ENHANCING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH CURRICULUM INTEGRATION BASED ON NEW ZEALAND’S KEY COMPETENCIES:
A Descriptive Case Study

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Education) at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand

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November 2010
I certify that the thesis entitled Enhancing student achievement through curriculum integration based on New Zealand’s key competencies: a descriptive case study and submitted as part of the degree of Master of Philosophy (Education) is the result of my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this research thesis (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for any other degree to any other university or institution.

Signed: _____________________________

Date: _____________________________
ABSTRACT

New Zealand schools are constantly searching for means for enhancing student achievement, maximising learning potential and utilising effective teacher pedagogy. Curriculum integration is widely supported as an effective pedagogical approach to curriculum design and has been identified within The New Zealand curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) as a method that would successfully aid in implementation of all aspects of the new curriculum, including the Key Competencies.

This research used a descriptive case study approach to attempt to enhance student achievement through the creation of a model of curriculum integration that was based on the Queensland New Basics model and yet unique to a New Zealand setting so that it developed the teaching and learning of the Key Competencies. Through the conducting of semi-structured interviews, extensive observations of students and teachers, and document analysis, there were five emergent themes identified. One of these themes effectively led to a working model of curriculum integration that enhanced student achievement and overall learning experiences. Central features of the model include the development of a personalised school curriculum: Deeper Understandings and learning dispositions, recognition and development of effective pedagogical tools and approaches, culminating rich assessments encompassing self, peer, formative and summative assessment; and greater student engagement, levels of higher order thinking and transferability of learning.
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