

Qualifications for Adult and Tertiary Teachers / Educators: Needs Analysis

Preface

This draft is an attempt to develop a broad-brush needs analysis for qualifications concerned with Adult and Tertiary Teaching (ATT). It does not cover the Education Specialisation and Support qualifications that are also in the Teacher Education field: there is little if any overlap between the two groups of qualifications and these will be subject of a separate analysis that involves the stakeholders concerned.

The analysis explores, where information is available, the way in which qualifications presently in the ATT sub-field are utilised in the tertiary education sector in Aotearoa, New Zealand. It draws on Ako Aotearoa's commissioned report on the status of qualifications and support for tertiary practitioners (Projects International, 2010)¹ and on the recent review by the MoE of changing conditions in the teaching workforce within tertiary education providers². We can probably infer that similar changes are occurring in other contexts where tertiary education takes place.

The tertiary education work force is extraordinarily diverse. This diversity is its strength: it is required to meet the continually changing needs and expectations of an even more diverse cohort of well over half a million learners in both formal and informal tertiary education across New Zealand. Ultimately these qualifications for adult and tertiary educators are about supporting practitioners to meet the needs of these learners.

While the starting point for the needs analysis is, necessarily, the use that has been made of qualifications at present, discussion about new qualifications must reflect the diversity of the sector as a whole and be (as far as possible) future-proof.

Introduction and overview

A changing environment and current priorities

There is no doubt that the role of the tertiary teacher / educator is changing. Students are more diverse and their needs and expectations will vary depending on their level of academic preparation, the cultural capital they bring to their programme of study, their familiarity with on-line technologies and, where they are familiar, their ability to translate that

¹ Projects International (2010) *Taking Stock: Tertiary Practitioner Education Training and Support*. Publ. Ako Aotearoa, Wellington.

² Ministry of Education (2012) *The changing structure of the public tertiary education workforce*. Publ. Tertiary Sector Performance Analysis, Ministry of Education, Wellington.

familiarity into uses that support formal study. Increasingly, too, because of the costs of study, many, if not most students view tertiary education as an investment rather than an opportunity: this again shapes their attitudes and expectations.

They also study in a wide range of diverse settings. The Tertiary Education Commission reports that 469,000 tertiary learners (280,000 EFTS/STMs) studied in formal TEC funded programmes in 2012³. Of these 42% (on an EFTS basis) studied at university, 24% at ITPs, 9% at Wānanga, 10% at PTEs and 15% in the workplace under the guidance of ITOs. The majority of these learners will study with organisations where a teaching qualification is not a formal requirement for the staff who will facilitate their learning.

In addition, many learners are engaged in adult and community education in non-formal programmes of study. By definition, the nature of ACE programmes is diverse and wide-ranging and designed to support life-long learning and community empowerment. Many of these programmes are concerned with adult literacy, numeracy and language or health and social well-being. There are no formally recognised pre-degree qualifications for ACE practitioners *per se*, except that several providers engaged in ACE provision offer qualifications in adult literacy and numeracy education.

Despite there being no formal requirements for teaching qualifications, New Zealand policy makers, in common with other western tertiary education systems, are placing an increasing emphasis on ensuring public accountability for the quality of tertiary education provision. Particular priorities for tertiary education are, firstly, about ensuring equity of opportunity, especially for learners who have been under-served by the school system. Secondly, there are the challenges and opportunities that on-line technologies present for educational delivery, networking and collaboration. Any future tertiary teaching qualifications should seek to enhance tertiary teachers' capabilities in both these areas.

The work-force

Estimating the number of people employed with teaching responsibilities in formal tertiary education in New Zealand is difficult because of the diversity of the sector, but over 27,000 seems to be a reasonable working estimate. Pre-degree teaching qualifications may be of relevance to more than half this number (essentially those outside the university sector- see following discussion). However a large proportion of these people work part-time⁴ which is likely to be a barrier to uptake for some through either their own resource constraints and anticipated return on investment or through lack of support from employers.

Despite an increasing number of restructurings over recent years, turn-over rates are estimated to be low in the public tertiary sector. However there is considerable concern about a work-force with a significantly older age profile than the New Zealand work-force as a whole that will need replacing in the near future⁵. In the meantime, high proportions of staff

³ Tertiary Education Commission (2013) *2012 Tertiary Education Performance Report*. Publ. Tertiary Education Commission Wellington.

⁴ Ministry of Education (2012) *The changing structure of the public tertiary education workforce*. Publ. Tertiary Sector Performance Analysis, Ministry of Education, Wellington.

⁵ *ibid.*

are on temporary or casual contracts and casualisation of the university workforce in particular is an increasing international concern.

There are no collated data for the PTE or ITO sectors, but turn-over is likely to be higher in many PTE's than in the public sector due to the changing nature of the market in which they operate. The reorganisation of the ITOs (and different models of training and assessment used within those ITOs) makes the situation particularly unclear in this sector at present.

Pre-degree qualifications for tertiary teachers

Over the period 2009 - 2012 an average of 1,800 people a year gained a formal pre-degree qualification in tertiary teaching⁶ (in 2008⁷ almost 400 gained level 7 qualifications or higher). On the face of it, this suggests that most of the staff outside the university sector are likely to become qualified over time. However the numbers are considerably inflated by the activity of the Skills Organisation / Learning State and Te Wānanga o Aotearoa who put large numbers of people through qualifications in the four year period 2009-2012, accounting for almost 55% of NCAET graduates.

Traditionally ITPs have placed a high value on full-time staff gaining a teaching qualification (often provided as a local qualification in house). Universities, in contrast, have not had this requirement (inevitably too, they look to offer those staff who are interested opportunities to undertake qualifications at Level 7 and above). Policies of PTEs vary considerably, with a significant proportion (around 40%) regarding it as an important pre-requisite for employment.

Even if it wasn't for the imperatives created by the Mandatory Review of Qualifications, there is a clear need for the rationalisation of qualifications available in this discipline area. Many local qualifications are producing very limited numbers of graduates and there is a lack of discrimination of expected outcomes from qualifications at different levels.

There is also a strong sense across the sector that any qualifications review needs to re-evaluate the priorities afforded to ensuring tertiary teachers are fully equipped to address the following:

- Achieving parity of success for Māori and Pacific learners
- Engaging younger learners
- Addressing literacy and numeracy needs for tertiary learners
- Ensuring all learners have the appropriate digital literacies to support successful study
- Providing quality international education both within New Zealand and overseas.

⁶ NZQA usage data – note: may be some double counting.

⁷ Latest data available: Projects International (2010) *Taking Stock: Tertiary Practitioner Education Training and Support*. Publ. Ako Aotearoa, Wellington.

Professionalisation of tertiary teachers

In parallel with this, there is a growing international debate about the professionalisation of the tertiary teaching profession. Part of this discussion is the role that tertiary teaching qualifications should play in any professional accreditation process⁸. While this debate is only beginning in New Zealand, a strong profession, whether a formal body or not needs a critical mass of members with the capability to continually evaluate the effectiveness of their own individual and collective practice.

Another dimension is the need for tertiary educators individually and collectively to be equipped to be active players in the continuing policy and practice debate about how best to frame our tertiary education system in the future.⁹

The following sections expand on some of these aspects in more detail.

Exploring the available data

Teachers in tertiary education in New Zealand¹⁰: the workforce and emerging issues

Overall numbers

In 2012, over 35,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff were employed by recognised tertiary education organisations (TEOs). Of these, nearly 15,600 FTEs were identified as teaching staff (Table 1). This comprises about 44% of the total tertiary education workforce. It is estimated that this represents over 21,000 individual tertiary teachers, of which 11,300 work in the university sector who, as noted above, are unlikely to be interested or have the opportunity to gain pre-degree qualifications.

Table 1: Full-time equivalent teaching staff employed in the New Zealand tertiary sector in 2012.

Part of sector	No. of FTEs
Universities	7,060
ITPs	4,440
Wānanga	751
PTEs	3,370
Total	15,570

⁸ Suddaby, G. and Holmes, A. (2012) An accreditation scheme for tertiary teachers in New Zealand: Key informant draft discussion document. Ako Aotearoa discussion paper.

⁹ See for instance, Tertiary Education Union (2013) *Te Kaupapa Whaioranga; The blue print for tertiary education*. Wellington, Tertiary Education Union; OECD (2011) *Building a high quality teaching profession; lessons from around the world*. Paris, OECD Publishing.

¹⁰ Data in this section from: Ministry of Education (2013) *Profile & Trends: New Zealand's Tertiary Education Sector 2012*. Publ. Tertiary Sector Performance Analysis, Ministry of Education, Wellington and Ministry of Education (2012) *The changing structure of the public tertiary education workforce*. Publ. Tertiary Sector Performance Analysis, Ministry of Education, Wellington.

Note, however, that this data does not include practitioners contributing to education and training in the workplace or providing non-formal education (especially in the Adult and Community Education sector), nor does it include 'non-academic' staff within TEOs who may have important learning support roles, either as learning advisors or working as casual tutors. ITOs, for instance, have several thousand staff (possibly up to 5,000¹¹) involved in assessment in the workplace. Many of these staff are involved in mentoring of trainees and other education support activities.

This means that the total number of staff involved in tertiary education as teachers, learning facilitators or assessors is likely to be around 27,000 of which pre-degree qualifications may be of relevance to up to 16,000.

Investment in staff

The cost of employing personnel constitutes a very significant investment. While no collated data are available outside public tertiary providers, 60% of all expenditure in tertiary education institutions is on staffing. In 2011 personnel costs were \$2.57 billion (for both academic and non-academic staff). The MoE analysis suggests that these costs have risen by 2.8% per year since 2001 when they were under \$1.4 billion.

Full-time versus part-time

Over the period 2001 – 2011, the number of academic FTEs in the public tertiary education institutions (TEIs) has increased by 18%. Detailed data are not available for private providers, but the 12,000 FTEs in the public tertiary education institutions comprise around 17,000 individuals.

The increase in proportions of part-time staff 2001 - 2011 is entirely due to changing profiles in the university sector, particularly in the first half of the last decade and is in common with international trends. The proportion of part-time staff employed by Wānanga has decreased over this period (now 29%), while the part-time / full-time ratio in the polytechnic sector although varying considerably from year to year shows no overall trend (44% of ITP academic staff were part-time in 2011).

An ageing workforce

There are significant concerns about the ageing tertiary teaching workforce. Statistics New Zealand estimated that around 38% of academic staff in tertiary education were over 50 in 2006. By 2016 it is estimated that 25% of ITP staff will be over 60. In the university sector the age profile appears to be even more biased to the over 60's¹².

¹¹ Extrapolating from survey responses from ITOs in Projects International (2010) *Taking Stock: Tertiary Practitioner Education Training and Support*. Publ. Ako Aotearoa, Wellington, plus recent comment at pre-review regional fora.

¹² Exactly comparable data not provided.

Increasing workloads

Although a crude measure, changes in student : academic staff ratios (SASRs) suggest that the 'productivity' of academic staff is increasing. In the period 2007 – 2012 SASRs increased from 17.8 to 19.0 in the universities and in the polytechnic sector from 17.0 – 18.1. However in the Wānanga sector SASRs have decreased from 41.2 to 32.9. Of course actual workloads are not solely dependent on SASRs: how on-line learning is deployed, the availability of casual tutorial / demonstrator staff and marking support all have significant impacts on the effects of these ratios.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that in many cases support for teaching staff is decreasing while expectations of higher quality provision continue to rise. However this very much depends on individual organisations priorities and expectations. There is no doubt that the pressures on university academic staff have increased as a consequence of the PBRF.

Gender¹³

While the proportion of women employed as tertiary teachers is increasing. Women now comprise 48% of the university academic workforce, 53% of the ITP workforce and also constitute a majority in the Wānanga (no data provided). In the universities women are disproportionately in junior roles or occupy part-time positions. In the ITP sector there are also significantly more women than men working part time (54% versus 33%). However, the number of women in senior roles is broadly similar to men, as is the case in the Wānanga.

Ethnicity of the tertiary teaching workforce

The MoE only started collecting data on the ethnicity of the New Zealand tertiary workforce in TEIs in 2012 and any summary data has yet to be published. Māori and Pacific academic staff are clearly under-represented in universities and ITPs in comparison to the levels of participation of those key priority groups.

Turn-over rates

The turn-over of academic staff in tertiary education is difficult to quantify. The age profile suggests that turn-over in public TEIs is low, except where organisations have chosen to restructure different parts of their operation. Internationally, it is a commonly raised concern that younger academics have increasing difficulty securing permanent employment. The situation seems to be no different in New Zealand¹⁴.

¹³ Data from Ministry of Education (2012) *The changing structure of the public tertiary education workforce*. Publ. Tertiary Sector Performance Analysis, Ministry of Education, Wellington.

¹⁴ The MoE (2012) report (op.cit.) indicates this is the case by looking at the levels of part-time employment for 'other' academic staff as a proxy for the pool available to recruit new academic staff to permanent positions. This part of the workforce is becoming increasingly casualised.

Anecdotally the turn-over of staff in many PTEs may be higher, but there is no national collation of data for the private tertiary sector.

Requirements for and value placed on tertiary teaching qualifications by employers

Present value placed on qualifications by employers

In 2010 Ako Aotearoa's report '*Taking Stock*'¹⁵, reported that no Universities or ITPs required a teaching qualification as a pre-requisite for appointment of full-time staff, although 40% of PTE respondents did. Most polytechnics expected their new full-time appointees to gain a teaching qualification within a set time after employment, as did 50% of PTEs. This was not a requirement for any New Zealand University. Both ITPs and PTE's had significantly lower expectations for part-time staff. The '*Taking Stock*' report also found variations between organisations in approaches to general professional support and development.

There is anecdotal evidence that some polytechnics have been less able to implement their policy requirements for trained tertiary teachers over recent years.

Most ITOs require the completion of a unit standard in assessment by work-place assessors¹⁶, but there is no clear picture of how ITO's value the completion of full qualifications in adult education and training. With the notable exception of Learning State / The Skills Organisation, few ITOs have made much use of these qualifications (see page 9).

Wide range of qualifications with varying clarity of outcomes

The *Taking Stock* report noted a wide range of tertiary teaching qualifications available, many of which had very few completions. It was also critical of the variable content of graduate profiles and outcome statements, with the result that it was often very difficult to distinguish between expected outcomes at different levels of study.

Present policy settings requiring increased accountability for the quality of teaching and learning

In New Zealand, current government policy settings and funding expectations through investment plans have placed an increasing focus on quality of teaching. This is particularly relevant to the non-university sector at present, with particular emphasis on preparation for the new round of NZQA external reviews of TEO self-assessment processes for quality enhancement and TEC's expectation for parity of achievement for Māori and Pasifika.

¹⁵ Projects International (2010) *Taking Stock: Tertiary Practitioner Education Training and Support*. Publ. Ako Aotearoa, Wellington.

¹⁶ 16 of 22 respondents: Projects International (2010) *Taking Stock: Tertiary Practitioner Education Training and Support*. Publ. Ako Aotearoa, Wellington.

There is a growing expectation that this increased level of accountability for the quality of teaching (and support for learning) will impact on the universities in the medium term.

The increased emphasis on export education also places a strong focus on the quality of the educational experience New Zealand offers. Similarly, the growing use of on-line learning and in particular MOOCs makes the quality of educational delivery more public and transparent.

Changing student expectations

As with other western education systems, student expectations are changing for three principle reasons:

- increased diversity of the student body
- increased awareness by individuals and families of the costs of education
- increased awareness of the potential of on-line access to learning materials and support.

International trends and an emerging debate about professionalisation

There is a growing international debate about the professionalisation of tertiary teachers. These include work on standards and proposals to regulate the profession by requiring qualifications as a condition of entry (particularly in Further Education). The beginnings of such work is underway in New Zealand and Ako Aotearoa is following progress in both Australia and the UK closely¹⁷.

While this debate is just at its emerging stages in New Zealand, work undertaken by Ako Aotearoa with the Metro Group of ITPs on this is attached for reference in Appendix 1. These standards were developed with reference to the New Zealand Teachers Council *Registered Teacher Criteria*¹⁸. Much more extensive work has been undertaken by Innovation & Business Skills Australia Ltd who have recently published a capability framework for VET practitioners¹⁹.

The New Zealand work includes an aspirational description of what a 21st century vocational educator is like (also included in Appendix 1). This work formed the basis of the development of a Graduate Diploma in Professional Education (Level 7) now being offered by Otago Polytechnic.

¹⁷ Suddaby, G. and Holmes, A. (2012) An accreditation scheme for tertiary teachers in New Zealand: Key informant draft discussion document. Ako Aotearoa discussion paper.

¹⁸ New Zealand Teachers Council (2009) *Registered Teacher Criteria*. www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/rtc

¹⁹ Innovation & Business Skills Australia (2013) *The VET Practitioner Capability Framework: Implementation Guide*. IBSA, Melbourne.

Current usage of existing pre-degree teaching qualifications

Non-specialised certificate level qualifications in tertiary teaching

During the period 2009 – 2012 nearly 4,300 people completed a certificate level qualification in generic²⁰ adult education / tertiary teaching. Over 91% of these completed a National Certificate²¹.

There are two National Certificates in Adult Education and Training: 0378 at Level 4 and 0379 at Level 5. 59 TEOs offered (or offered opportunities to complete²²) the Level 4 qualification and 29 the Level 5 qualification between 2009 and 2012. 2,546 learners gained the Level 4 national certificate during that period and 1,370 gained the level 5 certificate.

By far the largest provider of the Level 4 NCAET qualification was The Skills Organisation / Learning State who graduated over 51% of the total in the four year period 2009 - 2012. Six other ITOs used the Level 4 qualification over this period, but between them produced less than 4% of the total graduates.

Over 76% of the graduates from the Level 5 NCEAT qualification between 2009 and 2012 studied at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, with another 14% graduating from 5 ITPs. Numbers of graduates from this qualification fell off markedly in 2011 and 2012, with only 105 graduating in 2012²³.

Of the 59 TEOs offering the Level 4 qualification, 60% had graduated less than 5 learners. The equivalent figure for those offering the Level 5 qualification was 55%. Although, in the absence of EFTS consumption data, it is difficult to be certain, the returns suggest that the majority of these TEOs had discontinued offering these qualifications.

Over the period 2009-2012, there were 10 providers offering local tertiary teacher training qualifications at certificate level (levels 4 and 5²⁴) all of which were ITPs. During this period 380 students graduated with 154 EFTS consumed. There are some striking differences between providers in the relationship between graduates completing the qualification and the number of EFTS reported.

Five of the 10 providers had over 30 graduates during the 4 year period, comprising a total of 238 qualifications awarded (78% of the total). Two providers discontinued certificate level provision during this period.

²⁰ This term has been used to describe certificates designed to support teachers working in general areas of tertiary education (it excludes, for example, specialisms in adult literacy and numeracy, foundation education or Mātauranga Māori). Both the Level 4 and 5 national certificates, include strands in National Environment and The International Environment – for the purposes of this analysis these strands have not been separated out and all national certificates have been included in the generic category.

²¹ Figures calculated from NZQA usage data.

²² Some TEO's reporting qualification completions are ITOs.

²³ In 2013 this figure fell further to 57 as at 17 October.

²⁴ The titles of older local qualifications do not always define level of study.

National Certificates in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education.

There are two certificates offered in this area: one, 1212, is for educators, the other, 1253, is focussed on vocational education in the workplace. The NZQA dataset indicates that 2,570 learners graduated with these over the period 2009 – 2012. Nearly 2,200 of these qualifications (over 85%) were gained in the vocational / workplace option. However there may be some significant double counting in both options as completions of the core sections and completions of the whole certificates are reported by providers separately.

Five TEOs (Literacy Aotearoa and four ITPs) were engaged in provision of the educator option over the period surveyed with 372 qualifications awarded. Literacy Aotearoa accounted for 56% of graduates.

Thirty-five TEOs offered the vocational / workplace option. Workbase, Adult Literacy Education and Consultancy, Framework Solutions, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and Training for You were the major source of graduates accounting for almost 68% of the total, with six ITPs providing another 17% of graduates over this four year period. Half the TEOs have each graduated less than 20 learners, some considerably less.

Diploma level qualifications in tertiary teaching at levels 5 and 6.

In all 417 people graduated with diploma qualifications at levels 5 or 6 in adult education / tertiary teaching in the period 2009 – 2012. However only four providers are particularly active in this space.

Eight providers offered the National Diploma in Adult Education and Training in the period 2009 – 2012: there were only 30 graduates, with one ITP provider accounting for 70% of those. Only one other provider produced more than 1 graduate in this period.

Five providers (ITPs and Wānanga) actively offered local diploma qualifications round the country during the 2009 – 2012 period (two other providers stopped offering their qualifications after 2009 and one other seems²⁵ to have just commenced in 2012). There were 387 graduates over the period 2009 – 2012, with one provider graduating 77% of these diplomates.

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²⁵ NZQA usage data identifies enrolments in 2012, but no EFTS consumption.

Appendix 1

Draft proposed professional standards for vocational educators of advanced standing developed by an Ako Aotearoa and ITP Metro working group (2012)

<i>PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND PROFESSIONAL VALUES</i>	
An advanced professional vocational educator meets the following:	
Standard	Evidenced by:
1. Actively practices Manaakitanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. learners and their needs are put first ii. concern for and contribution to the success for all learners
2. Progresses individual and organisational commitments to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. contribution to maximising success for Māori learners ii. contribution to active engagement with Iwi and other Māori groups
3. Actively develops professional relationships with learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. value placed on individual learner's perspectives ii. cultural competence iii. responsiveness to individual learners needs iv. ability to inspire engagement and motivate learning v. responsiveness to cultural and academic diversity
4. Adds value to the institution's and learners' communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. relational capability ii. active contribution beyond the academic community on behalf of the organisation
5. Innovates for successful learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. future focus ii. ability to manage risk while undertaking experimentation and innovation in teaching and learning iii. ability to foster learners' creativity
6. Promotes and models collegiality and collaboration within and across disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. contribution to and leadership of teams ii. engagement with organisational processes iii. promotion of interdisciplinary dialogue iv. contribution to cross-organisational programmes and projects v. shared good practice

<i>PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN PRACTICE</i>	
An advanced professional vocational educator meets the following:	
Standard	Evidenced by:
7. Synthesises the dual professional roles of educator and work expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. expertise and leadership in work practice ii. contribution to the body of knowledge in their work practice area iii. a global perspective and future focus on their profession or trade in their educative practice
8. Practice is informed by a critical understanding of education and cognitive theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. advanced evidence-based decision making on pedagogical issues ii. development of their learners' metacognitive skills
9. Designs and guides learning for individual success, starting from the individual's experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. learning design co-creates the learning process ii. promotion of active and deep learning iii. provision of appropriate guidance and support to foster learner success iv. use of technology to enhance effective learning v. use of and contribution to open educational resources (OER) vi. outcomes focus, including work and community capabilities
10. Is a practitioner-researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. critical self-reflection and research to advance practice from an evidence base ii. critical evaluation of the learning experience
11. Leads evidence-based assessment practice for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. evidence-based assessment strategies are integrated with learning design ii. assessment of prior learning including work based and informal learning

Narrative on the rationale for the practice standards

A vocational educator of advanced standing in the 21st century is a team player and a dual professional in both their trade or profession and in the facilitation of learning. She / he is focussed on the best possible outcomes for all learners in their care and works proactively in the context of Te Tiriti o Waitangi to ensure success for Māori. Highly culturally competent, she / he will exhibit Manaakitanga for all learners. They recognise and respect the multi-faceted diversity in their learners and seek to treat and value them as individuals.

Learning with these educators is challenging, exciting, supportive and purposeful. By no means least, it is fun. Above all, it is focussed on developing each learner's capabilities to maximise their own potential and future opportunities. That learners achieve success on their programmes of study is only part of the goal for these educators: ensuring their learners are best equipped for the next steps in work or further study is, ultimately, more important.

Relevant work experience and contexts are fundamental to high quality vocational education. This means that professional practice as a vocational educator is not bounded by either the limits of the educational organisation or by the qualifications offered. Emphasis is on achieving the best possible synergies between the world of education and the world of work in all the diverse forms of each.

Digital technologies are employed routinely as tools to support learning and provide access to relevant content in an organised way that suits the needs of the individual learner. Teaching and learning facilitation focuses on concepts, developing deeper understanding and the attributes that enhance learners' employability. Learners are progressively equipped with the strategies to become confident in their studies, time-efficient and, progressively, more autonomous.

Advanced twenty-first century vocational educators are, in a very real sense, partners with their learners and negotiate the learning environment and opportunities with them. In particular these educators seek to recognise and build on the existing knowledge, strengths and skills of each learner and foster learning between peers. Their assessment strategies are designed to foster learning and build wherever possible on naturally occurring evidence. Such educators are highly skilled in actively managing any risk to learning. This means that they are not afraid to experiment alongside learners in order to foster innovative, creative and motivating learning opportunities and to learn alongside the learners in their care.

A highly professional vocational educator is continually challenging themselves about their own practice and looking for continuing quality enhancement. They are critically self-reflective and undertake this self-reflection in a systematic and evidence-based way. Nor is their self-reflection limited to their education practice: they are also future-focussed in terms of their trade or profession. They are helping their learners prepare for an inevitably changing future.