

## Tertiary Education Report: Ōritetanga Learner Success – realising system-wide equity

<b>Date:</b>	5 August 2021	<b>TEC priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>Report no:</b>	B-21-00459
		<b>Minister's office No:</b>	

ACTION SOUGHT		
	Action sought	Deadline
<b>Hon Chris Hipkins</b> Minister of Education	<p><b>note</b> the TEC's update on its Learner Success programme of work to realise system-wide equity in the tertiary education sector.</p> <p><b>note</b> this paper incorporates our report back to you on the use of Equity underspends to support our learner success pilot projects.</p> <p><b>agree</b> that the TEC share this briefing with Associate Education Ministers.</p> <p><b>agree</b> that the TEC release this briefing in full.</p>	31 August 2021
<b>Enclosure:</b> Yes	<b>Round Robin:</b> No	

CONTACT FOR TELEPHONE DISCUSSION (IF REQUIRED)				
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact	
9(2)(a)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		
Paora Ammunson	DCE, Learner Success Ōritetanga	9(2)(a)	✓	

**THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES HAVE SEEN THIS REPORT**

- DPMC   
  MPI   
  ENZ   
  ERO   
  MBIE   
  MoE   
  MFAT  
 MPP   
 MSD   
 NZQA   
 NZTE   
 TEC   
 TPK   
 Treasury

<b>Minister's Office to Complete:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Noted	<input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change
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Seen

Overtaken by Events

See Minister's Notes

Withdrawn

**Comments:**

## Executive Summary

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1. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Vision is: “A resilient prosperous New Zealand – where every person has the skills, knowledge and confidence to create a fulfilling life.” This requires a tertiary education system which is fit for purpose, and is able to respond to the needs of all learners.
2. Currently, the tertiary education system does not work well for many Māori, Pacific, disabled and low income Pākeha learners.
3. The, literally, hundreds of small, one-off, bespoke, interventions which agencies and tertiary education organisations (TEOs) have implemented over decades are not making the change required for true system-wide gains in equity and learner outcomes.
4. Over the past three years, the TEC has been collating robust evidence about what really makes a difference. What the TEC has seen is that effective investment in learner outcomes requires an intentional, holistic, whole of TEO commitment to action; to put learners at the centre of everything they do.
5. Based on evidence gathered from international and local best practice the TEC has now designed and tested a Learner Success Framework (the Framework). The Framework has been tested with partners from the university, polytechnic and wānanga sectors. Research also shows that there will be a significant return on investment for TEO partners from implementing the Framework.
6. The TEC is now looking to implement this approach at scale. This will be the first higher education programme of its kind at a national level. There is an opportunity to lead the world in delivering an education system that truly works for all our learners and to realise system-wide equity in New Zealand.
7. Running in parallel, and to ensure the TEC supports TEOs, the TEC will also need to change its own operating model to be more equity-minded, culturally affirming, and learner and whānau centric in how it works. The TEC is working to ensure that its careers and investment roles are aligned to support TEO transformation.

## Recommendations

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**Hon Chris Hipkins**, Minister of Education

*It is recommended that you:*

1. **note** the TEC's update on its Learner Success programme of work to realise system-wide equity in the tertiary education sector,
2. **note** this paper incorporates our report back to you on the use of Equity underspends to support our learner success pilot projects;
3. **agree** that the TEC share this briefing with Associate Education Ministers; and
4. **agree** that the TEC release this briefing in full.

agree /  disagree



**Paora Ammunson**

Deputy Chief Executive, Learner Success Ōritetanga  
Tertiary Education Commission

29 July 2021



**Hon Chris Hipkins**

Minister of Education

28 / 08 / 2021

## Purpose

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1. This briefing provides you with an update on the Learner Success programme of work the TEC is leading in order to realise system-wide equity in the tertiary education sector.

## Learner success is essential to a successful and thriving New Zealand

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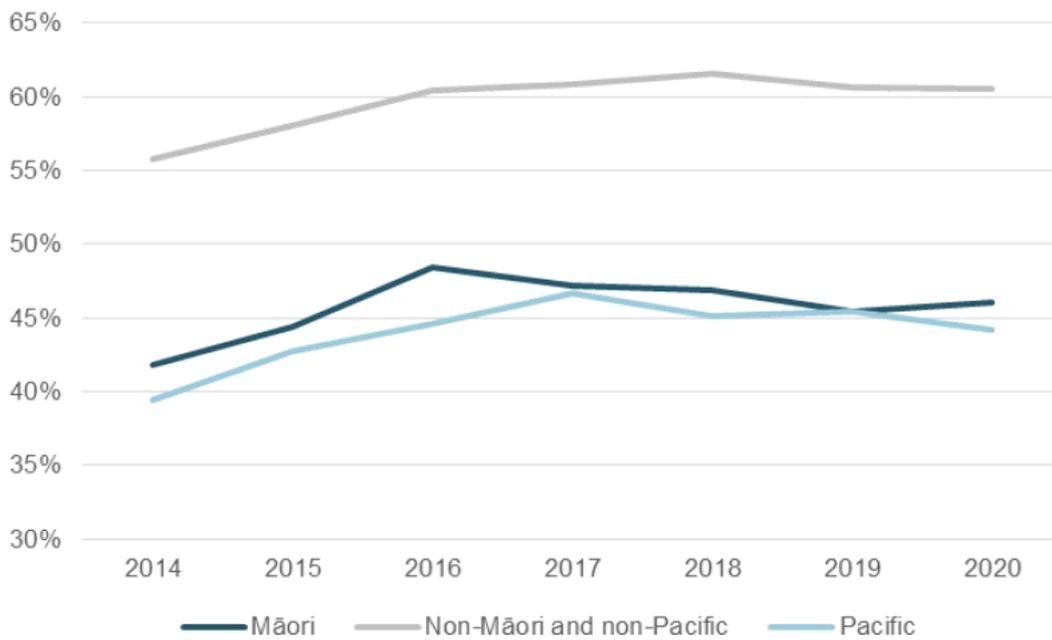
2. All learners should receive the support they need to succeed in education, and achieve sustainable employment and lead fulfilling lives. Education – and in particular tertiary education - is the key that unlocks social mobility. It is also key for a workforce that is highly skilled and driving economic growth.
3. However, the current tertiary education system does not always deliver an education experience appropriate to the needs of a large group of learners. Māori, Pacific and disabled learners are over-represented in this group. The system also underserves large numbers of low income Pākeha learners.
4. These learner groups all face barriers that affect their participation and successful completion of tertiary study. There are well publicised flow-on impacts for Māori, Pacific and disabled communities, as well as the New Zealand economy and society.
5. There have been hundreds of equity focused interventions across the tertiary education system to support under-served learners, with mixed results. Pilot projects come and go, but the necessary system level change to achieve parity of participation and achievement remains elusive. In many ways, these well-intentioned interventions have been a distraction from a focus on system-wide approaches.
6. The system needs to take a holistic and ‘whole of ecosystem’ approach to learner success. Evidence from other jurisdictions that have been able to make a real difference for all learners, demonstrates the need to drive a transformational shift in culture, mind-set and attitude and to ask two critical questions:
  - how can the system transform to become learner-centric?
  - in what ways is the design and implementation of the system (and TEOs) actually part of the problem?

## The tertiary education system does not work well for all learners

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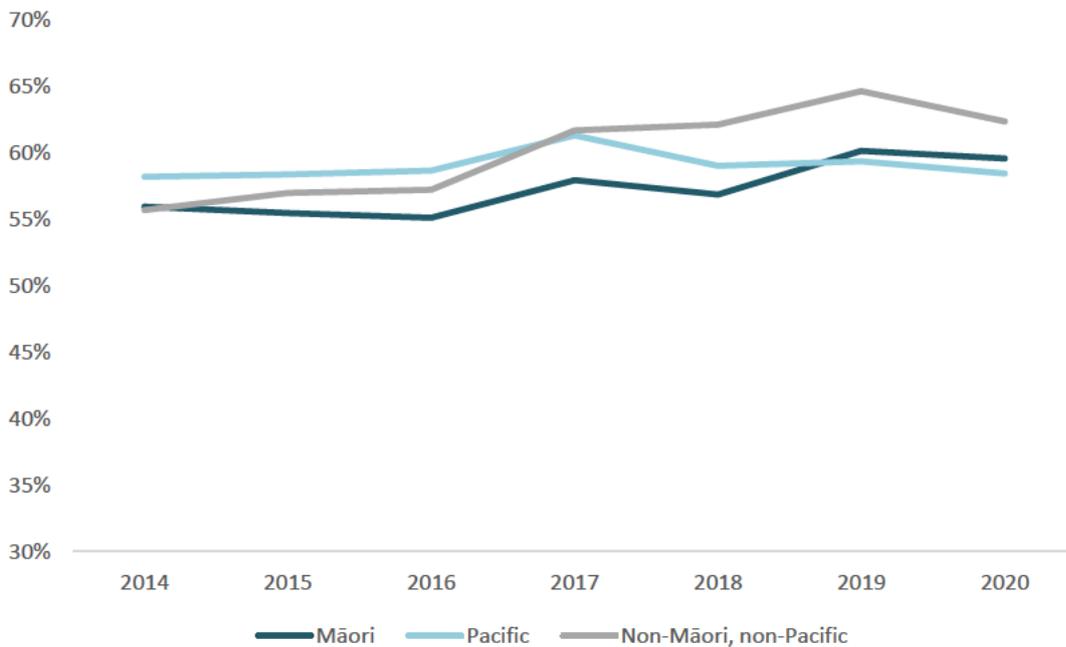
7. As noted above, each year the tertiary education system does not deliver an education experience appropriate to the needs of a large group of learners. Māori and Pacific people are over-represented in this group, with on average lower retention and completion rates than non-Māori and non-Pacific learners. Māori and Pacific people are also more likely to be from socio-economically disadvantaged circumstances.
8. While recent trends show that Māori and Pacific people are increasingly participating and achieving in tertiary education, many of these learners still tend to be concentrated in lower levels of study, and outcomes are poorer in comparison to other learners. This is particularly the case at higher levels of study, where tertiary education makes the biggest difference in people’s lives.
9. Less than half of all Māori and Pacific learners who enrol in a bachelor’s degree complete their qualification in 6 years, compared with more than 62% for all other learners. This parity gap is illustrative of many other gaps in the system and has been consistent despite overall increases to completion rates for all learners, as shown in figure 1:

**Figure 1: 6-Year Qualification Completion rates (level 7 degrees)**



10. In the Vocational Education and Training (VET) space, Māori and Pacific completion rates are also lower than for non-Māori, non-Pacific learners. The disparity has reduced in 2020 compared to previous years. The disparity between Māori and non-Māori, non-Pacific learners at levels 3 to 7 non-degree is 3 percentage points compared with a 17 percentage point difference at than at degree level.

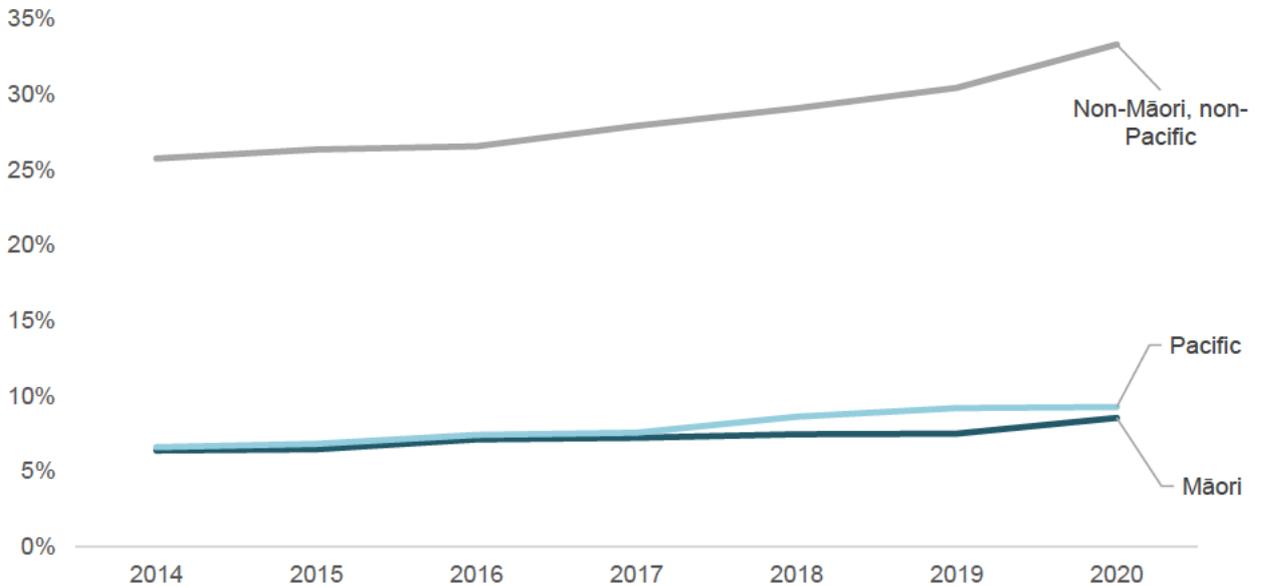
**Figure 2: 6-Year Qualification Completion rates (level 3- 7 non-degree)**



11. There are currently hundreds of initiatives in the tertiary sector designed to help Māori and Pacific learners. Yet, as can be seen in figure 2, these have not closed the achievement gap between Māori, Pacific and non-Māori, non-Pacific learners. In terms of gaining a bachelors qualification, the equity gap between Māori and Pacific learners and non-Māori, non-Pacific learners is as

great as it was six years ago. If the sector keeps doing what it has been doing, there will be no to little change in Māori and Pacific tertiary achievement.

**Figure 3: Percentage of school leavers achieving a bachelors qualification five years**



12. Māori and Pacific learners are underserved at every step in their journey through the compulsory and tertiary education system. Only 15% of Māori and 21% of Pacific learners gain University Entrance compared to 43% of non-Māori, non-Pacific learners. Of those Māori and Pacific learners who gain University Entrance, only 58% of Māori and 49% of Pacific learners gain a bachelors qualification, compared to 77% of non-Māori, non-Pacific learners. This pattern holds true for all Māori learners entering the tertiary system- even for those who have had relatively successful school or kura experiences.
13. There is variance between universities in how well they serve Māori and Pacific learners. However, at no university do Māori or Pacific learners complete bachelors qualifications at the same rate as non-Māori, non-Pacific learners.

**Figure 4: Qualification completion rates for Māori and Pacific learners compared to sector average of non-Māori, non-Pacific learners 2020 (level 7 degrees) - universities**



## **There is a strategic mandate to achieve equity**

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14. The new Tertiary Education Strategy and National Education and Learning Priorities place learners at the centre of the education system. It is important that the education system sharpens its focus on equity, to support learner success, as well as New Zealand's economic recovery.
15. Responding to the objectives of the Tertiary Education Strategy and National Education and Learning Priorities, the TEC Board has agreed a strategy that provides an overarching framework for all of TEC's work to drive change across the entire system.
16. 'Ōritetanga'- equity, is one of the three goals of the TEC's strategy, which focuses on shaping a more responsive system. To achieve this, we have developed a learner success programme of work which will enable us to drive system wide equity of participation and educational achievement.
17. The TEC's learner success programme was developed to ensure all parts of the system are working to support success, specifically:
  - learners and their influencers have the support and experiences to make good educational and career choices
  - communities and industry have an empowered voice in shaping the system (e.g. iwi/Māori and Pacific communities, businesses and industry)
  - capable, focused and accountable TEOs and sector leadership at all levels
  - TEC investment processes support and incentivise good outcomes for all learners
  - TEC itself has the internal capability and external relationships required to drive change.
18. The problems are systemic, entrenched and long-standing. Achieving the solutions will likewise be a long-term play, but it can be done if a whole of system approach is taken to focus on adopting a truly learner-centric approach.

## **TEC will need to use all of its system-wide levers**

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19. In order to achieve system level transformation, the TEC will need to use its entire suite of levers in a deliberate and intentional way. TEC needs to send strong signals to the sector and wider stakeholders, that learner success is a priority. Four key levers are:
  - Investment needs to provide the right incentives to all parts of the system to focus on the needs of learners
  - Monitoring needs to be targeted and meaningful. There should be consequences for poor TEO performance
  - Careers information and tools need to redress the information imbalance in the system and allow learners and their whānau to make the best education choices for them
  - The TEC itself needs to lead by example and be much more of a learner centric, equity minded and culturally affirming organisation.

## **Designing an investment approach to drive learner success and equity**

20. Investment is one of the most effective tools the TEC has to deliver on its strategic goals of equity, skills and employability, and system responsiveness. We are considering how our investment can be enhanced to drive the broader strategic outcomes needed, regionally and nationally.

21. The TEC’s Investment Function Redesign programme will result in a more strategic approach to using its levers to fulfil its purpose and realise the vision, as well as designing a more efficient process that supports TEOs to be more future and improvement focused.
22. Building on work over the past few years the TEC is intensifying use of Learner Success Plans (LSP). LSPs are a relatively new key funding tool for achieving equity at the TEO level and are a key way of TEC meetings the Government’s TES expectations. All TEOs which receive more than \$5m in TEC funding are now required to develop an LSP as an integral part of their Investment Plan. TEC’s assessment of LSPs is used to inform investment decisions and requests for additional funding. Performance against LSP commitments is actively monitored as part of TEC’s Relationship Management function.
23. Complementing LSPs, the TEC is finalising the design of Disability Action Plans (DAP) which will also soon be required of all TEOs. DAPs will need to link closely to guidelines set out in Kia Ōrite – the NZ Code of Practice for an Inclusive Tertiary Education Environment for Students with Impairments.
24. The TEC is also integrating thinking on investment for equity with its work with the Ministry of Education (MoE) on the design of the new Unified Funding System, and particularly the learner based component of this system.

**Case Study: Using LSPs to drive change at Massey**

In 2018, the TEC initiated a process with Massey to develop and implement a learner success plan to lift its low educational performance, particularly for Māori and Pacific students. In this instance, the LSP was tied to funding and we withheld a portion of Massey’s indicative allocation on the understanding that it would need to submit an adequate plan for us to release the funding.

Engagements with Massey over the last three years have identified deficits, skills gaps, and issues related to understanding learner cohorts through a comprehensive data analytics approach, and the commitment of the Senior Leadership Team to fully understand Massey’s data and review low performing programmes to address parity gaps.

Given the size and geographic spread of Massey, and the importance of their role within the wider tertiary sector, whole-of-organisation change will take time. Recently, we have seen a greater willingness from Massey to shift its institutional focus to learner success, including acknowledging embedded institutional barriers. The Senior Leadership Team has indicated its ownership and accountability of performance, alongside building a relationship between the TEC’s Board and Massey’s Council. This is reflected in Massey’s most recent LSP, where they have used the principles of the Framework to develop ‘Pūrehuroatanga’ - a whole-of-institution approach to learner success.

9(2)(b)(ii) & 9(2)(g)(i)

[REDACTED]

## **Developing Careers tools to inspire and support confidence**

25. The TEC's Careers Strategy work includes an embedded commitment to supporting equitable learner outcomes, including:

- designing an iwi engagement strategy for careers
- integrating careers tools (e.g. Tiro Whetū) into wrap around services, targeting those most at risk, including partnering with iwi and Pacific communities
- developing a clearer careers focus into investment decisions, including support for increased work- integrated learning
- supporting the development of Inspiring the Future for kura kaupapa and low-decile schools

## **Stakeholder engagement to support a learner's ecosystem**

26. Learners have their own connections and relationships affecting their lives e.g. with family, friends, wider whānau, iwi, employers and community groups. The education system needs to better understand, respond to, and leverage those relationships to ensure tertiary education best meets the needs of learners wherever they are.

27. The TEC has a number of pieces of work underway related to this goal:

- developing RSLG and WDC relationships, supporting Te Taumata Aronui and implementing a stakeholder approach to enhance community and iwi voice
- partnering proactively with Te Pūkenga to ensure their operating models are grounded in the principles of the learner success approach, e.g. members of the Ōritetanga team have been embedded to support the Te Pūkenga Akonga at the Centre research work across the country
- working with the wānanga sector to support their self-led adoption of learner success approaches that work for them
- engaging widely with key groups working for disabled and neuro-divergent learners, care experienced learners and refugee background learners. These relationships have been essential in developing investment tools and guidance, and informing wider policy work.

## **He Marae Tangata – building a learner centric, equity minded and culturally affirming organisation**

28. The TEC has a significant role in the tertiary education system, providing funding, information and guidance to TEOs and careers support to learners and their whānau. The TEC needs to manage all of these functions in a way that considers the impact on learner outcomes and avoids inadvertently creating barriers to system-wide equity. That means, that the TEC itself needs to develop an intentionally learner-centric focus.

29. The TEC has recently initiated an internal staff capability project - He Marae Tangata - to build expertise across all its work and to transform our own organisational culture.

30. A fundamental part of this work will focus on us honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and meeting the specific needs and aspirations of Māori learners. The TEC is considering how it can embed Te Ao Māori considerations across all of it's work and strengthen mātauranga Māori in the tertiary system more broadly.

## **An equity-minded operating model: supporting TEO capability**

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### **Developing sector capability in learner success requires a holistic focus on leadership, data and interventions**

31. TEOs which have made significant progress in improving achievement for under-served groups of learners, such as Georgia State University in the US, have achieved success through a 'Learner Success' approach.
32. Evidence shows that TEOs that want to make a difference for learners need to shift from individual interventions and pockets of focus to a systemic "whole of ecosystem" (i.e. all of organisation) learner focus in all aspects of their operations. An holistic approach is required, involving several key elements:
  - strong leadership within TEOs and in relationships with key partners (including employers, family, whānau, iwi)
  - systems and processes designed with the learner in mind, including teaching and learning environments
  - a 'guided pathways' approach that makes it clear to learners before they enrol what they need to do to gain a qualification and where their qualification will lead them, and
  - data and technology solutions that can be used to appropriately track learner progress.
33. All of these components need to be in place in order to significantly improve learner success. Currently, most TEOs focus predominantly on developing and delivering stand-alone interventions to improve performance for under-learner groups such as Māori and Pacific People, often without organisational leadership or a deep understanding of these learners. Universities have reported a stocktake of over 340 separate initiatives which have been implemented to improve education outcomes for Māori or Pacific learners; and yet stubborn equity gaps remain.
34. These programmes are, by and large, pilots in nature, often poorly targeted or not timely, and not typically systematised.
35. The current TEC investment process has revealed that TEOs are generally very poor at conducting their own data analysis to drive equity goals or to align or deploy interventions, particularly for individual learners. Overall, TEO strategies are poor at setting and monitoring meaningful and measurable goals toward achieving parity.

### **The learner is at the centre of the Framework**

36. Based on robust evidence, the TEC has developed and tested a Learner Success Framework (see the Framework at Appendix 1) for the Aotearoa New Zealand context. This framework has been updated as a result of feedback from partner TEOs and project evaluation.
37. The Framework is essentially a blue print for change transformation. It provides TEOs with an approach for putting learners at the heart of what they do, and is designed to address the biases and disparities that have resulted in the tertiary education system under-serving specific learner groups.
38. The learner is at the heart of this approach, so that across the whole of the tertiary education system, the question is continually asked of what will this mean for learners? TEO's need to know who their learners are, and ask these questions:
  - where do our learners come from?
  - what do they do outside of tertiary education?
  - what else could be happening in their lives?

- what do they need to succeed?
- what do we do that works for them?
- what do we do that doesn't?

39. TEOs can, then, start thinking about how they design and implement everything they do to maximise learner success. A key success is a mindset shift from 'learners are the problem' to 'we are the problem'.

### **An intentional & holistic approach to learner success is required**

40. The first phase of the Framework – the learner success diagnostic – is an assessment of TEOs' current state against specific learner success capabilities. These are the key elements TEOs need to get right in order to enable learners to succeed – whatever that looks like for each learner. The key elements are:

- **People, culture & leadership** - the commitment and collaboration of the TEO's leadership with respect to learner success, and the clarity of vision for desired change.
- **Data & technology** - the capacity and capability to collect, assess, analyse and use data to inform decisions, and to use technology to support learner success.
- **Guided pathways** - clear and relevant educational pathways, from first engagement to employment, that foster learner success.
- **Holistic student supports** – planning and integration of critical student academic and personal supports into a seamless, timely, and personal experience for every student.
- **Student-centric systems** - policies and practices that impact learner success, and the processes for reviewing and aligning policies and practices to remove barriers and enable learner success.
- **Teaching & learning** - review and re-design of pedagogy, meaningful professional development, learning environments and contexts.
- **Partnerships** - the development and support of partnerships between the TEO and relevant employers/industry, family & whānau, community groups, social agencies and education providers.

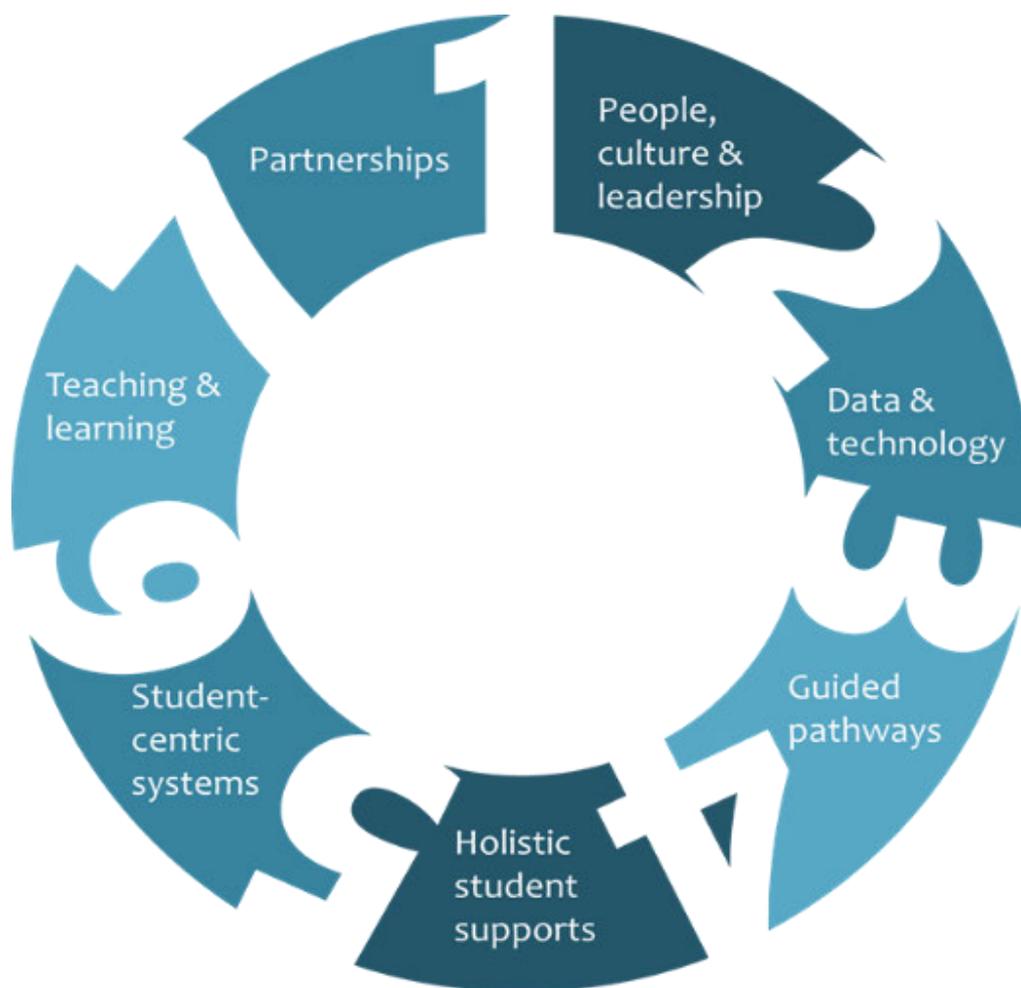


Figure 2: Learner Success Framework – TEO capabilities

## **An equity-minded operating model: testing the Framework**

### **The TEC has partnered with TEOs to trial the Learner Success Framework (the Framework)**

41. Over the last two years the TEC has developed the Framework and piloted the approach with four TEOs:
- Waikato Institute of Technology
  - Te Wānanga o Raukawa
  - University of Waikato
  - Manukau Institute of Technology
42. All four pilot projects are now complete and required co-investment from TEOs alongside the TEC. These pilot projects were funded from underspends in Equity Funding, as per your delegation of 2019.
43. The four partner TEOs were engaged to undertake pilot projects that aimed to:
- determine the suitability and utility of the Framework across different sectors; and

- provide recommendations and insights into ways of improving and implementing the Framework.

44. The following table sets out a summary of each project, including the level of TEC funding provided (TEOs were required to at least match this level of funding). Impacts on learner outcomes and equity will only be fully measurable once the processes and changes identified become more mature and entrenched within the partner TEOs. However, there have been clear and immediate impacts [see Wintec Case Study below]. Combined with global insights from adopting whole of organisations approaches. The TEC is now confident in the Framework.

<b>Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec)</b>	<b>\$430,000</b>
<p>Wintec was the first and longest running of the partner projects. They tested the first four phases of the Framework - from diagnostic to strategy development. By using human-centred design methodologies, Wintec developed a deep and comprehensive student journey mapping process. The Wintec research approach has now been adopted to help inform Te Pūkenga's new operating model for all sixteen of its subsidiaries. A case-study of one of Wintec's Ōritetanga initiatives is included below. In addition, and by way of global endorsement, Achieving the Dream (the US equity network of community colleges) recently published a new guidebook for colleges on collecting and analysing learner data, which includes Wintec's learner journey mapping process as part of the toolkit for US colleges.</p>	
<b>Te Wānanga o Raukawa (TWO R)</b>	<b>\$375,000</b>
<p>Changing learner demographics and demand necessitated TWO R to undertake a radical shift in the way they design and deliver their education offerings, by moving most of their content into a blended delivery model.</p> <p>The TEC partnered with TWO R to support them in undertaking this business transformation project, which involved them using a kaupapa Māori lens closely aligned with the Framework, to provide insights into how a wānanga might adapt the Framework to their particular cultural setting. TWO R is now leveraging the technology partnerships they have formed through this work to partner with leading global IT companies to grow their delivery.</p>	
<b>University of Waikato (UoW)</b>	<b>\$297,500</b>
<p>UoW's project focus was to create a robust system of learner insights by building their data analytical capability. This approach enabled them to identify teaching and learning gaps, trends, and patterns to build responsive information technology systems that allow pro-active approaches to strengthen student success. For its use of data, UoW received a 2020 Council of Australasian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT) award for its use of data to improve learner success.</p> <p>This year, UoW is progressing the work started under the pilot to enhance its student support and advice services.</p>	
<b>Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT)</b>	<b>\$331,200</b>
<p>The TEC partnered with MIT to test the first four phases of the Framework, from diagnostic to strategy development. The project builds on MIT's successful Hōkūle'a Project which increased the retention rates of Māori and Pacific learners in levels 1 -3 provision, through an early assessment of needs and provision of holistic support (academic, pastoral and cultural). Like Wintec, the work MIT has done as part of the pilot will be used to support the development of Te Pūkenga's operating model.</p>	

## **An equity-minded operating model: evaluating the Framework**

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45. From September 2019 to early 2021, an evaluation was undertaken alongside the four LSP pilots.
46. The aim of this evaluation was to provide the TEC with:
- an understanding of how the Framework and tools could be further refined
  - the key findings from the pilots of the Framework in different educational contexts; and
  - the key learnings at TEO and system level to consider in scaling learner success approaches across the entire tertiary system.
47. The Framework had initially been developed by the TEC based on what was judged as best-practice internationally, including Georgia State University and the Achieving the Dream network of community colleges in the US.
48. The TEC Framework has been endorsed by these global experts and has now even been adopted by other overseas jurisdictions (the Framework is being used by the Washington State Community College system as part of its learner success toolkit).
49. The current pilot projects road-tested the suitability, utility and real world impacts of the key elements of the Framework to an Aotearoa New Zealand context.

## **The evaluation has demonstrated the value of the Framework...**

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50. Initial evaluation findings have demonstrated the benefits of the Framework in providing a structured process and approach for the TEOs to use, adapt, and embed new processes to become more learner focused.
51. While the Framework has been refined along the way, there is confidence, both within the TEC and among TEOs, that is fundamentally the right approach to addressing disparities in outcomes of learners in tertiary education. The main themes and findings from the evaluation to date are:
- the suitability and utility of the elements of the Framework in an Aotearoa NZ context was endorsed
  - TEOs took ownership of learner success approaches
  - TEOs shifted their mind-sets towards different ways of doing business
  - TEOs understood the scope of work required for large scale change
  - the Framework has been aligned with mātauranga Māori considerations (in the case of the TWR pilot), but this should be made more visible in a future iteration of the Framework
  - learner success approaches have already made meaningful progress during the challenging period since mid-2020.

## **... and the Framework has been updated to reflect the learnings**

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52. Based on initial evaluation findings as well as other engagements with TEO partners (including a two-day workshop with Te Pūkenga), the Framework has been further updated.
53. A new first step (“Preparing to Success”) has been added which recognises the need for TEOs to understand and commit to the scope and scale of change required in implementing the Framework before they even begin this journey. This steps allows them to make up-front, informed decisions to fully commit to the mahi.

54. Explicit consideration of the links to Te Tiriti o Waitangi have been included. In particular, questions in the diagnostic tool have been amended to emphasise the importance of a tertiary system that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
55. Refinements to the Framework, as well as development tools and resources to support the phases, will continue as more detailed lessons learned from the evaluation become available.

### **Case Study: Wintec New Student Enrolment and Retention**

Based on lessons from its learner success project, Wintec has designed and implemented a New Student Enrolment and Retention (NSEAR) programme. The project has been implemented across the 25 programmes with the lowest completions and highest attrition for Māori and Pacific Learners.

The project is data driven and looks at what interventions are needed and then creates an implementation plan by programme.

Through the NSEAR programme, Wintec is able to identify exactly where in the journey students are withdrawing from courses (e.g. they can see where young Māori women are exiting and at what point in the semester). The NSEAR project team collaborated with Māori staff to make sense of the student journey in a way that both Māori and non-Māori staff understand.

The results in the first two years of the project are promising. Wintec now has a precise picture of points of attrition, scale of attrition, and remediations:

- in NSEAR programmes, a three year trend of falling course completion rates for Māori and Pacific learners was reversed
- course completion rates for Māori learners rose from 62% to 68% in 2020
- course completion rates for Pacific learners rose from 64% to 67% in 2020  
*[for context: since 2010, Wintec's average annual course completion rate increase for all learners has only been 0.2 percentage points]*
- retention also increased by close to 25%, meaning that 325 more Māori and Pacific learners remained enrolled when compared to 2019.

At an institutional level, the case management support offered during and post lockdown for those learners who were absent from class showed positive results, with 84% of those taura who were case managed remaining on track with their learning.

## **The TEC is now moving to the next phase of the learner success project**

56. Lessons from the pilot projects have also been used to develop a plan for rolling out adoption of the Framework across the entire tertiary education sector through 2021 and out-years, including progressively uploading tools and information for the tertiary education sector to use.
57. In particular the TEC is working in partnership with Te Pūkenga to support it to adopt the Framework across its network of subsidiaries (in response to your Letter of Expectations to Te Pūkenga). This approach has been a key factor in Te Pūkenga's development of its new operating model.
58. A key element of the roll out includes the continued use of Equity Funding in 2021 underspends to accelerate the approach with specific TEOs and to expand understanding of how the Framework can be used.
59. In addition to this funding, your proposal to allow the TEC discretionary use of a proportion of SAC level 3+ funding will enable the TEC to make more targeted investment decisions to more effectively support the Government's strategic goals outlined in the Tertiary Education Strategy and Ka Hikitia | The Māori Education Strategy.

60. This funding would enable the TEC to build on the initial Learner Success pilot projects and co-fund projects with the sector at scale, which clearly align with supporting or improving teaching and learning services or outcomes for enrolled students.
61. The TEC is now looking for partners across tertiary subsectors who are willing to implement the Framework in totality and change their whole-of-organisation operating models.
62. The TEC has recently invited applications for funding from selected TEOs. The focus is on projects which will:
- provide lessons for the further design and implementation of the Framework; and
  - have the greatest impact and influence across the rest of the system.
63. Funding decisions will be made by the end of July, and the TEC will update you on decisions and provide a description of the selected projects.
64. Another important initiative is the establishment of a Learner Success Community of Practice. This will be supported by the TEC but owned by the sector, as a vital means of sharing best practice, raising awareness and providing ongoing mutual support to build learner success capability and capacity across the whole of the sector. 9(2)(j)

## **An equity-minded operating model: related projects and engagement**

65. In addition to the four pilots, funding has been used to support other key projects to build awareness and accelerate the change needed across the system.

### **Kia Ōrite**

66. The TEC provided \$87,500 to fund the University of Otago to update Kia Ōrite – the NZ Code of Practice for an Inclusive Tertiary Education Environment for Students with Impairments. The Code is due to be completed and re-launched by the end of the year and will be instrumental in supporting TEOs to develop their Disability Action Plans (DAPs) from 2023.

### **University of Canterbury**

67. The TEC has worked with the University of Canterbury (UC) for the last 2 years on its approach to learner success. This started with its attendance at the TEC's Ōritetanga conference. The appointment of Professor Cheryl de la Rey as the Vice Chancellor around this time led to UC developing a new organisational strategy with a much clearer focus on driving equity through all aspects of the University. The leadership of the Vice Chancellor and Chancellor have been instrumental in UC's commitment to transforming the institution.
68. In 2020 members of the UC learner success team attended the TEC-led trip to the United States, including attending the Achieving the Dream conference, and meeting higher education agencies and institutions in Tennessee and Georgia. This supported UC to develop international connections and refine its strategies.
69. UC has now developed a University wide change programme to systematically drive equity and has commitment to significantly investing in this transformation over the next 3-4 years. It will deliver across three key focus areas and 7 new initiatives.

70. The work involves developing new initiatives, like co-requisite courses<sup>1</sup> and the Takere Academy described below, and enhancing existing services and investing in technology to support the whole ecosystem, like Analytics for Course Engagement:

- *Takere Success Academy* – Over summer 2020/21, we supported the University of Canterbury (\$158,000) to implement its Takere Success Academy: a scholarship offered for Māori and Pacific students to develop skills and confidence focusing on strengthening relationships, study skills, and resilience necessary for academic success. Initial evaluations have shown that it has been successful. 92% of students felt more prepared academically and 82% reported developing independent study skills. Learners also reported reduce fear of failure and increased sense of belonging. Lecturers have reported that not only are Takere students much more confident and independent but this is noticeably enabling other learners.

*“During Semester 1 2021, academic lecturing staff noted that, in a large 100-level management course, Takere students always attend class, sit in front, and are engaged and participatory. This was identified as creating a positive ripple effect to other ākongā Māori feeling emboldened by their behaviour and learning practices.”*

- *Analytics for Course Engagement* - which combines technology with coordinated proactive outreach to support students at risk of lower achievement or dropping out. UC trialled this initially in semester 2, 2020. During this time 1777 students were contacted. 44% reengaged after the first text message. Students can also see how they are progressing in self-directed learning compared to their peers through student dashboards.

## Universities New Zealand Research Project

71. A further \$110,000 has been used to support a tripartite project between the University of Canterbury (project sponsor), Universities New Zealand (UNZ) and the TEC to undertake an initial investigation to understand, identify and set out the potential opportunities to address the systemic barriers to universities delivering the outcomes they seek for all learners. The universities have taken a whole university system approach to the research.
72. The initial research showed significant potential return on investment for individual universities. The estimated cost to universities due to “summer melt” (attrition after pre-enrolment and before commencement) and first year student attrition is approximately \$909m per annum. This figure is based on preliminary research which will be interrogated in more depth during the next phase of work.
73. This only serves to underscore the massive potential: for learners, the sector and society as a whole, if universities were to take a more learner-centric approach, like the one set out in the Framework.
74. This initial universities wide work will be followed by specific and more detailed business cases for change for each participating university. This will enable the TEC to work with the university system as a whole to drive a learner success approach across the total network of universities.

## Working with the Wānanga Sector

75. As you are aware, the education agencies have been working- under Minister Davis leadership- on a programme of work to support and end to end “Māori medium” system of knowledge. TEC and the education agencies have been working directly with the wānanga system on issues such as legislative form, more aligned funding, governance arrangements, and the future of mātauranga Māori.

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<sup>1</sup> A co-requisite course is a course that must be taken at the same time (concurrently) or earlier with another specified course.

76. There are also opportunities through this wider work to support a learner success approach that is specific to the wānanga system. The TEC has partnered with Te Wānanga o Raukawa to test our Learner Success Framework. We are also working closely with Te Wānanga of Aotearoa who are strongly committed to embedding the learner success framework across their delivery and to support their partnership with Te Pūkenga.
77. At a recent presentation to the TEC Board, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa updated us on their memorandum of understanding with Te Pūkenga, and in particular, talked through its commitment to learner success and how important the Framework has and will be in arranging training and delivering more learner-centric services.

## MAKING SURE IT LASTS

### Understand how

Develop data, systems and procedures to enable TEO's to identify when extra services need to be deployed

Ongoing advising touch points & methods and policies – enrolment support & outreach, first year program planning, goal setting

Develop holistic service support models, responsive to where learners are on their journey

## BUILD ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY & COMMITMENT

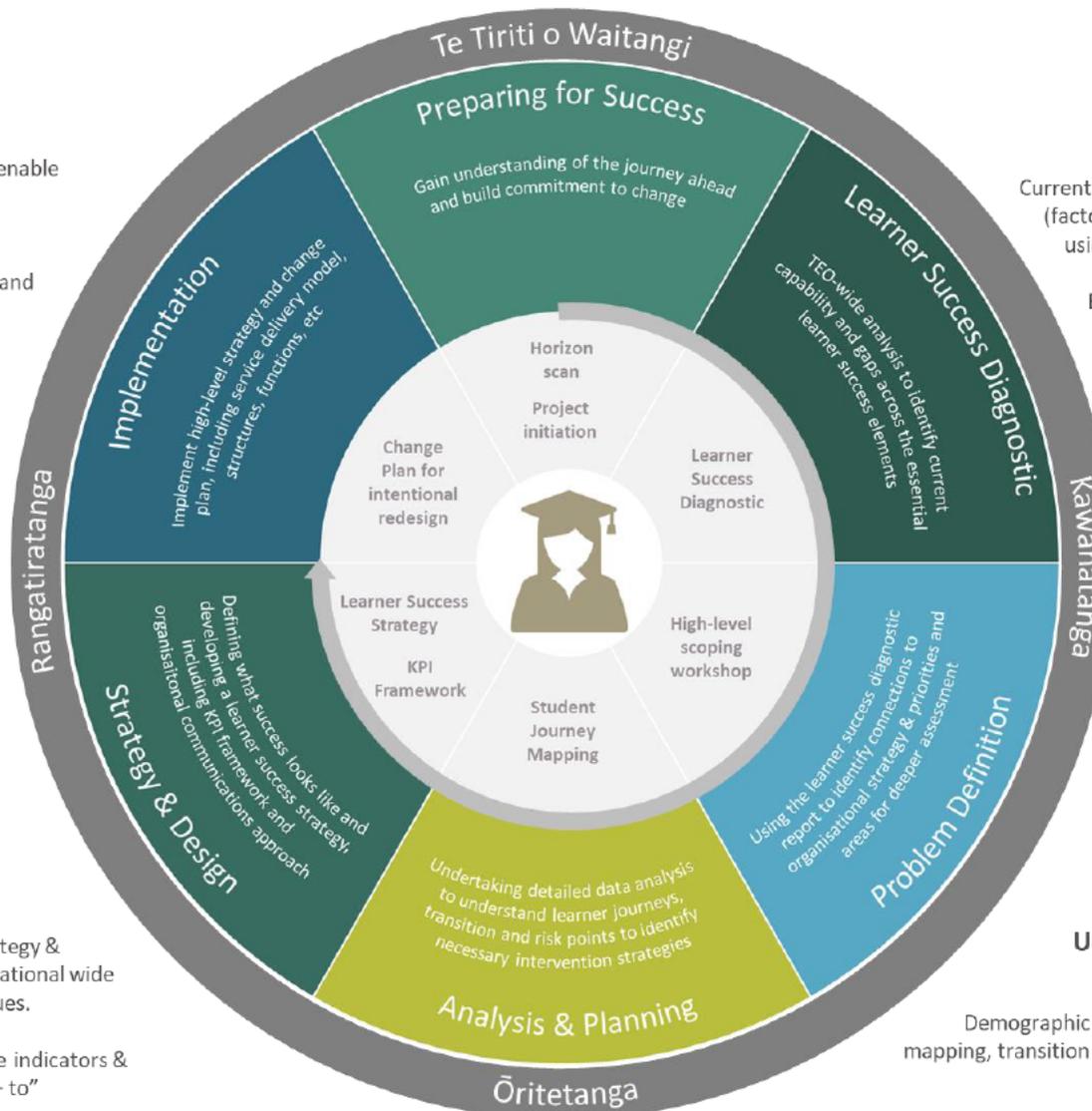
### Understand what

Develop a cohesive Learner Success Strategy & develop a change plan to ensure organisational wide input into learner success vision and values.

Establish a baseline for lead performance indicators & develop learner success strategy “from – to”

### Understand when

Develop design & implementation roadmap



## CREATING AWARENESS & DESIRE FOR CHANGE

### Understand why

Current state - analysis of learner success maturity (factors that impact participation & completion) using “whole of system” capability diagnostic.

Engage stakeholders and make the case for change by creating awareness of current Maturity levels and the relationship to current performance and future direction and strategies

## UNDERSTANDING LEARNER NEEDS

### Understand who

Demographic data analysis using cohort student journey mapping, transition connection and progression & completion. Develop risk segment cohorts.

Plot risk and attrition points. Assess effectiveness of current interventions and usage against risk segments (use of self-reflection documents and EER)

Develop end to end strategies & interventions aligned to attrition points: transition, connection progression & completion