

Welcome

This is my last newsletter welcome for *Ako Aotearoa Alert*. After having had the great privilege of being the director of this organisation for four years, I have accepted a new role with the Tertiary Education Commission. My time at Ako Aotearoa has been exciting and immensely satisfying; it has also, at times, been frustrating, but I guess that comes with the territory.



The great pleasure is that I believe Ako Aotearoa has been able to raise the profile of tertiary teaching and learning in this country considerably. Not that we have done this alone: much has been down to the sector itself. We have simply been tapping into and fostering the enthusiasm of leading practitioners right across the sector. Herein lies much of the excitement and the reward. The next phase of Ako Aotearoa's development has already begun, which is to build on what has been achieved so far in partnership with the sector and take Ako Aotearoa's reach much wider, especially at the organisational level.

I came into this role with the firm belief that the best of tertiary education in New Zealand – and the best is to be found in all parts of the sector – is world class. I have had that view constantly confirmed while in this role. Nevertheless, I have also become aware that, while our system and organisations enable great practice to happen, they also allow much indifferent practice to exist alongside. Even allowing for student demographics and data problems, the Tertiary Education Commission's Educational Performance Indicators show wide variation between notionally similar providers.

Here lies the frustration: we simply do not share and promote good and excellent practice well enough, and our thresholds for what we regard as acceptable are often lower than they should be. We need to be constantly mindful that tertiary education has a clear moral purpose. Ultimately, it is about people's lives. It is about individual opportunities and outcomes for learners, their whānau, and communities. The wider economic and social benefits of tertiary education flow from this.

The last four years have reaffirmed for me that the sector is still, in general, too conservative in its approach, and it often works in ways it has always done without questioning the base assumptions of practice. As a sector, we are all good at arguing from first principles; weaker when it comes to evidential critique. While there are many outstanding exceptions, tertiary teachers in general have some way to go in developing the capability to become rigorous, evidence-based reflective practitioners. In other words, tertiary teaching is not yet the leading-edge profession that 21st-century Aotearoa, New Zealand needs. We are also acutely aware that better outcomes for learners are not to be gained simply through the efforts of individual practitioners, however professional they may be; their efforts must be actively underpinned by the tertiary organisations that employ them.

Needless to say, these problems are not unique to New Zealand – they are international. I am optimistic that the current alignment of funding incentives and evaluative quality assurance requirements have set a sound platform for us to address these issues in ways that may give us significant international advantages in the future. Of course there is often a large gap between policy intent and reality. In this context, Ako Aotearoa will continue to have a considerable role to play in fostering the best possible standards of teaching and

learning, the development of evidence-based enhancement of practice, and disseminating that good practice as widely as possible.

I am very pleased to be able to report that Professor Tom Prebble and Dr Sue Walbran will be jointly acting as Interim Directors until a new Director is appointed. Both will be acting on a part-time basis: this is not two replacing one! Tom, who was Interim Director during the establishment phase of Ako Aotearoa will focus on strategic aspects, with Sue, until recently a senior manager in NZQA, having oversight of operational matters.

It has been truly rewarding to be part of an embryo organisation and to see it grow to a position of influence. Most of all it has been a tremendous privilege to work with such talented and committed people both within our own organisation and across the sector.

My sincere thanks and best wishes to you all.

Dr Peter Coolbear
Director, Ako Aotearoa

Update: Increasing Educational Attainment for TES Priority Learners

In Issue 15 of *Ako Aotearoa Alert* we featured the start of the Ako Aotearoa project *Increasing Educational Attainment for TES Priority Learners*, which is supported by the Tertiary Education Commission and Ministry of Education. The aim of the project is to examine how our tertiary system can best serve the needs of learners at lower levels of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. These are the largest group of learners in tertiary education, and their needs are explicitly prioritised in the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES). It is therefore important that we gain an increased understanding of where our system works well for this group, what issues still exist, and how to promote good practice.

The project is guided by the independent Educational Attainment Working Group (EAWG). The group and its work can be accessed via the project space on the Ako Aotearoa website (www.akoatearoa.ac.nz/priority-learners).



International forum presenter Dr Bruce Vandal (standing) with several members of the Educational Attainment Working Group: (left to right) Carrie Murdoch, Business New Zealand; Christine Clark, Corporate Academy Group; Karen Davis, Victoria University of Wellington; and Dr Peter Coolbear, director of Ako Aotearoa.

International expert forums

Ako Aotearoa is hosting a series of public forums and workshops throughout June and July with international experts on issues of relevance to priority learners. Held nationally, these events are designed to promote discussion and debate about how New Zealand can best serve the needs of priority learners. These expert forums draw on international experiences and initiatives to provide insights into how our educational system is working, and how it could be improved.

Biographies of the speakers involved in these expert forums are featured opposite. In June we have held events with Dr Bruce Vandal, focusing on “developmental” education, and Professor Ewart Keep, focusing on links and pathways between education and the labour market. Both speakers have provided extremely valuable perspectives from other constituencies and have been willing to share new and exciting ideas along with cautionary tales.

In July, we host Professor David Conley from the University of Oregon. Professor Conley provided the keynote address at the Centre for Multiple Pathways national symposium

Developing Pathways: Leading students to success, held at Manukau Institute of Technology on 18 and 19 July. Smaller events for Professor Conley will also be held in Wellington, Greymouth, and Christchurch.

Material from these expert forums is available on the Ako Aotearoa project space (see earlier link), including copies of presentations, downloadable material, and links to initiatives of interest.

Discussion papers

Our third stream of activity under this project involves a series of discussion papers on particular topics and areas of concern identified by the Educational Attainment Working Group. The first paper focuses on the issue of targeted training programmes (training opportunities and youth training), the second discusses transitions in to and out of education for priority learners, and the third raises questions about how well our system seems to be serving those who study part time. These papers can be downloaded from the project space on the Ako Aotearoa website (see link below).

How to contribute to the discussions

We encourage people to join the discussion on these papers and to keep in touch with the progress and development of the project by joining the Priority Learners group on our website (www.akoatearoa.ac.nz/priority-learners). If you are already registered on the site, log in and click on the “Join” button provided on the priority learners page. If you are not, go to www.akoatearoa.ac.nz/user/register and follow the instructions to register.

Once you are a member of the Priority Learners group you can contribute to the discussions. Remember, you need to be logged in to do so. We look forward to hearing from you.

For further information about the work, please contact Nicholas Huntington on n.huntington@massey.ac.nz



Professor Ewart Keep (third from right) – presenter at the recent Wellington Expert Forum – with attendees: (left to right) Liz Chinlund, Victoria University of Wellington; Simon Tries, New Zealand Qualifications Authority; Arthur Graves, Ministry of Education; Ruma Karaitiana, Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation; and Cushla Wilson, New Zealand Council of Trade Unions.

Professor Ewart Keep

Deputy Director, Centre on Skills, Knowledge, and Organisational Performance (SKOPE), University of Cardiff, United Kingdom



Ewart Keep is the deputy director of SKOPE, based at the Cardiff University School of Social Sciences. He has a range of research interests, including lifelong-learning policy, learning organisations, training for low paid workers, the design and management of education and training systems, employers' attitudes towards skills, how governments formulate skills policy, higher education policy, and the nature of the linkages between skills and performance. He is currently working on the role of recruitment and selection as a source of skills, and the feedback signals that employers' patterns of recruitment send to the learner (in reference to future research priorities in the field of engineering and technology), and how English policy makers conceive of skills policy and its linkages to other policy domains.

Ewart is a member of the Scottish Funding Council and Skills Development Scotland joint Skills Committee, the Higher Education Funding Council for England's Strategic Advisory Committee for Enterprise and Skills, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills' Policy Expert Group, and the Scottish Government's Skill Utilisation Leadership Group. He has provided advice and consultancy for the National Skills Task Force, several UK government departments including the Department for Employment and Learning and the Treasury, the Cabinet Office, House of Commons and Scottish Parliament committees, the Welsh Employment and Skills Board, Skills Australia, and the governments of Queensland, New South Wales, and New Zealand.

Ewart is concerned with progressions into worthwhile employment and how the demand-side of this equation cannot be ignored. Employers need to be involved in pathways development and have a significant role to play in incentivising improved utilisation and development of skills.

International experts

Dr Bruce Vandal

Director, Postsecondary and Workforce Development Institute, Education Commission of the States, United States of America

Bruce Vandal coordinates research and policy work as director of the Postsecondary and Workforce Development Institute at the Education Commission of the States. He has directed projects on aligning education and workforce development policy, teacher preparation, and college access.



At present, Bruce is the director of *Getting Past Go*, a three-year Lumina Foundation for Education project to effectively leverage investments in remedial and developmental education to increase college attainment. He is also the co-director of the *Tennessee Developmental Studies Redesign Initiative*, which is a partnership with the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) to reform developmental education courses at TBR institutions. This initiative is funded by the US Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education.

Bruce's insights into facilitating successful progressions into higher levels of study provide a valuable reference for how we might address similar issues in New Zealand.

Professor David Conley

Director, Centre for Educational Policy Research, University of Oregon, United States of America

David Conley is Professor of Educational Policy and Leadership at the College of Education, University of Oregon. He is the founder and director of the Center for Educational Policy Research at the University of Oregon, and founder and chief executive officer of the Center for Educational Policy Improvement, a not-for-profit educational research organisation. He also serves on numerous technical and advisory panels, consults with educational agencies nationally and internationally, and is a frequent speaker at national and regional meetings of education professionals and policy makers.



In 2003, David completed *Standards for Success*, a ground-breaking three-year research project to identify the knowledge and skills necessary for college readiness. This project, funded by the Association of American Universities and The Pew Charitable Trusts, analysed course content at various American research universities to develop the Knowledge and Skills for University Success standards. In 2005, Dr Conley published his research from this project in *College Knowledge: What It Takes for Students to Succeed and What We Can Do to Get Them Ready*. Dr Conley's most recent book, *College and Career Ready: Helping All Students Succeed Beyond High School*, features case studies of America's most college-ready high schools, informs policy makers, administrators, teachers, parents, and students how they can develop a culture rooted in postsecondary success.

BY BRIDGET O'REGAN

News from the Southern Hub

Kia ora koutou. Welcome to the winter edition of the Southern Hub news. Educators engaged in social work, particularly fieldwork support, will be interested in reading about our most recently completed project. The Canterbury earthquakes, their impact on teaching and learning, and lessons learned are the focus of three newly approved projects. We also introduce workshops on the process of collecting evidence of learner benefit.

Recently approved Southern Hub projects

The three significant earthquakes and large number of associated aftershocks experienced in the Canterbury region since 4 September 2010 have required educational organisations to cope with a natural disaster and its consequences. While this disaster has had specific and unique effects on Canterbury, there is no doubt that aspects of teaching and learning and the resulting generation of new knowledge, new processes, and altered understandings has the potential to inform educational organisation policy and practices nationally and across many vocational settings.

The Southern Hub is pleased to support three projects that investigate the impact of this disaster on tertiary teaching and learning and, from the lessons learnt, develop recommendations that will assist organisations in strategising their response to major events and/or disasters in the future. Each of the projects introduced takes a different focus and, when completed, a resource will be developed in which all three project outcomes are combined into a comprehensive package.

Preparedness for sudden change: Lessons from managing large scale disruption within a Bachelor of Nursing learning community is led by Dr Lesley Seaton and a team from Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT), supported by Lieutenant Commander Lisa Conlon, University of Technology, Sydney. The project will explore the most appropriate and optimal role(s) for education providers where there is sudden, large-scale disruption to the learning community. It will provide recommendations for tertiary education organisations to ensure continuity of good teaching practice should such events occur.

CPIT's Martin Jenkins leads our second "earthquake" project *Institutional strategies supporting forced change: Guidelines derived from case studies of the February 22nd 2011 Christchurch earthquake*. During the national state of disaster, the main CPIT campus was inaccessible for almost six weeks. This impacted strongly on CPIT's ability to provide teaching and learning facilities and student support services. Because of the nature of the event, rapid change was required by the organisation, staff, and students to deliver redesigned programmes in very different teaching and learning environments. In this project, Martin sets out to determine how organisations, staff, and students respond to such forced change, how these changes have impacted on learning and teaching, and whether these changes are sustainable.



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Jude Douglas from Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology

Completed Southern Hub funded project

Our latest completed project is *Kia Tene/ Off the Cuff*, developed by Jude Douglas from Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology. Intended for field educators working with social work students on placement, this resource consists of a set of 15 activities, each of which includes a page of advice for the field educator and a page-long student exercise.

The activities are designed to provide starting points and suggestions for field educators to help their students connect with the rich possibilities of their placement. The content is grounded within relevant literature, and the exercises are well designed. The material for field educators not only discusses the corresponding material for students but is written in a way that encourages practitioners to reflect on their practice.

The resource therefore not only has the potential to enhance outcomes for learners but may also have professional benefits for practitioners using the resource. To download this resource go to: www.akoaotearoa.ac.nz/kia-tene

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The project will explore the following three levels to determine the methods of curriculum delivery used to adapt to change:

- organisational – this will focus on key players who influenced the changes, the development processes followed, and staff expectations about the sustainability of the changes
- programme design – this level investigates the rationale behind the changes, drivers and barriers, and the educational principles followed in redesign
- students – they will be asked how these methods differ from pre-earthquake methods, how they were supported through the changes, and how the changes have impacted on them.

The final “earthquake” project *Recognising the impact on students of a crisis event in an educational setting – Developing response recommendations* is led by Sandra Richardson, Centre for Postgraduate Nursing Studies, University of Otago, Christchurch. Sandra and her team will explore the social, cognitive, and professional implications of the earthquake events on a range of medical and nursing students, and newly graduated nurses involved in the Nurse Entry to Practice programme. The project team will:

- explore the type and range of student reactions and adaptations to the impact of an unexpected crisis situation
- identify ways in which positive adaptation can be facilitated
- provide recommendations for educational and support organisations relevant across a range of settings and levels of education.

We are delighted to support Diane Gordon-Burns of the University of Canterbury and Leeanne Campbell of Rangī Ruru Early Childhood College in their project *Inakitia rawatia hei kakono mā āpōpō: Students’ encounters with bicultural commitment* that strongly reflects kaupapa Māori principles. Diane and Leeanne (pictured below) will explore the previous attitudes and experiences of early childhood first-year students in te ao Māori (the Māori world). The project intends to generate knowledge about specific indicators that will support the understanding of initial teacher education lecturers in implementing bicultural and tiriti-based programmes. This will prepare and strengthen graduating students and beginning teachers with a broader acceptance of bicultural commitment. It is anticipated that the recommendations generated will be of interest and benefit to all tertiary organisations, staff, and students.

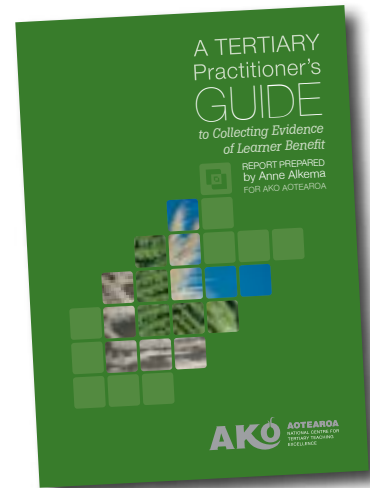
Our final project, led by Flip Leijten of CPIT, investigates *The effectiveness of peer learning in a vocational setting*. The project will concentrate on aspects contributing to effective peer learning in a vocational setting, including:

- favourable conditions and how to measure effectiveness whilst considering who is learning
- how the role of peers with whom one works can be conceptualised
- what helps peers learn together
- what learning results through interaction
- how we know what occurs in groups or what has been learned.

A guide for trade teachers and tutors will be developed, using peer learning strategies, to enhance learner support.



One of our latest approved projects aims to support initial teacher education (ITE) lecturers in the implementation of bicultural/tiriti-based programmes. The project team – Diane Gordon-Burns (left), University of Canterbury, and Leeanne Campbell of Rangī Ruru Early Childhood College – are pictured here with two of the Teaching Adults posters from another Southern Hub funded project developed by the Southern Educational Developers.



Collecting evidence of learner benefit

Since its release in the March issue of this newsletter (Issue 14), *A Tertiary Practitioner's Guide to Collecting Evidence of Learner Benefit*, by Anne Alkema, has proved to be extremely popular with people across the tertiary sector. The guide provides practical information on the importance of evidence-based education, and practitioners can use it to begin integrating evidence collection into their day-to-day practice. To date, we have distributed around 2,000 print copies, and the document is available in PDF format on the Ako Aotearoa website.

We are pleased to announce that, as a follow up to the publication's release, the Southern Hub is working in partnership with ACE Aotearoa to run workshops around the South Island. Southern Hub Advisory Group member Jennifer Leahy and Ace Aotearoa's Tai Samaeli will facilitate the workshops, which will help tertiary practitioners to glean ideas on how to clarify what practices are working best for their learners. The workshops are also designed to offer tertiary practitioners ways to support their professional, reflective practice.

Three workshops are currently planned:

- Cromwell on Tuesday 19 July
- Blenheim on Tuesday 2 August
- Christchurch on Tuesday 20 September.

Places on the workshops are limited, so if you are keen to attend, please contact our activities officer, Pat Robertson, by email: pat.robertson@canterbury.ac.nz, or phone 03 343 7719.

Keeping workplace literacy and numeracy issues alive in New Zealand

Jeremy Baker, the Industry Training Federation's (ITF's) executive director, reflects on the recent New Zealand Literacy Forum, run by the ITF in partnership with Ako Aotearoa.



Rachel Barwell, national prisoner training co-ordinator at the Department of Corrections, describes at the New Zealand Literacy Forum the department's recent initiative to embed literacy and numeracy into vocational courses for prisoners.

More than 140 people gathered at the forum to discuss the major challenge facing the sector – how to keep workplace literacy and numeracy issues alive. This is a vibrant and passionate sector, and we were thrilled with the turnout and level of engagement at the forum.

While the ITF's Vocation and Educational Training Research Forum held in April (also in partnership with Ako Aotearoa) highlighted ongoing or completed research, the Literacy Forum focused on how literacy and numeracy have been implemented in the workplace. Over the past few years, people have worked hard in this sector to embed literacy and numeracy into training. Now we need to look at ways in which that momentum can be maintained.

We were delighted with the range of presenters at the forum, and there were many highlights throughout the day. One of the presenters, Bronwen Foxx, chief executive of Disabilities Resource Centre Trust – Te Whakaipurangi Haua – gave an entertaining and thought-provoking address about embedding literacy and numeracy from an employer's perspective.

In 2007 the Trust, based in Whakatane, started working with Careerforce, the industry training organisation (ITO) for the health and disability sector, as part of the Tertiary Education Commission's Embedded Literacy Pilots with five ITOs. The pilot programmes are being used to inform embedded literacy practice for ITOs. The pilot project ITOs were encouraged to explore different options for embedding literacy and numeracy learning into their training programmes. The Disabilities Resource Centre Trust was part of Careerforce's

pilot, and this involved running the training sessions with trust staff.

The Trust delivers more than 120,000 hours of care every year. Ninety percent of its 200 staff work in people's homes, and one of the challenges Foxx outlined was the logistical difficulties in getting staff to turn up to the centre to take part in training sessions. She was quick to acknowledge, however, the benefits from the programme – citing improved communication and confidence among staff.

Rachel Barwell, national prisoner training coordinator at the Department of Corrections, gave a presentation on how embedded literacy and numeracy have been introduced to the department's vocational courses for prisoners. The department delivers training to nearly 3,000 prisoners each year as part of its strategy to reduce the chances of reoffending once prisoners are released.

Since embedded literacy and numeracy were introduced in 2010, nearly 500 prisoners have commenced vocational courses with embedded literacy and numeracy elements. The department aimed not only to improve prisoner's core literacy and numeracy skills, but to support them to achieve the national qualifications.

Barwell said the project was too new and the numbers too small at present to draw any significant conclusions, but early indications looked promising. She told the forum that instructors have reported an improvement in prisoners' participation in courses and comprehension of the key concepts being taught. This also resulted in improved training outputs.

The final session of the day focused on the future of workplace literacy and numeracy. The enthusiasm, passion, and commitment evident in this session gives us confidence that there will be even greater innovation and development in this space in the years ahead.

National Tertiary Learning and Teaching Conference 2011 – Te Huinga Ako ā-Motu 2011

After several years of the National Tertiary Learning and Teaching Conference – Te Huinga Ako ā-Motu – taking place in the North Island, Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology is hosting the event at its Nelson campus on 12–14 October. Ako Aotearoa is pleased to support the event again as main sponsor. Bridget O'Regan, Ako Aotearoa Southern Hub regional manager, will also contribute to the planning as a member of the conference organising committee.

The conference theme for 2011, *Building Futures*, has been developed in the context of significant change happening throughout the tertiary education sector. Amidst all this change, it is important for educators to keep focused on the basics of learning and teaching, so learners can develop solid foundations on which to build their own futures.

The conference logo with its building blocks reflects the message to "mind our ABCs"



as we build careers and aspirations for a sustainable future. To register your attendance, or for information about submitting a paper for presentation, please go to: www.nltitconference.ac.nz.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Good Practice Publication Grants 2011 – call for applications



We are pleased to announce the details of the Ako Aotearoa Good Practice Publication Grant (GPPG) scheme for 2011. There are now two streams to the scheme, which reflects our view that sustainable improvement of outcomes for learners is about both the improvement of individual practice, and strategic and systematic organisational support to enhance educational performance.

Evaluating the impact of our projects

To date, we have committed nearly \$6 million to supporting research and implementation projects in tertiary teaching and learning (across our regional and national funding schemes). We have commissioned initial evaluation work to measure the impact of our funded projects and this has indicated the schemes are working well. For example, Networkers conducted an evaluation of the Regional Hub Project Funding Scheme and found positive changes in the status and work of individuals and project teams, as well as permanent improvements in the process, delivery, and/or content of tertiary courses.

What is important for us now is to gain a better understanding of the sustained impact of our funded projects. We recently completed a pilot of an Impact Evaluation Framework, involving selected completed projects from the Regional Hub Project Funding Scheme and the National Project Fund. The framework examines the following four key areas relating to project outcomes and the impact these have had both within the participating organisation(s) and beyond:

- outputs resulting from the project and how these have been shared
- practices and how they have changed as a result of this project
- benefits to learners and how they have been achieved as a result of this project
- the impact on the project team.

This framework is now being implemented across all of our funding streams and will involve us visiting all funded project teams at six, 12, and 24 months after their projects have been completed. During these visits, we will discuss the outcomes that have been achieved from each project in light of the original project objectives. Our conversation will also enable us to discuss any additional support we might provide to teams to maximise the impact of their work, as well as any future project ideas resulting from the work.

The data collected from these evaluations will be invaluable to both Ako Aotearoa and its stakeholders as the funding initiatives are evaluated. Just as importantly, it will guide our support for the project teams, so they can disseminate their work more widely. However, the ultimate driver for this evaluation process is the need to better understand the sustainable impact these projects have on the teaching and learning process, their ability to bring about positive organisational change, and how that change impacts on learner outcomes.

Individual and Group Good Practice Publication Grants

The Ako Aotearoa individual and group GPPG streams showcase proven good practice in tertiary teaching and learning by individuals and groups. The funded publications must include evidence of learner benefit through the systematic collection of evidence.

Up to 20 grants are available during 2011. The maximum grant allocation for a written account of good practice with suitable supporting digital images is \$3,000. Submissions may also be supplied in the form of a digital video or multi-media presentation to a "professional standard" (\$5,000 maximum).

Applications close 5pm on Friday 28 October.

Organisational Good Practice Publication Grants

The organisational GPPG stream will showcase suites of organisational strategies designed to improve teaching and learning that have been widely and sustainably implemented across an organisation, and proven to be effective.

Up to three grants are available during 2011. The maximum grant allocation is \$10,000. Publications must be in the form of either a 2,000 word summary accompanied by a digital video or multi-media presentation to a "professional standard" of up to 10 minutes in length, or a 5,000 word report with a brief executive summary.

Applications close 5pm on Friday 18 November.

Further information, including application forms, guidelines, and selection criteria are available at www.akoatearoa.ac.nz/good-practice-publication-grants or contact your Ako Aotearoa Regional Hub.

Two new National Project Fund reports now available



Engaging learners effectively in science, technology and engineering: The pathway from secondary to university education

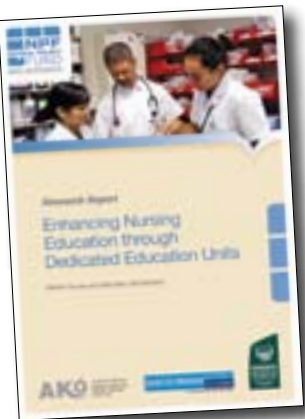
By Professor Tim Parkinson et al, Massey University

Launched at Massey University in June and featured in further detail in Issue 15 of *Ako Aotearoa Alert*, this comprehensive study, which included over 1,000 teachers and learners, examined how university students become or remain engaged in science during their transition from school to university. The research shows that learners at both school and university are highly engaged by “being scientific”. This research also found that university learners report higher levels of commitment to their studies than do school science students. The authors

question, however, whether the university teaching and learning environment levers off this commitment as well as it could. They argue that the pedagogical environment of science education needs to be redeveloped to promote students’ attainment of intellectual independence and higher order cognitive and non-cognitive skills, at all levels of their studies.

Across both sectors, teaching qualities were found to be the key determinant of learner engagement. In particular, the enthusiasm, commitment, and teaching techniques of science teachers and lecturers were the critical factor in enhancing learner engagement. The challenge, of course, is to develop curricula and a teaching environment in which content is so strongly anchored in the context of both the “real world” and of students’ own career aspirations that engagement is not allowed to deteriorate. To address these issues, the researchers have developed a framework for enhancing student engagement across the transition from secondary to tertiary science.

To download the summary document or full report, go to www.akoatearoa.ac.nz/engaging-in-science



Enhancing nursing education through Dedicated Education Units

By Dr Willem Fourie and his collaborative team across Manukau Institute of Technology and Counties Manukau District Health Board

A critical issue for nursing education is how to optimise practical learning opportunities in clinical contexts. The Dedicated Education Unit (DEU) model departs from the one-on-one dynamics of the preceptor model by creating a collaborative teaching and learning environment that fosters interaction and sharing of knowledge amongst learners and staff. As a result of this project, three new DEUs were established by the project team in 2010 and two more are planned for 2011.

The research report by Willem Fourie and Beverley McClelland is now available. It considers the benefits of a DEU model, including the following findings.

- The quality of the planning, welcome, and orientation are key factors influencing student learning experiences.
- The roles of the clinical liaison nurse, academic liaison nurse, and charge nurse managers significantly impact on the success of a DEU.
- Peer support and teamwork are key contributors to the success of a DEU, including student and staff interactions.

The authors also provide recommendations for developing DEUs. These will be covered in more detail in a guide planned for release in August.

To download the research report, go to www.akoatearoa.ac.nz/nursing-deu

National Project Fund report coming soon

Exploring community and whānau-based learning strategies for Taranaki reo and tikanga

By Te Kupenga Mātauranga o Taranaki

This research project examined how regional education programmes meet community aspirations, such as revitalising te reo Māori and cultural practices. The findings of the project highlight the importance of informal adult teaching and learning on marae or in Māori community settings. The locus of the programmes is as important as the content, and the value of the setting is not just for the learner, as an individual, but also for their whānau and communities as well.

Overall, the five ways identified through which marae-based learning environments contribute to Taranaki Māori aspirations were the:

- revitalisation and strengthening of a Māori identity
- broad development of Māori that improves their position in society
- acquisition, application, and transmission of Taranaki Māori knowledge for community purposes
- strengthening of connections between individuals and collectives to enhance regional cohesion
- sustainability of Taranaki Māori practices and communities.

The summary report, *Tahia te Marae, Tahia te Wananga – Marae and Māori community-based adult learning*, will soon be available, along with the full report, at: www.akoatearoa.ac.nz/kupenga



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