



Reform of Vocational Education (RoVE)

Manufacturing, Engineering and Logistics interim Establishment Board

Engagement workshop of 26 August 2020

Key themes and questions

Themes and comments

The participants in the workshops were generally supportive of the overarching preamble, proposed legal name and approach to the appointment of the first and subsequent boards.

There was interest in:

- Understanding how smaller employers would have a voice in influencing the delivery and approach of the new organisation and greater clarity about the industry advisory mechanisms.
- Seeing collaboration across the new system, particularly among the Workforce Development Councils and with the Regional Skills Leadership Groups, and in coordinating the various workforce development strategies.
- Ensuring the Workforce Development Council focused on adding to the work already undertaken by employers, such as not duplicating career promotion at a firm level but rather focusing on sectoral challenges.
- Seeing the Workforce Development Council focus on performance, with poor outcomes for some apprenticeship programmes and some learner groups cited.

Some concerns were raised about:

- A lack of clarity about how the whole system fits together, the transition arrangements, the level of investment in the new organisation, the overall timeframes for establishment and oversight of the performance of the Workforce Development Council.
- The potential lack of representation from practitioners of education and training or other professional practitioners such as engineers.
- The possible lack of continuity between the interim Establishment Board and the first Board.
- The use of the term engineering in the legal name was associated with possible confusion given the coverage of other Workforce Development Councils, and a desire to build on the success of the New Zealand Board of Engineering Diplomas.
- The role of the Minister in the appointment of the first Board and the need to provide clear guidance, but an acknowledgement that no such role was anticipated for subsequent boards.
- Whether a term limit of two years for the first Board was more appropriate than the range proposed currently.
- The lack of obvious representation by Pasifika in the Board or advisory groups.

There were suggestions that the:

- governance arrangements for the Workforce Development Councils should be standardised

- Co-Chair roles should be converted in a Chair and Deputy Chair arrangement.
- adjective ‘relevant’ be applied to the identified experience in the skills required of Boards and Board members.
- there may be other mechanisms to achieve representation of Māori on the Board.

Possible coverage issues relating to glass manufacturing and food processing were raised, but there was limited evidence in support of the change.

Questions and responses

Q. Is the intention to have one qualification per trade or skill?

A. Progress has been made to simplify the qualification system through the introduction of New Zealand Qualifications. Workforce Development Councils will have a role in setting skill standards and endorsing provider programmes, but a single qualification model is one of many possible outcomes.

Q. How do engineers work out which Workforce Development Council to work with?

Most engineering employers will be covered by the Manufacturing, Engineering and Logistics Workforce Development Council. Those involved in building physical assets will be covered by the Construction and Infrastructure Workforce Development Council.

Standard-setting will be led by Manufacturing, Engineering and Logistics, but close collaboration with Construction and Infrastructure will be necessary.

Q. Doesn't the funding prioritise completions too much resulting in too many learners passing without the skills and competencies employers need?

There is currently no direct mechanism (performance-linked funding was discontinued in 2018). Still, achievement rates of learners are taken into account in the TEC's investment decisions and the NZQA's quality assurance mechanisms.

Workforce Development Councils will work with employers to set skill standards, endorse programmes developed by providers and moderate assessments. These changes should improve the quality and relevance of vocational education.

Q. Are small niche industry quals currently delivered by small providers at risk through the new model?

By breaking the link between enrolment volumes and the funding of standard setting, the new system should strengthen responsiveness to industries with relatively few employees.

Q. Why is each Workforce Development Council developing its own proposal to the Minister of Education?

Each Workforce Development Council is a separate legal entity.

Q. Why are three stages for the establishment of Workforce Development Councils?

The Reform of Vocational Education programme team is assuming that there may be three stages. These involve:

- an interim Establishment Board to develop the proposal to establish the Workforce Development Council.
- an Establishment Board to get the Workforce Development Council up and running over the first two years
- an ongoing Board to govern the Workforce Development Council on an ongoing basis.

This approach assumes that the latter two boards will require different skill sets and that the appointments process for the Establishment Board may tend to prioritise speed.

It is up to the interim Establishment Board to determine with industry whether this distinction is relevant or necessary.