



Tertiary Education Commission
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua

YOUTH GUARANTEE

Setting students up for success

Best practice examples from 2010

Published December 2010 by:
Tertiary Education Commission
Te Amorangi Mātauranga Mātua

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Introduction

This document is designed to support Youth Guarantee providers to introduce or improve their Youth Guarantee programmes.

The document covers the core areas for a successful Youth Guarantee programme, and was developed based on experiences from staff working on Youth Guarantee. These experiences were shared during best practice workshops held by the TEC in November 2010. Materials from these workshops are also available on the TEC's website.

These examples are not intended to be the sole reference point for staff organising Youth Guarantee programmes. Organisations should decide how they want to approach Youth Guarantee depending on the type of organisation they are and the types of students they will attract to the programme.

Background to Youth Guarantee

2011 will be the second year of the implementation of Youth Guarantee and funding for over 2,500 equivalent full time students (EFTS) has been allocated for the year.

Youth Guarantee was introduced in 2010, with funding approved for 29 Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) to deliver 2,000 equivalent full-time students (EFTS). The programme has grown to include 35 TEOs with a delivery of over 2,500 EFTS in 2011.

The purpose of the Youth Guarantee initiative is to improve the educational achievements of targeted youth by providing them with an opportunity to participate in a range of vocational courses free of charge.

The initiative is intended to:

- increase the educational achievement of targeted 16 and 17 year olds not currently engaged in education by providing them with improved access to study towards qualifications at levels 1 to 3 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) in tertiary education; and
- improve transitions between school, tertiary education and work.

Organisational approaches to Youth Guarantee

Dedicated support

A dedicated Youth Guarantee support person can provide valuable central support for students and other staff in the organisation.

2010 providers have found that having a person that can relate to the students, and support them on issues they are having outside of the classroom is imperative.

The practicality of having a staff member with the primary role of supporting Youth Guarantee students will depend on the type and size of an organisation, but the key is to ensure that there is a central person to

coordinate and oversee the programme, and preferably to have contact with the students on a regular basis.

Communication and consistency across faculties and departments

Strong communication between staff within each provider helps to ensure that staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities for students, and that students are achieving as expected.

2010 Youth Guarantee providers emphasised that the coordinator or support person needs to have regular contact with the tutors involved with the students to ensure that communication is free-flowing. This communication should also include other support people in the student's life where possible (e.g. family, whanau and the student's support network outside the course).

Having clear boundaries on the roles of the Youth Guarantee support person, tutors and other staff is important to ensure consistency across the organisation when dealing with Youth Guarantee students, and to ensure that staff members can manage their workloads effectively.

Separate vs. integrated classes

Providers have expressed a range of views regarding whether the best approach was to have Youth Guarantee students integrated into classes with fee-paying students, or to have them in separate Youth Guarantee classes.

Most providers have operated integrated classes, with the expectation that Youth Guarantee students are to be supported by teaching staff and succeed like any other students. Providers should structure their classes according to the needs of their particular students.

Youth Guarantee has been positioned as a "fees-free" scholarship at some organisations, which also provides some additional student support. Generally, providers haven't experienced any issues in having fee-paying and Youth Guarantee students in the same environment.

Recruitment, promotion and retention

At the Youth Guarantee workshops providers discussed the best ways to promote Youth Guarantee programmes in their communities and recruit appropriate students. It was identified that some methods are more effective (and less costly!) than others.

Face-to-face recruitment and community engagement

Face-to-face recruitment has been the most effective way of recruiting students from either within the organisation or through engagement with schools and community groups¹.

Some suggestions for recruiting appropriate students to Youth Guarantee are to:

¹ This has also been evidenced in research that the TEC commissioned in July/August 2010. This research found that most students interviewed were informed about Youth Guarantee either through the organisation (47%), their school (23%), or their friends and family (18%).

- develop relationships with schools (including careers advisors, deans and principals) – create buy-in from schools and build your relationships with them where possible;
- organise campus visits where potential Youth Guarantee students can see the campuses, meet other students and tutors, and understand more about the courses that are on offer and the way they work;
- get involved in community events;
- build relationships with government and other support agencies; and
- hold expos to show off the work and achievements of previous Youth Guarantee students – where appropriate, have the students fronting the displays so they can relate to the potential new students.

Setting students up for success

Once the students have been selected for Youth Guarantee courses it is important to ensure they are set up for success. Some suggestions for doing this include:

- ensuring that family / whanau are involved right at the beginning of the process (i.e. when the student comes for the initial discussion about the programme);
- showing students respect and recognising that tertiary study is a new environment for them;
- developing career pathways, showing students how the qualification they are studying will get them into higher level industry certificates, and/or get them into the job and career that they're aiming for;
- considering the terminology used regarding the first conversation about Youth Guarantee (for example, referring to the meeting as a 'chat' rather than an interview); and
- ensuring that expectations are clear at the outset (i.e. that the student will complete a full-year of study), including what time commitment will be required of the student (and their support people) and what level the course material will be pitched at.

Teaching and learning approaches for students

At the workshops in November, providers discussed the ways that teaching younger students can be different to teaching adult students and the importance of keeping students engaged in the education.

Providers found that having a 'hook' to keep students engaged and motivated worked particularly well. Depending on the student and type of programme this could include:

- sport;
- hands-on trades work that produces something of interest to the student (e.g. building go-carts);
- a reward or points system; and/or

- an employer or workplace system, (e.g. using one verbal warning and two written warnings).

The key is to provide regular targeted incentives to ensure that students continue to work hard, stay engaged in the programme, and progress through their studies.

Other examples of ways to teach Youth Guarantee students were also discussed at the workshops, including:

- giving students power over their own learning (e.g. getting them involved in planning the programme);
- varying the order of teaching (e.g. doing activities that the students enjoy in the afternoon to encourage students to come back after lunch or doing short bursts of activities that require high concentration);
- ensuring the programme is flexible and able to be varied slightly if the original approach is not working;
- meeting different learning styles (e.g. more hands-on or kinaesthetic learning for some students); and
- strengths based approach (putting students into courses that they enjoy doing and capitalising on strengths).

Learning plans

Organisations use a range of names for learning plans, including:

- personal learning plan (PLP);
- personal education plan (PEP); or
- independent learning plan (ILP).

Providers that attended the 2010 Youth Guarantee workshops agreed that regardless of terminology used, learning plans are an important part of the Youth Guarantee programme and that these should be developed with each student when enrolling.

Families and support people should also be involved in the development and tracking of learning plans where possible. This will ensure that the key people in the students' life have an understanding of the objectives and are able to support the student towards the same outcome.

Structure of programmes

It is important to target courses at the right level for the students and ensure that they are structured to achieve maximum success from students.

Suggestions discussed at the Youth Guarantee workshops include:

- *providing taster courses* for the first six months or the full year of study. This will allow students to try a number of vocations and decide which one they prefer.
- *varying teaching blocks and start/finish times* of classes each day to ensure the maximum attendance from students (the start/finish times could be set taking into account feedback from students).

- *working with a range of people including industry experts* so that students get as much real experience of the industry as possible. This can also be beneficial when planning your programme as industry experts may be able to provide equipment and facilities not otherwise accessible.

Pastoral care

Good pastoral support is integral to the success of any Youth Guarantee programme. Providers have advised that this pastoral support works best when it is built into all parts of the programme, and is tailored to the specific needs of this group of young students.

Building a support network

At the Youth Guarantee workshops providers all agreed that building a support network with the students' family / whanau / support group outside was a key to success.

Suggested ways to incorporate this support into the programme include:

- encouraging students to bring family / whanau with them to their initial interview/discussion about the programme;
- explaining to parents at the outset what their responsibilities are (i.e. how they can contribute to the student's success) and what expectations the provider has of them;
- holding family events such as barbeques, hangi or information evenings; and
- developing and maintaining a relationship between the Youth Guarantee coordinator or dedicated person and the family.

Other pastoral care

Depending on the type of organisation and the type of students enrolled in Youth Guarantee, there are many other ways that organisations can provide Youth Guarantee students with the pastoral support needed for them to achieve educational success. Suggestions from the Youth Guarantee workshops include:

- arranging a special orientation for the Youth Guarantee cohort;
- introducing students to the key support people within the organisation and ensuring that the support staff are in regular contact with the students;
- engaging a specialist (either initially or long-term) to provide pastoral care or specialised support if the expertise don't exist within current staff. It is important to ensure that the people working with the students can relate to them effectively;
- using technology (e.g. cell phones or Facebook) to keep in touch with students and monitor attendance;
- setting up a home room for students;
- having a student mentor in the classroom to work with the students;

- supplying food for students that may not be able to afford breakfast and lunch; and
- providing students with transport or equipment that is vital for the course and that they would not otherwise be able to afford.

Providers will need to use their judgement when considering whether or not this additional support is appropriate, and ensuring that this support is respected by the students.

Collaboration and networking with support agencies

During 2010 Youth Guarantee providers have found that building relationships and working with support agencies is key to the success of their programmes. These relationships have meant that staff working with Youth Guarantee students have been able to seek advice from, or refer the students to the appropriate support agency as required.

Examples of agencies that Youth Guarantee staff may require the services of include:

- Career Services (<http://www.careers.govt.nz/>)
- Work and Income (www.workandincome.govt.nz)
- Youth Transitions branch of Work and Income (www.workandincome.govt.nz/community/a-z-grants-and-other-help/youth-transition-service.html)
- Housing New Zealand (www.hnzc.co.nz)
- Salvation Army (<http://salvationarmy.org.nz/>)
- Child Youth and Family (www.cyf.govt.nz)
- Mental Health services (<http://www.mhc.govt.nz/information-about-nz-mental-health-services>)
- Drug rehabilitation services (<http://www.druginfo.org.nz/ADANZ/Home>)
- Department of Corrections (<http://www.corrections.govt.nz/>)
- NZ Police – Youth Education Services (www.police.govt.nz/new-zealand-police-youth-education-services-yes)

Administrative requirements

This section is to help staff ensure that the administrative requirements of Youth Guarantee are covered off, and to ensure that staff are aware of the performance expectations of Youth Guarantee students.

Reporting students and outcomes

Youth Guarantee funded students should be reported through the Single Data Return (SDR) in the same way as other Student Achievement Component (SAC) students but with the Source of Funding code 22.

In 2011, Youth Guarantee performance will be measured against the following educational performance indicators:

- successful course completion;
- qualification completion;
- progression; and
- retention.

The Youth Guarantee programme's purpose is to raise the *educational achievement* of young people, i.e. successfully completing their courses and qualifications. Please see the website for more information on Youth Guarantee performance.

Providers should make sure that students are aware of their options if they are considering exiting the programme before completing it (for example, to get a job). This could include talking to the student about the longer-term benefits of continuing with study and getting a qualification, versus the shorter-term benefits of getting a job with low or no qualifications.

Funding and Planning enrolments

Staff working on Youth Guarantee should be aware of the methodology for calculating funding, and/or be in regular contact with planning staff. This will ensure that you know how many students can be enrolled within your organisation's funding allocation, and avoid under delivering against the allocation.

Further information on the methodology can be found at:

<http://www.tec.govt.nz/Funding/Fund-finder/Student-Achievement-Component/Payment-and-performance/>

Funding is paid at the same rate per EFTS as SAC funding. However, for every Youth Guarantee EFTS enrolled, the provider will be paid a Youth Guarantee Payment of \$4,500, in addition to their SAC funding.

The purpose of the Youth Guarantee Payment is to cover pastoral care costs and student fees. Providers should be mindful that Youth Guarantee students are unlikely to have access to student loans or allowances to pay course related costs, so these may be covered by the Youth Guarantee payment in some circumstances. Please see the Payment section of the Youth Guarantee page on the TEC website for more information.

Conclusion

These guidelines were developed following workshops with Youth Guarantee providers in November 2010. They are designed to share the information that was presented and discussed at the workshops nationally, and to assist organisations with embedding their Youth Guarantee programmes.

For more information please see the Youth Guarantee section of the website or contact the TEC Service Centre.