



Lifting literacy and numeracy sector capability in foundation-level education

This document summarises the findings in our recent review about lifting literacy and numeracy sector capability

We reviewed how we can lift sector literacy and numeracy capability

We want to build better ways to lift the tertiary education sector's capability to embed literacy and numeracy in foundation-level education, to achieve better outcomes for learners.

Our review of adult literacy and numeracy sector capability was carried out in the first half of 2017. It looks at how the government has built and invested in capability, and provides recommendations on how we can optimise our future approach. The review looks at the capability building programmes funded by the TEC, and our overall investment in foundation-level education.

The review is timely because:

- > we have invested significantly in building educational infrastructure, supporting literacy and numeracy, and professionalising the workforce since 2009
- > the educational and policy context for literacy and numeracy has evolved since 2009, as have the needs of educators and Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs)
- > we need to ensure our approach to lifting sector capability is strategic, responds to current and future needs, and aligns with how we will invest in tertiary education.

We support several initiatives to lift adult literacy and numeracy capability

Our approach assumes that capable educators are integral to improving learner outcomes. We want all educators to have the knowledge, skills and competencies to deliver learning programmes that meet learner needs and improve outcomes.

We have developed several initiatives since 2009 to support literacy and numeracy capability (see diagram). Investing in sector capability complements our teaching and learning tools such as the Learning Progressions, Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool, and Pathways Awarua.



We have made considerable progress but our approach lacks some critical parts

The review concludes that our current system of capability building could be better connected and more effective with greater coherence.

Our current approach is to provide professional development ‘stepping stones’ which educators can jump between in no particular order. The system is not ‘broken’ but relies heavily on tutor initiation and self-development mostly through workshops and qualifications.

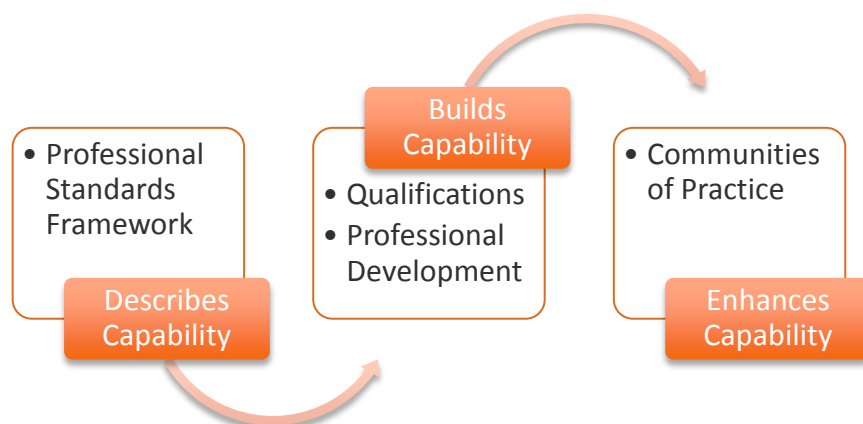
The review found that:

- › current workshops and qualifications for individuals are not working as well as they could, to get deep and sustainable change to educator and organisational practice
- › TEOs are still at varying levels of maturity regarding embedded literacy and numeracy practice
- › a compliance-driven approach does not recognize very well the differences in educators’ backgrounds and needs.

The review recommends a range of improvements for our capability building programmes and our overall investment in foundation-level education

The diagram illustrates some of the review’s recommendations to improve coherence. They include:

- › develop a foundation professional standards framework with the sector. Such a framework would inform a coherent professional development pathway and new sector capability building programmes.
- › retain our centralised funding approach to capability building programmes. This is because individuals and organisations still need the support of external experts to build their teaching capability and communities of practice.
- › develop new models of professional learning and development that are focused on learners, particularly Māori and Pasifika learners
- › focus more broadly on all the capabilities that foundation-level learners need to progress, with literacy and numeracy as underpinning capabilities¹
- › consider how quality rather than compliance could be used to improve organisational ownership and engagement with professional learning and development activities.



¹ Ako Aotearoa. ‘A Foundation for Progression: Graduate profiles for Level 1 and 2 qualifications’ p.19



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