

## **Information about the proposed new data collection system**

**18 May 2015**

A trial is underway to test a proposed new data collection system for non-Crown funded private training establishments (PTEs).

The proposed new system would help track international students' educational progress and ensure data is managed safely and consistently.

It would also allow PTEs to access more timely and detailed information and give them the ability to benchmark themselves against the rest of the sector.

If a PTE adopts the new system, it would also mean there is no need for further manual reporting – current manual data returns would no longer be required and data from providers' own student management systems would automatically be sent to the new central database.

The Export Education Levy (EEL) that is paid by providers would be calculated using the new system.

This project is an initiative across the education sector, mainly involving the Ministry of Education, NZQA and Education New Zealand. It is based on the successful implementation of a similar system delivered to around 4,000 education providers in the early childhood sector.

The Ministry of Education is currently piloting the proposed new system with PTEs that have volunteered to take part. Participants of the trial are able to test the system and see what is required from them, in an environment that is safe and supportive.

Education New Zealand is also participating in the pilot to provide an example of what value could be added to the international sector report by using the new data.

A further key objective of the pilot is to better understand non-Crown funded PTE business processes around capturing this type of information which would inform the proposed change to the Rules of Registration, which are being consulted on 18 May 2015.

### **What you need to know**

#### ***Why is this happening?***

This proposal is part of a programme of work underway to provide more accurate, timely and accessible information about students as they progress through the tertiary education system.

The new system would replace two manual data collections with one electronic system that works alongside providers own student management systems. Data collection would be quicker and easier for everyone.

PTEs would have access to more timely and detailed information that could be used for business planning and benchmarking their own performance against the sector.

The automated data collection system would also strengthen the performance monitoring of tertiary education organisations and programmes.

***Who would be affected?***

This change would affect PTEs that are non-Crown funded – this means that they do not receive Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) funding - but are signatories to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (the Code) and offer education to international students.

The proposed new data collection system would replace two things that providers complete manually each year – the annual census (known as the RS20) and the EEL collection (known as the RS17).

***What is the timeframe for the project?***

A pilot to test the proposed data collection system is underway and the findings for the project would be completed by the end of 2015.

Exact milestone dates for each PTE taking part in the pilot would vary as providers can volunteer to join at different points in time and use different student management systems.

***Is there a need for the pilot?***

The Ministry of Education and NZQA encourage PTEs to be involved in the pilot so that the system can be fully trialled and providers can be assured that the proposed system works effectively and seamlessly.

The pilot would help identify any issues while shaping implementation, including timelines and approach.

***What are the benefits of this project?***

Education providers would be able to automatically transfer data from their own student management systems into the new central database. This would mean more timely and comprehensive information is available that would help with better business planning, enhanced performance monitoring and the ability to benchmark against the rest of the education sector.

In addition, it would remove the need for manual data forms to be completed.

The education sector as a whole would also have more timely, correct and comprehensive information available for policy, planning and risk management decisions.

NZQA is developing a proposal to expand the current Record of Achievement to include a greater range of student learning toward qualifications on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF). A more comprehensive record of this type would provide students with an authoritative source of their completed learning. This type of record would need to be populated electronically, by capturing data from the new system.

As the pilot takes place, the Ministry of Education and NZQA are learning more about the different benefits of the new system for different providers. We are using the feedback gathered during the consultation and pilot to refine some of the information proposed to be collected and would develop case studies to demonstrate the range of benefits of the new system.

Potential benefits already identified include:

***For PTEs:***

- More timely and comprehensive information would allow for better business planning and enhanced performance monitoring.

- Detailed information from across the education sector would provide the ability to benchmark against the rest of the sector.
- No longer a need to manually complete four census submissions annually.
- Data can be used to satisfy NZQA's quality assurance requirements.
- A robust source of data is available for organisational self-assessment (e.g. for applications, consistency reviews, external evaluation and review).

***For students:***

- Achievement data would be included in the Record of Achievement.
- As the Record of Achievement becomes more comprehensive students are more likely to want all their learning available on this record as an accessible, accurate, comprehensive and authoritative record.

***Data-sharing:***

- Better information would strengthen NZQA's risk management and quality assurance processes.
- Automated data-sharing would enable government agencies to use education data more effectively in order to understand better and provide more support for agencies' international education initiatives.

***For the New Zealand government***

- Unit record data would be available to agencies to analyse so that risks can be anticipated and managed. It would also be able to be used as part of investigations into potential non-compliance.
- Understanding student pathways is critical to New Zealand's international education strategy and this type of data would allow the tracking of international students through the system.
- The process for lodging student results with NZQA and maintaining the required enrolment and academic achievement records for all students, would be simplified for all PTEs.

***I work at a non-Crown funded, Code signatory PTE – what should I do?***

The proposed new data collection system would require non-Crown funded PTEs to provide new student data. This may lead to changes to your current student management system and potentially some of your business processes associated with collecting and processing student data.

By using the new data collection system, your student management system would automatically provide updated data to the central database, replacing the need to complete two things that providers complete manually each year – the annual census (known as the RS20) and the EEL collection (known as the RS17).

***Would the new data collection system also be a replacement for the Single Data Return (SDR)?***

The new data collection system would not replace the SDR.

***What would happen to my organisation's student management system if we participate in this project?***

The project team would work with your organisation's in-house developer or vendor to make changes that allow your system to interface with the new data collection system.

Updates to your system – such as a new enrolment - would be automatically sent in near real time to the new central database.

***Would we need to change our current student management system?***

Organisations can keep their current system, but it would need to be integrated into the new system. We can supply your vendor or in-house developer with the technical information they need to do this, and the project team would provide support while you make the changes.

***What if my organisation doesn't currently have a student management system?***

We would work with providers on an individual basis to find alternative options.

***What would the information in my organisations student management system be used for?***

In the event of an emergency event (like a national disaster) or the collapse of a provider, information about affected students would be readily available so that assistance can be provided and suitable alternative providers found.

Should your organisation request funding for course delivery, the information would be available to provide proof of performance to funding approvers.

Also, aggregated information would be used by Education New Zealand to support the education industry goal to achieve growth in the sector.

***How can I be sure my information would stay private?***

A Privacy Impact Assessment would be undertaken as part of the project and all recommendations or requirements would be implemented to ensure the privacy of data.

***Would I have access to my information?***

As part of the new automated EEL invoicing process, each PTE would receive an overview of their business information.

Feedback from the pilot would also tell us what information PTEs would most like to see and the project team would continue to work together to ensure the new data collection system provides PTEs with the type of information about the sector they want and need.

***What has been the outcome of other event based collection systems?***

The Ministry of Education recently implemented a similar system for Early Childhood Education which is working successfully. This project would reuse existing technology and build on the experience gained to make the transition to the new event-based data collection system as easy as possible.

***My organisation doesn't have an issue completing the manual RS17 – why can't we continue doing what we're doing?***

The data collected through the manual EEL collection (known as the RS17) and annual census (known as the RS20) methods is limited.

The primary purpose of the proposed new non-Crown funded PTE data collection system project is to collect more comprehensive, accurate, and timely information which would offer a better understanding of the education sector. The data would be used for policy, investment and planning decisions and enabling education sector growth and benchmarking.

***Why focus on non-Crown funded PTEs instead of funded ones?***

Funded PTEs currently provide unit record information through the SDR. This data is currently unavailable from the non-Crown funded PTEs.

**Why doesn't the government just ask for extracts when they want more information on the non-Crown funded PTE sector?**

This suggestion is essentially the same process as the SDR which is completed by funded tertiary education organisations.

Using the SDR was considered by the project team but was decided against as it is a point-in-time view of data and requires ongoing resources and management for the PTE and the government to validate, transform and manage the data.

It would also still require system changes for many PTEs and create a new and ongoing compliance process. While there is an initial implementation period with the proposed new system, it doesn't add any ongoing compliance burden.

**Why are trimesters referred to when English language schools operate differently to other tertiary education organisations?**

Trimesters are referred to for consistency purposes. The reporting and EEL invoicing processes across the sector are based on trimesters.

Trimester dates are in the table below:

|                 |                           |                              |
|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Trimester One   | 1 January – 30 April      | EEL Invoiced on 15 May       |
| Trimester Two   | 1 May – 31 August         | EEL Invoiced on 15 September |
| Trimester Three | 1 September – 31 December | EEL Invoiced on 30 January   |

**Would I have to change my data structure to match what is proposed for the non-Crown funded PTE system?**

No, there is no requirement for you to change your data structure or how you name your data fields. You may need to make changes so that you can record new data but you should continue to use the structure that suits your business processes.

If assistance is required during transition, the project team would assist you.

**Can you clarify what you mean by the term component?**

Components can be described as parts of a programme which make up a coherent arrangement of learning or training. Components are commonly called courses, modules, unit standards, assessment standards, papers, etc.

**We have a pre-enrolment process – do we need to send you those as a 'Learner Provider Enrolment' event, and how do we go about reversing it if the student does not actually commence study?**

Learner Provider Enrolments are only required once the provider is confident the learner has accepted the education offer.

**What if we do not capture pass or fail on our components?**

It is suggested that the reference data list for the Completion Code would include a status for "Finished".

Although the sector does offer components which result in a pass or fail, we are aware that some PTEs offer components that a student undertakes and then 'finishes' without a pass or fail being required e.g. IELTS preparation courses. Through the pilot, we will test the range

of possible outcomes and ensure that this field has values that cover all the situations that apply to your students.

***We do not currently capture tuition fees at the component level – how would this impact the Export Education Levy calculation? Would we need to change our processes?***

This has been highlighted with pilot participants commenting that:

- “We charge for a programme rather than components”.
- “Our component charge covers multiple trimesters and can overlap academic years”.

Initial discussions have shown that these issues would be managed in multiple ways, depending on the PTE and the impacts. For example:

- Change their process to include component level fees.
- Include mapping at their student management system to pro-rate the programme fees into component fees.
- Splitting component enrolments over academic years.

Further information and analysis is still required in this area, and would be gathered during the pilot phase.

***Why is the proposed ‘total tuition fees’ (which the variable EEL component is calculated from) not taking into account the drawdown following the fee protection policy?***

Regulations state the variable component is “0.45% of the tuition fees received by the provider from international students”, and does not mention fees drawn down from the fee protection trust.

Fee protection policy allows draw down of 20% (up to \$3,000) of tuition fees within the first month to allow for expenses such as agents fees and the levy.

The fee is calculated only on those tuition fees where the component (course) has commenced within the relevant period (not the annual fee for long term students). The fee is calculated 15 days after trimester end (for trimester one and two) and 30 days after (for trimester three) which would cover the refund period for most components, leaving minimal risk of ‘wash ups’ for the following trimester.

Providing a function to update the enrolment tuition fee each time a drawdown was actioned would place a much larger impact on provider’s compliance effort for little gain.

***If the student only has one name, the immigration standard is to enter it as the first given name. Why are non-Crown funded PTEs doing this differently?***

Non-Crown funded PTEs are following the same model as SDR and Department of Internal Affairs, which is “If you only have one name, write it in the space provided for the surname or family name.”

***Given that many of our students come to New Zealand for a short one-time-only experience, is all the data required from these student types?***

We acknowledge that providers may offer NZQA approved study as well as courses not quality assured by NZQA.

All data is required only from students enrolled in NZQA approved learning.

***Is the National Student Number (NSN) going to be a mandatory field?***

Part of the purpose of the pilot is to understand the non-Crown funded PTEs business processes on capturing information.

The NSN would be a mandatory field for students enrolled in an NZQF component. The NSN ensures that the student's learning can be followed as they progress to other providers. It also is essential for recording progress on a Record of Achievement.