology?

Does this technology bring with it any implications for student/staff privacy?

