

Event Backgrounder: Open Polytechnic Graduation Ceremony on Tuesday 11 May 2021

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education
From:	s9(2)(a)(i), Acting Manager Delivery and Projects
Date:	23 April 2021
Reference:	E-21-00162

Purpose

1. You are scheduled to attend the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand Graduation Ceremony on Tuesday 11 May 2021 at 3.30pm. The event will be held at the Michael Fowler Centre, 111 Wakefield Street, Wellington.
2. You have also been invited to prepare a speech for the ceremony. This speech includes a congratulatory note for Open Polytechnic's recent graduates and highlights the RoVE story where possible.
3. This backgrounder provides you with key information about Open Polytechnic, including issues that may be raised. The following have been attached as appendices:
 - a. Appendix A – Event Information Sheet and Run Sheet
 - b. Appendix B – Biographies of Key Attendees
 - c. Appendix C – Summary of Open Polytechnic's Funding for 2021
 - d. Appendix D – Evidence of Increased Learner Demand at Open Polytechnic
4. We recommend this event backgrounder be proactively released following the event.

About Open Polytechnic

5. Open Polytechnic traces its history back to 1946 when it first opened as the 'Technical Correspondence School'. The organisation underwent a major transformation in 1990 and was renamed 'The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand'. As its original name implied, Open Polytechnic has always specialised in distance and – in modern times – online learning.

6. Open Polytechnic is a subsidiary of Te Pūkenga, with a 2021 Current Approved Allocation of \$49.1 million.¹ This includes funding from the Targeted Training and Apprenticeship Fund (TTAF) to the value of just over \$2 million (refer to Appendix C). Open Polytechnic is funded to deliver provision to approximately 5,475 equivalent full-time students (EFTS) in 2021.²
7. Open Polytechnic is a Category 2 provider³ that exclusively delivers distance/online provision. It has one campus in Lower Hutt, Wellington.
8. Open Polytechnic delivers a wide range of tertiary programmes with the majority of learners studying at levels 3 and 4.⁴ The organisation offers programmes in the following areas: accounting; construction; business and management; education; engineering; applied science; horticulture and agriculture; information technology; and social work.

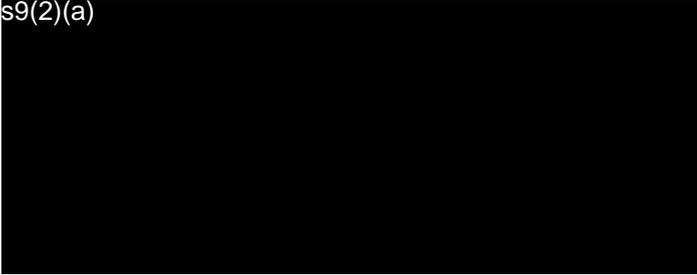
New Zealand’s Largest Distance and Online Educator at the Tertiary Level

9. Open Polytechnic is New Zealand’s largest provider of distance education. Its programmes are designed exclusively for distance learning, with online courses that include and blend such materials as readings, videos, quizzes, and student forums.

Matters they may raise with you

10. The Open Polytechnic is experiencing increased student demand and is wanting more funding to support this – TEC is currently considering a funding increase for Te Pūkenga which, if granted, would accommodate some of this demand. Indicative evidence of this increased demand can be found in the data table provided in Appendix D.

s9(2)(a)



Acting Manager Delivery and Projects, Delivery
Tertiary Education Commission

23 April 2021

¹ Data sourced from Qlik as at 14 April 2021, My Allocations and Payments App, using the Summary sheet with filters for reporting year (2021) and TEO (6022 – Open Polytechnic of New Zealand).

² Data sourced from Qlik as at 14 April 2021, My Commitments App, using the Summary sheet with filters for reporting year (2021) and TEO (6022 – Open Polytechnic of New Zealand).

³ New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), External Evaluation and Review Report, July 2015.

⁴ Data sourced from Qlik as at 15 April 2021, My Provision – SDR, using the ‘Enrolment Trends over time’ sheet with filters for reporting year (2020) and TEO (6022 – Open Polytechnic of New Zealand).

Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister of Education

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Appendix A: Event Information Sheet; and Run Sheet

Event Details	
Name of host organisation	The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand Ltd
Type of event the Minister is being invited to (e.g. conference, launch, cocktail function) and title of event	Graduation ceremony for our diploma and degree students
Day, date and timeframe of Minister's attendance	Tuesday 11 May from 3.15pm – 4.15pm
Venue (exact room, building and full physical address).	Michael Fowler Centre MFC Main Auditorium 111 Wakefield Street Wellington.
Purpose of event (objectives, planned outcomes)	To celebrate the achievements of our mainly adult learners who have completed their qualifications by distance learning – many of our graduates have studied while in the workforce and/or raising their family.
If the Minister is being asked to make a presentation to someone (e.g. an award), please provide details of what the presentation is, what the Minister is required to do, who the presentation is to	N/A
If a conference, please provide a programme for the full conference (or an indicative outline, with a full programme provided at a later stage), particularly indicating what is scheduled to take place <u>before</u> and <u>after</u> the Minister's speech	<p>3.15pm Official party gathers at the Michael Fowler Centre to get ready for the procession onto the stage - the official party includes our Executive management team, Board members, our academic staff, Hon Chris Hipkins, and any official guests.</p> <p>3.30pm Kapa haka group welcomes in graduates, followed by the official party procession past the audience and graduates. Followed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karakia and mihi by Wayne Glen - Singing of New Zealand National Anthem (words on back of programme and on overhead screen) - Welcome speech by OPNZ Board Chair (Vaughan Renner) - Approx 3.50pm - Introduction of Hon Chris Hipkins by OPNZ Board Chair - Speech by Hon Chris Hipkins - Approx 4.15*pm (depending on the length of the speech the Minister wishes to give) – Board Chair stands to shake Minister's hand and thank him;

	<p>Hon Chris Hipkins leaves the stage (exit is by the wings, an Open Polytechnic staff member will be on hand to guide the Minister back to the main entrance. Any staff accompanying the Minister are welcome to wait in the wings during his speech so they can join him immediately after).</p> <p>- Awarding of diplomas (followed by a graduate speech) and then degrees (followed by a graduate speech).</p> <p>* Please note, 4.15pm is our estimate of the latest the Minister will leave the ceremony, he may finish earlier based on the time we start and the length of his speech. If he has availability, the Minister is also more than welcome to stay with us for the entire ceremony, seated on stage for the duration until we conclude at approximately 6pm.</p>
If a launch/function, please provide a run-sheet including timings for the event	N/A
Who will be introducing/thanking the Minister?	OPNZ Board Chair, Vaughan Renner
Dress code	Business attire

Facilities	
How will the venue be set up? (e.g. lecture style with podium; or informal, people standing)	<p>The ceremony will be in the main hall of the Michael Fowler Centre.</p> <p>There will be a lectern, microphone and PA system. The Minister will be directed to a seat in the front row on stage, joined by OPNZ Board Chair, our Chief Executive Dr Caroline Seelig. Our Board and Executive members, staff and official guests are also sitting on the main stage.</p> <p>The graduates and their guests will be seated in the main seating area.</p>
Please indicate the facilities available to assist the Minister deliver the speech., e.g., Datashow, Overhead Projector, etc	We will have a lectern, microphone and if required there is a big screen available if there is anything the Minister wishes to show on screen.

Multi-cultural Dimension	
Please indicate whether it would be appropriate for the Minister to include a Māori, Pacific or other ethnic greeting at the start of his speech	He is more than welcome to include a te reo, Pasifika or ethnic greeting in his speech
Please advise if the Minister is to be involved in a more formal/specific Māori, Pacific or other ethnic dimension to your event (e.g. pōwhiri); the nature and timing of this; will he be required to respond, in English or Māori; and if Māori, can your organisation provide a speaker/singer on the	No. However, there will be a kapa haka performance at the beginning of the ceremony to welcome in the procession of Executive management team, Board members, our academic staff, Hon Chris Hipkins, and our official guests while they take their seats.

Ministers' behalf?	
Please indicate who the Minister should acknowledge (either as part of his greeting at the start of his speech, or as part of a more formal dimension)	OPNZ Board Chair Vaughan Renner, and OPNZ Chief Executive Dr Caroline Seelig.

Attendees	
Please provide a guest list if possible, or indicate the makeup of the audience	On stage will be representatives from Open Polytechnic's Executive Directors, Academic Staff, and Board Members.
Are other Ministers and/or MPs being invited to attend? If so, who?	No
Please indicate any other important guests the Minister should be aware of	N/A
How many people in total are being invited or are expected to attend?	Approximately 1,000 (includes approximately 210 graduates and their guests).
Is an admission fee being charged?	No

Speeches	
Length of speech requested (Note the standard length of speech is 5-7 mins.)	5-7 minutes
Is there to be a Question and Answer session following the speech? If so, how long will this session be?	No
Who else has been invited to speak? In particular, are other Ministers or MPs being invited to speak?	Dr Caroline Seelig will give the closing speech. Two graduates speakers will also deliver a short speech after the awarding of diplomas and degrees.
Content of Minister's speech – please indicate what issues you consider will be of interest to the audience [Please be as detailed as possible. You may find it useful to view speeches the Minister has previously delivered. www.beehive.govt.nz will take you to the Government website where you can locate photos and a CV of the Minister]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister may wish to mention the importance of adult life-long learning and acknowledge graduates' commitment to learning new knowledge and skills throughout their lives. • The Minister could also acknowledge the many different qualifications that our graduands will be receiving that afternoon (including degrees in business, early childhood education, applied science, social work, information technology, engineering technology, and the arts. As well as diplomas in accounting, business, construction management, architectural technology, psychology, applied management, sustainable management, information and library studies, early childhood education and care. design and decorating, and legal executive). • The Minister may also want to acknowledge that above all, our graduands have made a tremendous commitment to their own lifelong learning, which has included sacrifices of time

	spent with family, whānau and friends so that they could achieve their learning goals.
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Media	
Are media being invited; and if so, who?	No
Will there be a media release issued by the organiser or host of the event? If so, please supply a copy to the Minister's Office one week prior to the event, with information on when it will be released to the media and to who.	Yes
Will there be invitations sent out, or advertisements for the event? If so, please supply a copy to the Minister's Office at least one week prior to the event.	No However we do live stream the event via live web streaming and on our Facebook channel using Facebook Live. It will also be recorded for our YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/user/OpenPolytechnic/ and posted a few weeks after the ceremony.

Contact details	
For organisational issues around the Minister's attendance	s9(2)(a)
For the speechwriter to make contact, if required, to discuss content and elicit further information	s9(2)(a)
Who will meet the Minister at the venue (mobile number, and land-line number for the venue if possible)	s9(2)(a)
Often photographs are taken during the Minister's visit. If the organisation takes any photos, we would be grateful to receive copies. Often a staff member accompanying the Minister will take photos. In order for us to use/publish any photos taken or obtained from you, we need to obtain consent from the people in the photos. Please supply the Minister's office with an appropriate person to contact, following the visit, to arrange consent.	s9(2)(a)
Do you have any questions you need answered in relation to the Minister's attendance?	No

Appendix B: Biographies of Key Attendees

Chief Executive: Dr Caroline Seelig



Dr Caroline Seelig took up this role in 2009, and has over 25 years' experience as a senior manager in tertiary education. She has extensive knowledge of the ITP sector, having previously held senior positions in Tai Poutini Polytechnic, Eastern Institute of Technology, and Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology.

She is a previous Chair of New Zealand Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics and was recently a member of the International Council for Open and Distance Education Task Group on Student Success.

Deputy Chief Executive: Neil Carroll



Prior to joining Open Polytechnic in February 2010, Neil was Deputy CEO Academic Services and Policy at WelTec. He has also held senior roles at the Central Institute of Technology, NZQA, Agriculture ITO, and the Association of Polytechnics in New Zealand.

Neil has a comprehensive understanding of the financial, human resource management and academic quality needs of a large polytechnic, having held senior management roles throughout the changes in the tertiary sector over the last 30 years. A Woolf Fisher Scholar in 2005, Neil holds both a BSc (Hons First Class) and an MSc in biochemistry.

Board Chair: Vaughan Renner



Vaughan Renner is a director and consultant with extensive board experience, who currently serves on a number of public sector, private sector, and not-for-profit boards.

He is the President of Business New Zealand and Business Central, Chair of the New Zealand Standards Approvals Board, and director of a number of privately held companies. He was previously a member of the Combined Council of Weltec and Whitireia Polytechnics.

Vaughan has had a 20 year executive career including senior leadership and general management positions in the automotive sector. He holds an MBA, BE (Chem), and a BSc (Chemistry).

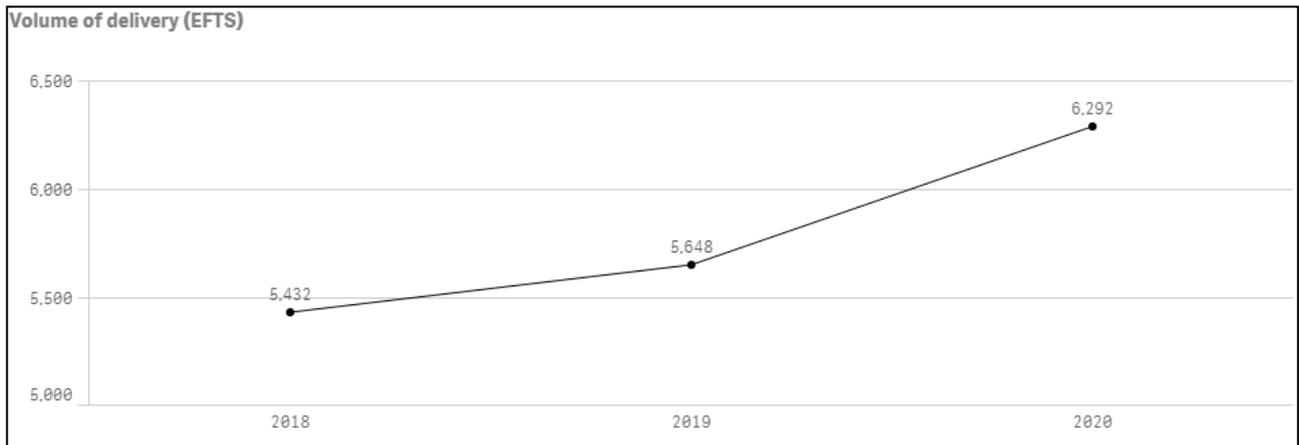
Appendix C: Summary of Open Polytechnic's funding for 2021⁵

Indicative allocation \$47,812,471		Amendments \$0		Current approved allocation \$49,114,901		Wash-up -	
Allocations by fund: 2021							
Fund	Indicative allocation	Final allocation	Amendme...	Current approved allocation	Funded value commitment	Value of delivery	Wash-up
Totals	\$47,812,471	\$49,114,901	\$0	\$49,114,901	\$45,931,316	-	-
Equity Funding	\$151,091	\$151,091	-	\$151,091	-	-	-
Fees-free Payments	\$882,509	\$882,509	-	\$882,509	-	-	-
Performance Based Research Fund	\$142,641	\$142,641	-	\$142,641	-	-	-
Student Achievement Component Levels 1 and 2	\$3,274,582	\$3,274,582	-	\$3,274,582	\$3,274,496	-	-
Student Achievement Component Levels 3 and above	\$41,356,822	\$42,659,252	\$0	\$42,659,252	\$42,656,820	-	-
Targeted Training and Apprenticeship Fund	\$2,004,826	\$2,004,826	-	\$2,004,826	-	-	-

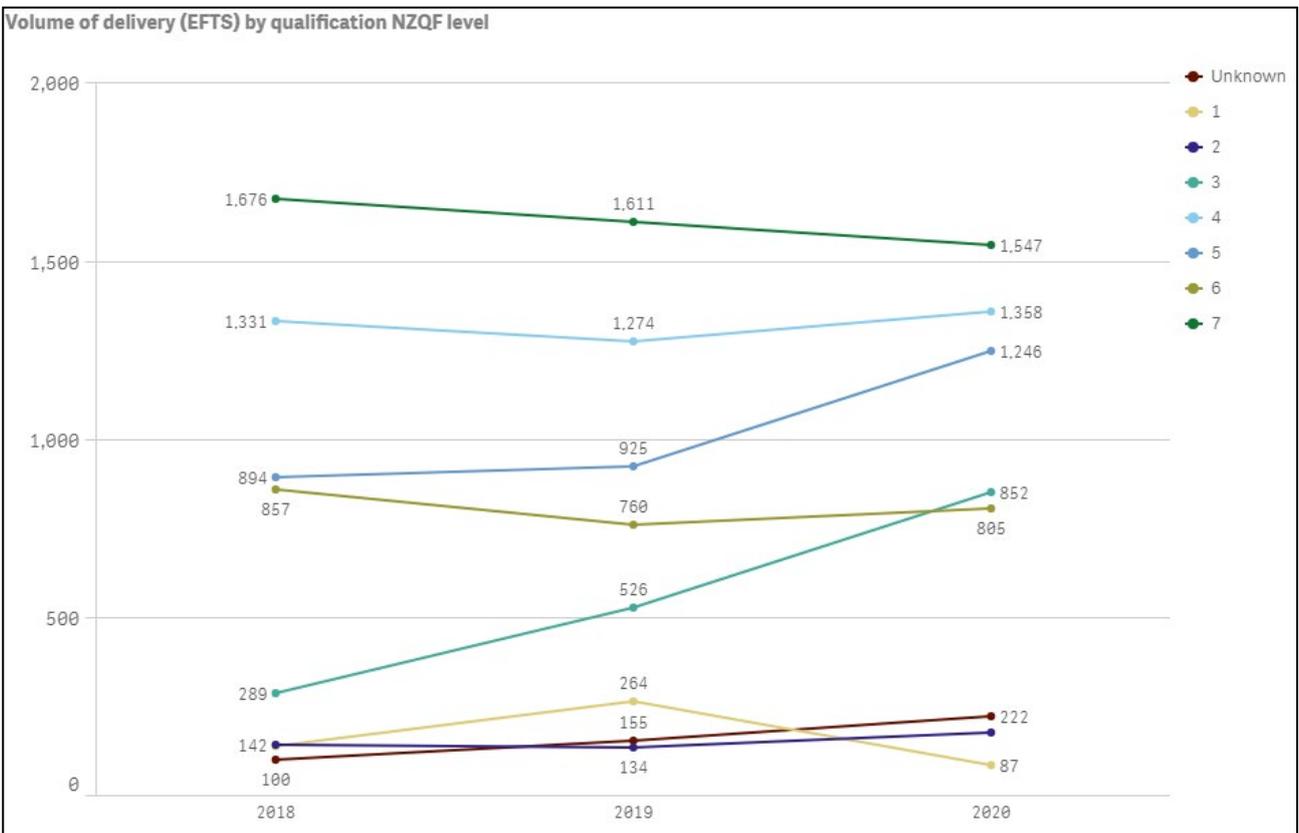
⁵ Data sourced from Qlik as at 22 April 2021, NZIST Allocations and Payments App, using the Summary sheet with filters for reporting year (2021) and TEO (6022 – Open Polytechnic of New Zealand).

Appendix D: Evidence of Increased Learner Demand at Open Polytechnic

D1 – Overall Volume of Delivery in EFTS from 2018-2020⁶



D2 – Volume of Delivery in EFTS by NZQF level from 2018-2020⁶



⁶ Data sourced from Qlik as at 19 April 2021, My Provision SDR App, using the 'Enrolment trends over time' sheet with filters for reporting years (2018, 2019, and 2020) and TEO (6022 – Open Polytechnic of New Zealand).

D3 – EFTS Delivered/Indicative Enrolments as at the 1st of March for the years 2020 and 2021

EDUMIS	Provider Name	EFTS Delivered	Nominal Dollars Delivered (GST Excl.)	EFTS Enrolled	Nominal Dollars to be Delivered by year end (GST Excl.)
		2020		2021	
6022	Open Polytechnic	1,870.6	\$15,202,812	3,258.6	\$26,722,410