



# Lifelong Literacy

## ISSUES OF STRATEGY

Frank Sligo • Bronwyn Watson • Niki  
Murray • Margie Comrie • Franco  
Vaccarino • Elspeth Tilley



**Massey University**

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This report is dedicated to the memory of the late Dr Su Olsson (1942–2005), friend, colleague, and objective leader in the Literacy and Employment Programme.



## Executive summary

In reviewing the New Zealand Adult Literacy Strategy (ALS) (Ministry of Education, 2001) and the current and future Tertiary Education Strategies (TES) (Ministry of Education, 2002, 2006) it became apparent that further development of adult literacy policy is sorely needed. Policy in this area is required that acknowledges, reflects, and seeks to improve the lived experiences of those working and learning within adult literacy training programmes.

Through a Foundation for Research, Science and Technology-funded adult literacy and employment research project, Wanganui adult literacy provider and practitioners' experiences and perceptions of provision and provision needs were gathered over the last three and a half years. This report summarises the issues that need to be considered in a future lifelong literacy strategy based upon the principle of lifelong learning. Emphasis is placed on "joined-up" solutions and approaches not just within the policy directions themselves, but also within and between the associated Government departments, and the resultant implementation plans for such policy.





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We are also indebted to the adult literacy providers and practitioners of Wanganui who have generously given their time to discuss pertinent literacy issues from their perspectives. These discussions and suggestions for improvement for the adult literacy sector have provided us with many of the key points outlined in this report.

We are especially indebted to the adult literacy participants who have shared their time and stories over the past three years with the research team.

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We acknowledge many other friends and colleagues not named here for their insights and support to date in this research. However, all remaining errors and omissions in this discussion paper are of course the responsibility of the authors alone. Further, the points of view expressed here are those of the authors, and are not necessarily endorsed by the community groups which, as is normal in a diverse society, will have their own perspectives on the issues covered here.





# Introduction and context

## New Zealand in the OECD

OECD research has demonstrated substantial variations in educational outcomes among member states (OECD, 2000a). For example, 95% of Korean 15-year olds expect to achieve tertiary education, while only 50% of European 15-year olds have the same expectation. According to the OECD's *New Zealand Country Note* (Goedegebuure, Santiago, Fitznor, Stensaker, & van der Steen, 2007, p. 76), in 2003, just over 32% of New Zealand 15-year old students expected to complete tertiary type-B education (i.e. a tertiary qualification with a minimum duration of two years full-time equivalent study). Just over 38% expected to complete a tertiary type-A education (i.e. a degree-level, tertiary qualification with a minimum of three years full-time equivalent study). This makes the total of New Zealand 15-year old students who expected to participate in tertiary education around 70%.

The OECD has noted a recent marked increase in tertiary education participation. However, it warns that **participation alone will not improve economic or social welfare**. What is needed is a greater drive for educational success (OECD, 2000a, p. 7). In most OECD countries, employment rates, labour productivity, economic growth and mental and physical health all rise with educational attainment rather than participation (OECD, 2006, pp. 23, 27). This is also evident in figures for New Zealand. For example, in 2004, around 66% of 25 to 64-year olds who had not completed upper secondary education were in employment, while of those who had completed upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education, more than 80% were employed (p. 22).

It is of concern that while in some countries, (for example, Ireland, Japan and Korea), around 80% of those enrolled in tertiary type-A programmes successfully complete their courses, just over half do so in New Zealand. Moreover, the survival rates of those in tertiary type-B courses tend to be even lower (OECD, 2006, pp. 12-13). In other words, as well as encouraging wider participation in tertiary education in New Zealand, there also needs to

be a greater focus on *successful completion* of tertiary courses.

## The knowledge economy

Collectively the quotations below describe transitions into a knowledge economy, acknowledging shifts from an industrial era based on commodities to an information era, where the economy derives from the accumulation of knowledge to generate new information technologies.

For countries in the vanguard of the world economy, the balance between knowledge and resources has shifted so far towards the former that knowledge is now thought of as the most important factor determining the standard of living – more than land, tools, or labour. Today's most technologically advanced economies are truly knowledge-based (*World Development Report*, 1999, cited in Frederick, Beattie, & McIlroy, 1999, p. 4).

A knowledge-driven economy is one in which the generation and exploitation of knowledge play the predominant part in the creation of wealth (United Kingdom Department of Trade and Industry, 1998, cited in Frederick et al., 1999, p. 4).

A knowledge economy includes human capital defined as the knowledge, skills, competences and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity (OECD, 1998).

A knowledge-based economy is ... characterised by rapid changes in technology, greater investment in research and development, greater use of information and communications technology, growth of knowledge intensive businesses, and ... rising skill requirements (Colmar Brunton, 2000, p. 6).

People bring intellectual capital to the development of businesses and the economy, in this way forming organisational capital that utilises and generates further intellectual capital to

maintain knowledge and economic growth.

In their analysis of the knowledge economy, Frederick, Beattie, and McIlroy (1999) describe how in today's leading economies, knowledge is recognised along with labour and capital as a factor of production. Therefore, to participate in the knowledge economy, a country must become a "learning economy" (p. 4), using new technologies to access global knowledge for interchange of ideas and innovation. Achieving this requires a commitment by government, educators, and businesses to creating a learning environment that moves away from recycling facts and instead teaches people how to learn.

Rapidly changing technologies require a flexible, creative workforce with the ability to understand and adapt to the requirement of skills changes. As Frederick et al. point out, much knowledge requires a continuous learning cycle of "discovery, dissemination, and the emergence of shared understandings" (p. 5). Successful firms recognise the need for continuous learning at an organisational level, viewing building a "learning capacity" within the firm as a priority.

One vital asset for developing a competitive knowledge economy, according to Frederick et al., is human capital. Another is when companies recognise the importance not just of intellectual capital, but of *changes* in intellectual capital, in the value of their business. Human capital is defined as "the formal education, training and on-the-job learning embodied in the workforce" (p. 4). Intellectual capital is "employees' knowledge, brainpower, know-how, and processes, as well as their ability to continuously improve these processes" (p. 5). Frederick et al. note that the buildings and equipment of high technology or service firms are a miniscule part of their market value. Their major worth and competitive advantage lies in their intangible assets, that is, in their intellectual capital, including innovative creativity and impetus to keep learning.

## New Zealand within the developing knowledge economy

In a submission to the New Zealand Government by the Minister for Information Technology's IT Advisory Group, Frederick et al. suggest that New Zealand already has many of the prerequisites needed for a knowledge economy. These include a good technological infrastructure and a culture of innovation.

However, they argue that there are key weaknesses related to the education sector. These are summarised in the box and outlined in more detail below. One key weakness is the place of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education. Frederick et al. found that greater commitment and resources are needed to overcome low numbers of graduates in technical disciplines, and to ensure that all teachers and students are ICT-literate.

### Areas of weakness related to the education sector

1. ICT in education: more commitment and resources needed
2. Research and development: more private sector investment needed
3. Need to create a knowledge export platform
4. Must raise national awareness of strategic importance of developing a knowledge economy

A second weakness is research and development, where the authors argue that more investment is needed, especially by the private sector. As Norris writes, "The foundation stones of the knowledge economy are human ingenuity and skill and a commitment to innovation through research and development" (cited in Frederick et al., 1999, p. i).

A third shortcoming is the continuing dependence on producing a limited range of commodity exports, with a low percentage of high-technology exports, rather than creating a "knowledge export platform" (p. 3). Fourth is a lack of strategic vision in promoting and communicating to all New Zealanders the importance of developing a knowledge economy.

*Cultivating the Knowledge Economy in New Zealand* (2000), the Colmar Brunton research carried out for the NZ Immigration Services, highlights some of these weaknesses. For example, interviews with respondents from a range of knowledge-based organisations tended to focus on a "scarcity of people with specialist skills and experience" (p. 3) within New Zealand and the difficulties in trying to recruit appropriately skilled people from overseas.

When faced with a skills shortage, organisations reported that after recruitment drives, first within New Zealand and then overseas, they make do or try alternative, less desirable, strategies such as training new graduates (p. 4). Some also reported being "constantly on the look out for people who may add value to the organisation" (p. 11).

The informants' reasons for such skills shortages were New Zealand's inability to compete internationally, particularly in relation to remuneration, our small population, and "New Zealand's education system not producing the skills that are required" (p. 12).

It was also suggested that there was a need to raise the profile of New Zealand knowledge-based industries as "leading edge, world leaders" (p. 19). However, these respondents did not appear to acknowledge their own and their firms' responsibilities in developing or raising the profile of New Zealand's knowledge economy. That is, there seemed to be a lack of awareness of how their firms might themselves contribute to raising the skills and competencies of workers through valuing and developing human, intellectual and organisational capital. As Frederick et al. argue:



New Zealand companies need to better understand and use the concept of intellectual capital. They need to look at their products, processes and people, and assess and augment the amount of knowledge they possess. They must unlock the value of their hidden assets, such as the talents of their employees, the loyalty of their customers, and the collective knowledge embodied in their systems, processes, and culture. They must learn how to turn their unmapped, untapped knowledge into a source of competitive advantage (p. 7).

That said, the government also needs to take an active role in ensuring the country's successful development of a knowledge economy. As Frederick et al. point out, more than 50% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in major OECD economies is now based on the production and distribution of knowledge. In analysing some of the more successful knowledge economies, including Australia, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Singapore, and the US, Frederick et al. found that government investment in encouragement and implementation of information societies and on-line economies has stimulated knowledge-intensive economies. Encouraging education and life-long learning, plus investing heavily in research and development, have enabled these countries to compete in the new global markets.

In contrast, in New Zealand we have not yet fully worked out how to invest in the development of a knowledge economy in ways that will free us from the disadvantages of distance and a small population. A positive development along these lines, though, was the NZ Government's 2007 Budget announcement of a 15% tax credit for company research and development.

## Lifelong learning

The concept of lifelong learning as an educational strategy arose around 30 years ago when OECD, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe, recognising that individuals learn throughout life, sought to remedy the lack of second

chance educational opportunities for adults who had not benefited from formal education provision for children and youth (OECD, 2004, p. 1). There has since been a shift in the OECD's focus in terms of lifelong learning, as they explain:

In current OECD usage, lifelong learning no longer refers simply to recurrent or adult education but encompasses all ... purposeful learning activity, from the cradle to the grave, that aims to improve knowledge and competencies for all individuals *who wish to participate* in learning activities (OECD, 2004, p. 1, emphasis in original).

To achieve the goal of lifelong learning for all, the multiple goals of education must be recognised, including 'personal development, knowledge development, economic, social and cultural objectives' (OECD, 2004, p. 2).

It is also important to be aware that the priorities among these objectives may change over the course of an individual's lifetime. Such an inclusive and all-encompassing lifelong learning framework requires education policy to surmount sector barriers by considering 'the demand for, and the supply of, learning opportunities, as part of a *connected system* covering the whole lifecycle and comprising all forms of formal and informal learning' (OECD, 2000a, p. 1, emphasis added).

**The OECD evidence demonstrates the importance of building an orientation to learning, in whatever form, for everyone at all ages and wherever learning may take place. The concept of lifelong learning thus moves away from adult learning as remedial, even coercion-based, in order to comply with government agency demands.**

However, our Phase Two participant interviews in the current Wanganui Literacy and Employment project provided indicators that adult learners still frame their learning in terms of remediation. Many participants come

to a training course constrained by low personal confidence and thinking that “only dumb people go there”. In our Wanganui sample, when asked why they were attending literacy training, some participants replied that it was at the behest of Work and Income. Undoubtedly Work and Income is pursuing the OECD recommendation to encourage their clients’ learning. Yet as long as some participants believe they are undertaking training mainly to retain their welfare benefits, they are thinking of stick rather than carrot, and the more powerful and enduring intrinsic motivations for learning are not yet engaged.

An important obstacle to achieving lifelong learning in New Zealand was raised in a press release from the National Council of Women (NCW, 2007). NCW points out that while the Education Act 1989 states that all children from five to 19 years are entitled to receive free education, it stipulates that this must be through state schools. Those who leave the state school system before they are 19 must pay for any further education. Stuart Middleton (cited by NCW, 2007) states that

**New Zealand is the only country in the OECD to remove the entitlement to free education and training for young people who leave school at 16 (p. 6).**

Axford and Seddon (2006), using Australian evidence, describe the ideal of a knowledge society built on lifelong learning as an era in which knowledge and learning are paramount. Yet, they argue, the social and economic reality for many is that work is becoming casualised and the kind of jobs that used to exist for people of lower functional literacy are quickly diminishing.

At the same time, Axford and Seddon argue, social life is becoming more individualised with assumptions by state agencies and others that people are responsible for managing their own levels of risk (p. 180). Under such conditions the state tends to assume that, despite enduring social and economic disparities, all citizens are equally informed and, therefore,

all are equally responsible for their individual welfare and educational development.

**In reality, problems associated with persisting generational underprivilege make a mockery of any such assumed level playing field. In this context it is unacceptable for the state and “knowledge-have” sections of the community to ignore a raft of equity issues for the “have-nots”.**

## **The Adult Literacy Strategy and lifelong learning**

The New Zealand Adult Literacy Strategy (ALS) (Ministry of Education, 2001), was the response to the country’s results in the 1996 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS). ALS presents two definitions of literacy, outlined in the box below.

### **Adult Literacy Strategy definitions of literacy**

Literacy is a complex web of reading, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, creative thinking and numeracy skills (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 4).

[Literacy is] using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one’s goals and to develop one’s knowledge and potential (p. 22).

Aims listed by the ALS include: 1) to improve literacy levels of the current adult population who are below the bar of literacy adequacy; 2) to invest in the current working age population who have adequate literacy to ensure that they remain literate in terms of changing technologies and work practices; and 3) to ensure that those leaving school and entering the workforce do not require remedial literacy education (p. 5).

Even though “creative thinking” is included in the ALS definition of literacy, the Strategy appears to contain an underlying premise that learning, particularly for adults, is remedial, short-term, and focused on the most pressing demands of current employment. This is in contrast to the lifelong learning perspective that, to be successful, learning needs to spring from a person’s persisting desire for knowledge, for the learning of new skills, self-fulfilment, and the development of creativity and productivity. For example, one ALS goal is “increasing the provision of workplace literacy programmes *where there is an obvious and urgent reason for literacy skill improvement* to respond to new job demands and new technologies” (p. 7, emphasis added).

This kind of orientation seems mainly unrelated to the approach that Frederick et al. insist on, such as the need to “unlock the value of their hidden assets, such as the ... collective knowledge embodied in their systems, processes, and culture” (p. 7).

Another example is evident in the ALS discussion of the need for a more highly trained level of adult literacy teacher. Here it is stated that “Learners of adult literacy should be receiving the most effective teaching possible *to improve their literacy as quickly as possible*” (p. 12, emphasis added). Sligo, Culligan, Comrie, Tilley, Vaccarino and Franklin (2006, p. 54) note that this is a reasonable aim so far as it goes. **Yet the focus on a problematic absence of literacy contradicts the positive and holistic aspects of lifelong learning promoted in the Tertiary Education Strategy 2002-2007** (TES) (Ministry of Education, 2002). This is discussed in more detail below.

## **The link between lifelong learning and employment**

Machin and McNally (2007) say that:

In most countries there has been continued expansion of tertiary education in the last decade. However ... in no case considered here, can one speak of ‘over supply’ of ter-

tiary education. The strong, positive and (often) increasing return to tertiary education suggests that ‘under supply’ is more of an issue and that continued expansion is justified. With regard to employability, in many countries there has been some catch-up of the less educated group over the last decade. However, those with tertiary education continue to have a much higher probability of being in education (p. 3).

According to OECD (2004) research, lifelong learning is important for the success, fulfilment and productivity of individuals, enterprise, the wider economy and society. The first reason given is the changing nature of both work and the labour market, with increasing demand for higher skills levels and continuing and more frequent changes in the nature of work skills required. The market focus on shorter product cycles has led to shorter job tenures and more frequent job changes.

Second, such structural changes lead to increasing economic gaps between knowledge-haves and knowledge have-nots. As OECD (2004) shows: 1) training opportunities in later life depend on the qualifications held when entering the labour market; 2) there are fewer learning opportunities in later life for the unemployed and disadvantaged; and 3) there is a widening earnings gap between those with and without post-secondary education (p. 2).

These OECD claims are supported by analysis of the 1996 IALS New Zealand data that found participation in adult training increases as literacy proficiency increases, participation is greater for those in full-time work and greater for those in higher skilled occupations (Culligan, Sligo, Arnold, & Noble, 2004, p. 19).

## **Lifelong literacy**

The perception of community adult learning as remedial implies a lack of basic skills among the individuals participating in such courses. Particularly with adult literacy courses, the perception that literacy skills once taught, will

result in employment with no need for further training, is erroneous. Both concepts of lifelong learning and lifelong literacy incorporate the need to continue learning and personal development throughout life, the result of which can only further enhance contributions to economy and society. **As lifelong learning implies learning across all stages of life, lifelong literacy implies learning of not only functional literacy skills, but also differing literacies throughout life stages, for example, workplace literacies, technological literacies, and community literacies.**

While work completed through the Wanganui Adult Literacy and Employment Project has shown that those taking part in adult literacy courses already contribute to their communities (Murray, Comrie, Sligo, & Vaccarino, 2007; Vaccarino, Sligo, Comrie, & Murray, 2007), the participants seek further skills through which they can contribute more or in more ways than currently. These participants did not pick up certain skills through formal schooling systems for a variety of reasons, but many have described a lack of fit with the dominant school teaching and learning system.

This suggests a population that thinks differently from the mainstream, which, in turn, can only lead to new, creative, and diverse approaches, if given the opportunity. In a knowledge economy and society, difference and creativity are necessary commodities. Such differences can be harnessed only if diverse forms of adult learning are valued by Government and other funding bodies in tandem with other forms of tertiary education and work preparedness programmes.

## Defining literacy

How to define “literacy” is still contested by academics and others, but we would argue that the term literacy as used in everyday discussion in the adult learning community encompasses both “hard” and “soft” skill sets. So-called hard skills are associated with the ability to demonstrate competence in standardised tests of literacy and numeracy. Soft skills are more to do with the demonstration of

personal abilities in situated literacies within what may be highly diverse work and community contexts. In the view of the current research team, both are important and need to be taken into account. Indeed, some adult literacy analysts believe that such is the relationship between hard and soft skills that the attempt to separate them is redundant, instead labelling all such skills and qualities as “literacies” (personal communication, 2007).

## What does literacy do?

In our view, lifelong literacy must be addressed in conjunction with all other indicators of insufficient attainment in the community. Each social agency of government, along with its local government counterparts and community-based agencies, needs a common script for what it can do to enhance lifelong learning in association with any other support or benefit it provides.

**The successive reports from the current research programme have demonstrated the intimate connections among low literacy, low income, poor health, poor access to transport, insufficient skills, low self-esteem, and poor employability. Therefore every agency with responsibilities in these areas should be aware of the need to foster lifelong learning in connection with its other responsibilities.**

As literacy strengthens, citizens are empowered to take a more assertive and effective approach to building their capabilities in many areas of their lives. In this way literacy is a means to an end in numerous elements of success in one’s personal life and citizenship. Thus an awareness of adult literacy and its relationships with improved health, better employability, improved confidence, improved community participation, and the preparedness to engage in lifelong learning, needs to be embedded in every governmental and other agency nationwide which seeks to serve the deprived.

**A key part of this is to create excellent inter-agency connectedness** among not only the providers of social and educational services,

but also the national, regional, and local governmental overseers of such provision, with the goal of providing joined-up solutions and ending silo-based partial responses to enduring social deprivations. Wanganui already demonstrates exemplary instances of inter-agency collaboration, but this success needs consolidating further and replicating in every New Zealand community.

**Also needed are single reference-points for social support within communities.** For example the Australian Department of Social Security has reorganised its array of services into 'CentreLink', a node in which citizens can access many and varied services. This has re-configured the former 'dole' offices, once stigmatised as catering only to the unemployed, into a much more positive model that offers a clear source of information to support everyone's employment and citizenship aspirations. Centrelink makes available co-ordinated services such as careers or life planning, training, and employment acquisition or transition. This has the possibility of offering holistic approaches to addressing low literacy that to date have been largely absent from the New Zealand scene.

## Focus of this report

The experience of this research team has been especially oriented to ongoing literacy and literacies learning. **The focus of this report therefore is on lifelong literacy, with an orientation to post-compulsory community education and training, particularly through Private Training Establishments (PTEs).** From time to time our reports, including this one, refer to literacy learning issues within the primary and secondary school sectors as such issues impinge on our areas of interest. Yet in the interests of a manageable research orientation, we do not pursue in-depth exploration of literacy in schools.

It should be noted that in this and others of our reports the conclusions have a primary focus on literacy issues within Wanganui and Districts. Certainly from this Wanganui base

we have consequentially spun off several other associated in-depth research explorations within the Rangitikei, Wellington, the Manawatu, and elsewhere (see Literacy & Employment Methodologies, n.d.; and Literacy & Employment Postgraduate Students, n.d.). Yet most of our research focus has been on the particular situation of Wanganui.

Wanganui has been powerful and appealing as a research site because it is large enough to offer a diverse array of challenges, opportunities, and community action in adult literacy. Yet it is small enough to have featured, in many instances, excellent collaboration among local branches of agencies with responsibilities in fostering improved adult literacy. Many of the conclusions in this report derive directly from discussions of adult literacy strategy with Wanganui adult literacy providers and practitioners<sup>1</sup>. National providers of adult literacy services elsewhere in New Zealand are able to consider any particular circumstances in their own location as they think about the relevance of the present commentary to their own situation.

This report now turns to an overview of the provision of services for the most in-need group of the New Zealand population, those at IALS levels one and two. Following this, issues on the funding of adult literacy provision and bicultural awareness needed throughout all literacy services are explored. Then, professionalisation of the industry, the needs of adult learners, and the required perception of learning as a lifelong process are discussed. The report concludes with an outline of the need for 'joined-up' Government approaches.

<sup>1</sup> The development of the themes covered in this discussion document, along with a list of adult literacy provider priorities, is available in Appendix A.





# Literacy learning provision for IALS levels one and two

It is difficult to obtain precise data about just what provision of literacy learning services is available for people at the lowest IALS achievement levels, 1 and 2. More discussion is available on this issue in earlier work from the research team (e.g. see Culligan et al., 2004).

In brief, though, the proportion of the Wanganui population at IALS Levels 1 and 2 (1996 projected through to 2004) is between 35.1% and 40%. Roughly half this group is at each level, with those at Level 1 comprising between 17.6% and 20% of this figure. However, it is not possible to determine accurately by region how many of these people are taking part in courses generally or in literacy courses specifically. The national census aligned with the IALS results indicates that on a nationwide basis just under 40% of those taking part in some or any form of training are at Literacy Levels 1 and 2. However, this figure covers all forms of training, not just literacy training.

Therefore, at both local and national level it is unknown what proportion of people at the lowest levels of literacy achievement are in literacy training. What we do know, however, from our analysis of both NZ census and NZ IALS data is that the probability of a person being in training increases in line with their own educational attainment (the “Matthew effect” – to those that hath, it shall be given ...). There is therefore a probability that those most in need of literacy training are least likely to be receiving it, while those who understand and have benefited from their educational experiences are most likely to take advantage of training opportunities.

An earlier report, our provider survey phase one, undertaken in 2004, has already provided some insights into the map of current adult literacy provision in Wanganui. These training providers respond to the needs of the learners who present to them, whether self-initiated or referred from sources such as Work and Income. **The problem of course is how to reach people at the lowest levels of IALS achievement.** While NZ is ranked as the top country with regard to the estimated hours of voca-

tional education and training available per adult, all countries that took part in the IALS had large groups of people outside this “emerging learning society” who were often deemed to be the ones most in need of learning such skills (OECD, 2000b, p. 43).

These people, for a complex array of reasons as described in our earlier reports, often cannot take part in adult literacy learning or do not find such training relevant to their aspirations. Wanganui providers and learners have discussed their needs with the research team over the four years of the project and these are recorded in provider survey reports, practitioner focus group reports, and participant interview reports. All these are available to inform an emerging government strategy for literacy learning.

Wanganui providers look for approaches to their professional work that will encourage the evolution of their business into a professional, collaborative industry with the capability to address current provider and participant needs. **Ideally, providers would wish to create a situation which could capture all those in the population at lower literacy levels. However, adult literacy practitioners find that any such longer-term ambitions must take second priority to the task of survival in a very challenging business environment.** That is, the existing pressures on Wanganui providers necessarily focus them on the task of what is needed to permit their businesses to survive now, as opposed to possible future development plans.

## Problems with the brand

Our interviews with participants in adult literacy learning revealed that before undertaking training, they had little or no idea of the benefits they found they obtained and enjoyed once underway. Comments such as “why didn’t they tell us it was like this” were typical. People considering entering such training typically fear it will be a re-run of failure at school. In fact this does not eventuate. At the same time, before entering training, it is rare for par-

ticipants to realise the great boost in confidence and capability they are likely to get from increased self-esteem and self-efficacy, better communication skills with their peers, and a renewed sense of purpose in their lives.

In relation to this, the actual term ‘literacy’ seemed either meaningless or carried derogatory connotations to many participants in adult learning with whom we spoke. Participants, when asked to state what the word literacy meant to them, equated it with illiteracy, or, gave responses that defined literacy purely in terms of functional reading or writing skills. Generally, there was significant confusion over the term with some saying “I don’t know what that even means”, or “I don’t really understand that word”. This lack of understanding or narrow definition of literacy, may contribute to non-participant reasons for not accessing courses. This is particularly the case when potential participants see advertisements for literacy courses and believe that this type of training is not relevant for them. As the IALS showed:

Adults with low literacy skills do not usually consider that their lack of skills presents them with any major difficulties. Respondents replied overwhelmingly that their reading skills were sufficient to meet everyday needs regardless of tested skill levels. This may reflect the fact that many respondents have developed coping strategies or that many ordinary jobs do not require high levels of literacy, a situation that is likely to change as the knowledge economy matures (OECD, 2000b, p. xiv).

**This led us to realise that adult literacy learning possesses extremely poor brand identity for those who are most in need of it. That is, this training possesses either an unclear or a negative brand in the minds of prospective participants. Therefore, marketing design and selling activities for such courses need re-thinking at a strategic and policy level, to explore how the persisting failure of the brand can be addressed.**

Certainly a series of social marketing cam-

paings is implied, employing carefully targeted public communication campaigns designed to win over this hard-to-reach target audience. Because the target market is intrinsically difficult to contact by print means, interpersonal approaches will be a necessary part of the communication plan. One necessary element is that marketing of such courses, building on social marketing campaigns, should be done by employing personal selling by current and former participants who have discovered the benefits of training first-hand. Many of the participants we spoke to in adult literacy training courses had been persuaded to attend through positive word-of-mouth recommendations from family and friends, and sometimes even friends of friends or strangers. We suspect that it will be particularly by strategies of the word-of-mouth kind that the people at IALS levels one and two may be drawn into training.

In our view, adult literacy policy needs to contain the wherewithal to market courses to potential participants in ways that they find attractive and engaging. Marketing and promotion need to leverage off the important dimension of peer sanction so that interpersonal networks, via “viral marketing”, continue to do the work of attracting participants.

In-depth research into problems of brand identity from both client and provider points of view is also required. The Wanganui Adult Literacy and Employment project is currently supporting one PhD student who is exploring issues affecting the brand from a critical theory perspective.

However, the lack of provider critical mass in a business sense and the consequent absence of assurance of business continuity permit no leeway for providers to deploy resources and energies to publicise their programmes within their communities. Provider businesses need to be much larger and more sophisticated in their capability, which will permit a more effective command of promotional planning and tools.







# Funding

Providers are keenly aware of the desirability of sharing exemplary practice with their colleagues in other businesses and thus building capability on a local and regional basis. Yet funding is structured in such a way as to create competition among providers for the short-term (usually one year), limited funding that exists. This competition in turn promotes secrecy, so that providers do not necessarily know about, let alone build on local successes. It also results in fragmented provision for learners where referral to other providers or stair-casing only occurs due to informal relationships built through practitioners where knowledge of each others' courses is shared, not in any structured, 'joined-up' way.

Providers of adult literacy training are far from happy with this situation. They feel the business and pedagogical isolation that results causes them to work less effectively, and also undermines what they believe to be their community service obligations of doing the best possible job for their clients. However, these walls of competition cannot be demolished on an ad-hoc, local, or regional basis. A policy response, aligned with appropriate implementation structures, is needed, to provide funding in ways that promote cooperation, rather than promote competition among providers.

The available funding also needs to be more than just short-term. The fractured nature of funding pays no attention to the reality of the long lead time that is inherent in effective business practice in adult literacy provision. This includes, but is not limited to, the development of proper client training, staff training, and building up of pedagogical resources.

As reported in our earlier publications, obtaining sustainable long-term funding is a major issue for all providers. They do not have clear and accessible information about the full range of available funding or the criteria that apply to it. A clearing-house of information about funding sources and resources is needed, as is funding for practitioner time to explore and apply for these funding sources. Practitioner time needs to be structured to follow the

model of what is available to secondary school teachers, where student-free periods are allocated to allow for this type of activity.

It is promising to see developments within the current tertiary reforms which have the potential to change this situation for the better. For example, the change of focus from “demand to need” within Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) removes the focus of funding from solely the numbers of students, and focuses it instead on the distinctive learning needs of its stakeholders (and the capability building required of the TEO to meet these needs) (TEC, 2007). Nevertheless, the adult literacy training industry historically has been and still is disorganised and hand-to-mouth. Many provider businesses, being micro in nature, are ill-equipped to cope with the disciplined and time-demanding requirements of advance financial planning. Therefore different funding arrangements within the current provider infrastructure alone will not solve the problem.

Investment is needed in radically rebuilding provider business infrastructure and capability, especially in contractual and planning methodologies. Only once there is a far more secure basis for investment will funding reforms have any significant impact at the provider-client interface.

We have earlier reported (Sligo, et. al., 2006) that funding regimes need to take into account all the associated costs, especially of working one-to-one with students when needed, of working with small groups, of professional development, and of developing and purchasing resources. Funders expect providers to have a commitment to professional development and continuous improvement. Yet funding levels are insufficient to achieve this, and the orientation of funding is not geared to this end.

Alongside an increase in funding levels, a step up is needed within provider organisations so that managers and practitioners as well can start to learn to cost for professional development. Again, few micro-businesses in this (or any) industry are capable of performing well

in this regard. Building basic business capability in planning will require specific governmental support.

Providers’ attempts to provide quality, professional services are especially undermined by their ongoing need to extract funds from community donors, and work with unpaid and untrained community volunteers. This distracts them from their core business of undertaking specialist tutoring, interviewing and assessing people of low literacy to ensure that their particular needs are being met, and building their own professional capabilities.

Despite the promise of reforms via the new tertiary funding plans, there is still a strong flavour of hand-to-mouth in much training provision. The resources required to address student needs and capacity building in these micro-businesses are not available, or are poorly directed, and reformed tertiary funding must address infrastructural needs of the industry.

**Providers are adamant that if professional outcomes are to be obtained, community-based adult literacy programmes must be valued as much as other tertiary, or indeed secondary, learning institutions, evidenced through professional funding.** In their view, community-based literacy provision is the basis for workplace literacies and serves many of the other literacy provision schemes, such as Training Opportunities (TOPS) etc. Volunteer tutors (and indeed paid tutors) operating within community schemes need better recognition of their role as a profession and subsequent remuneration and pay scales. Options in terms of career pathways would assist in the framing of adult literacy teaching as a profession in its own right.

## **Integrated literacy**

The incorporation of literacy and numeracy within vocational courses is important and necessary in many cases. Yet literacy training providers commonly report that when these two pedagogical functions are merged, neither

vocational nor literacy training is necessarily done to a high level of quality. Vocational and literacy training represent different professional specialisations. Even if these two specialisations are to be merged in the classroom, funding for each of them needs to be separately calculated. It must also be transparent and stable over time, and it needs to take account of the actual complexities and costs entailed in respect of the divergent needs of vocational and literacy training.

There are indications that the current tertiary reforms will result in improvements. Yet specific investment is required to ensure that vocational training can proceed in tandem with literacy training, so that both are exemplary in nature.

For example, tutors need professional development in learning how to teach integrated numeracy and literacy. This is especially the case for the majority of those tutors who are industry people. Such individuals may well possess excellent applied skills in their profession or trade, along with many years of relevant experience. Yet they may have had little training or coaching in how to teach their own discipline, or literacy, or a combination of both.

Vocational tutors have described the difficulties inherent in delivering integrated literacy, especially lacking sufficient time and resources for this complex task. When, as often seems to be the case, providers cannot access specific funding for numeracy and literacy in association with vocational training, the additional costs have somehow to be subsidised from elsewhere in the provider company. This is unsatisfactory and does no justice to the demands of teaching either a vocational subject or literacy.

**Therefore the combination of vocational and literacy training when offered in the one classroom creates a complex set of pedagogical demands on trainers. It is not realistic to expect tutors to possess multifaceted teaching capabilities without quite rigorous training,**

**development, and mentoring, all of which are expensive and require dedicated funding.**

Some vocational tutors we spoke to in focus groups expressed the opinion that teaching literacy and related coping and life skills to their students detracted from their capacity to deliver training in vocational skills. Others considered that vocational skills training was highly dependent on students attaining satisfactory levels of literacy, along with self-confidence and other related aptitudes.

One provider described how literacy and numeracy skills cannot be taught in isolation as the relevance of the skills to the aspired vocation of the student was essential for engagement in learning. Using contracted-in literacy services was an option for some to address the concerns of vocational tutors not trained to deliver literacy provision. These contracted services either taught the literacy or numeracy component, or trained the tutors to do so. However, for effective outcomes, providers emphasised that literacy and numeracy skills had to be integrated with and relevant to the taught vocational skills. This debate illustrates the subtle and demanding pedagogical questions faced by tutors, and the consequent need for ongoing professional development.

Further, vocational tutors stress that the literacy and numeracy work they undertake within their courses should not be seen just as an added extra, but should be recognised as a critical success factor in its own right.

Providers seek Government recognition of the ways in which community-based schemes, in their support of literacy training, and in the publicity that they provide for training, save the Government from having to invest further in adult literacy. One provider quoted data indicating that its scheme saves the Government \$250,000 per year in tuition expenses. Providers are aware that it is especially in recent times that the TEC funding models are being re-worked, so this is seen as a critical time for building emphasis for community-based literacy funding.







# Bicultural awareness

The publication of *Te Kāwai Ora* in 2001 was a defining moment in addressing the aspirations of Māori in respect of literacy. The report provided a comprehensive Treaty-based perspective on literacy. It demanded that literacy be understood within actual social and historical contexts but also as incorporating “the competencies that the literate person is able to demonstrate” (Māori Adult Literacy Reference Group, 2001, p. 5). In this way *Te Kāwai Ora* made it clear that literacy policy must be grounded in social and historical realities and, on that basis, should be designed to enhance people’s literacy capabilities. In our view *Te Kāwai Ora* is the key national document which can provide a bicultural vision to inform ongoing governmental strategy development for literacy.

We believe that bicultural awareness is largely dependent on progress in achieving biliteracy within a Treaty framework. As described in *Te Kāwai Ora*, the basis for successful Māori literacy programmes is building pride and self-confidence among the students. This includes a focus on whakapapa, and enhancements of self-esteem and confidence. Once self-esteem has been built, as the report notes,

It opens up the whole person. From there tutors can talk to them and introduce basics: once they start talking the students are like a sponge; they have lots of skills already and others that they have missed out on (p. 31).

In this way, literacy for Māori is not just about the functional literacy skills of reading and writing, it is:

also about outcomes that show that people have increased cultural and political knowledge. As well as knowing how to speak te reo this includes knowledge about whakapapa, knowledge about who you are and where you come from. When asked ‘What is it about learning te reo that is a literacy outcome?’ the answer lies in the ability for Māori to be able to read the Māori world view (p. 35).

### Literacy for Māori includes:

Functional literacy skills of reading and writing

Increased cultural and political knowledge

Ability to speak te reo

Knowledge of whakapapa

Māori being able to read the Māori world view

(Māori Adult Literacy Reference Group, 2001)

One major recommendation from *Te Kāwai Ora* was that “literacy in Aotearoa is redefined in the new strategy as a Treaty-based concept of biliteracy, based in te reo Māori and the English language” (p. 4). This provides a strong connection between functional capability in the two languages of English and te reo, placing them both under a Treaty umbrella.

From a Pākehā researcher’s perspective, it is important to stress that this vision is not to be seen as “something only for Māori” as it were. **Rather, the *Te Kāwai Ora* vision needs to be built into and to underpin the Government’s literacy strategy generally. The end result of a renewed lifelong literacy strategy should be that New Zealanders of whatever cultural heritage find it straightforward to access functional literacy training and development in either or both te reo and English. Further, a focus on te reo Māori allows for a bicultural underpinning to literacy provision (in both training and learning) that would also encourage tolerance and knowledge of differing cultural worldviews.** The ability of tutors to incorporate integrated literacy into vocational programmes and ensure bicultural understandings are integrated throughout requires a high level of initial training and ongoing professional development, alongside cultural guidance from local Māori.

Other nations with a comparable history of colonialism and post-colonialism have in recent times made substantial advances in becoming bilingual from what was largely a monolingual basis. For example, in Wales and Eire, investment in teaching citizens the indigenous languages that were formerly suppressed by the colonial power has paid enormous dividends in creating national pride and self-confidence. An emerging bilingual capability is playing an important part in reacquainting and reequipping those nations’ populations with knowledge of what citizenship means for them in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. New Zealand needs to study and learn from the emerging bilingual experience in countries such as Eire and Wales if it seeks to move towards a genuinely inclusive lifelong learning strategy.

Cultural literacy along with capability in both English and te reo are important foundational abilities that provide impetus to help adult learners achieve their lifelong learning aspirations. A person’s propensity to realise the need for lifelong learning and actually to undertake it over the course of a working lifetime will not be advanced by someone else’s diagnosis of what learning they need. As has often been said, learning and teaching do not involve filling an empty vessel, they comprise lighting a fire. A person’s strong and persisting motivation for lifelong learning needs to be built on both extrinsic rewards and on intrinsic, self-defined benefits. Of these, the intrinsic benefits are the most persuasive and enduring.

Any lifelong literacy strategy must be open to the pedagogical reality that there are many different ways in which people of whatever ethnicity discover the need for strengthened literacy skills, then seek to build them. Our previous reports have given many illustrations of the highly diverse routes into literacy that our interviewees have traversed. The *Te Kāwai Ora* report also featured the importance of fostering diverse approaches to literacy achievement, demonstrating the need that “multiple pathways towards the goal of biliteracy are provided for in te reo Māori and in English” (p. 17).

**Certainly any national strategy based on the notion of one size fits all in literacy training is destined to fail. As already stated, adults will attain their literacy objectives when the circumstances of their diverse lives permit them to do so, and when they are inspired to do so. Inspiration will not be legislated for, and so broad packages of support mechanisms and incentives are needed to fit the diverse needs of literacy aspirants.**

In several parts of this and in many of our previous reports we stressed the importance of holistic perspectives that are required if literacy needs are to be met. *Te Kāwai Ora* (Māori Adult Literacy Reference Group, 2001), as noted, has pointed to the “multiple pathways” required for lifelong literacy. While this kind of observation is certainly true for Māori, in our view all New Zealanders with aspirations to strengthen their literacy likewise need diverse opportunities to succeed in lifelong learning. *Te Kāwai Ora*’s orientation to “‘waiaora’, or total well-being” (p. 44) is apposite to all literacy learners. All these learners need a basis of well-being to underpin their adult lifelong learning.

It is also evident from the *Te Kāwai Ora* report that adult literacy learners need quality access to tutors who are skilled in Māori pedagogies and Māori cultural practices. The term quality here refers to the consistent implementation and pervasiveness of Māori pedagogies and cultural practices throughout all learning processes for those learners who wish to access it. In addition, Māori cultural knowledge needs to be inherent within practitioner pedagogical processes and professional development opportunities for those practitioners who wish to access it. Again, this is not a need just for Māori learners but is very relevant to learners of any ethnicity or culture who become more fully engaged by forms of pedagogy taught within a Māori cultural framework. Once again this approach is necessarily based on the need for local solutions to locally-defined problems. Also relevant are regional differences and gender issues which Māori

and Pasifika peoples (among other ethnic groups) believe are salient in their learning<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> For example, see Rāwiri (2006) for a discussion of literacy and employment issues primarily relevant to Whanganui Iwi.







## Practitioners' professionalisation and quality assurance

The New Zealand industry for adult literacy provision is undeveloped, fragile, and insufficiently resourced to do the work expected of it. It requires substantial capability building in respect of its professional, financial, and planning infrastructure, so that there can be sharing of best pedagogical and business practices. However, such sharing of best practice is not compatible with the current competitive funding arrangements. Literacy providers are forced to compete with their peers for contracts for precisely specified services. This promotes secrecy and debilitating competition, which does nothing to build capacity in the industry. Providers live hand-to-mouth on a contract-by-contract basis, their attention dominated by the need to compete for the next micro-contract. This perpetuates the absence of infrastructural capacity in this very weak industry.

**It is not the system of contracting in a philosophical sense which is problematic. Rather, the problem stems from the practice of mandating competitive practices in a very undeveloped and fragile industry.**

### **What gets measured gets done**

Inherently, a contracting system in an undeveloped industry such as adult literacy provision focuses the attention of both funders and providers on the micro-level of centrally mandated and pre-specified provider outputs. In theory (and ideally), such outputs would combine to form the desired outcomes for which Government is trying to legislate.

In practice, socially desirable outcomes tend to blur into insignificance for both funders and providers, because such outcomes are not being measured. Both parties are likely to ignore the big picture outcomes in favour of what they are being measured on. Such a method comprises a deficient and checklist-oriented approach to accountability.

This is a classic example of the poor managerial practice of 'hoping for A, but rewarding B'. The Government and its agencies hope for the

outcome of a fully literate knowledge society but deliver limited implementation contracts that reward micro-level service outputs. The resulting services are ill-coordinated with one another, do not necessarily address actual causes of low literacy, and therefore skate over the underlying issues surrounding deficient literacy and continued personal and societal development.

**Nationally, we hope to build fundamental competencies as a way to get people started on a life-long staircase of learning. What we get is funding and training practice that emphasises (mainly low-level) employment outcomes for those with limited education, the provision of which generally ceases when a person actually achieves a job.**

Providers also report struggling with the contradictory demands of industry and Government funding agencies for those potential learners currently in employment. Funding bodies want adult literacy providers to provide whole qualifications, whereas the industry training demand is for short courses or specific unit standards with back-up support in the workplace. An employer generally cannot support the cost to the business of supporting an employee through a whole-qualification training programme.

### **Misapplied funding and the power of tight-loose**

The short-term and fragmented adult literacy funding practices of recent times, although costly, have so far failed to impact on the very poor literacy performance first identified in a substantial percentage of the New Zealand population in 1996. We are concerned at the prospect that the 2006-2007 version of the IALS, the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALLS), will reveal that in the last 10 years no substantial progress has been made in ameliorating this country's deficient literacy attainments among its lowest-achieving citizens.

Although the field is still under-funded, the more pressing issue is not solely lack of in-

vestment in adult literacy (which has been substantial, though misapplied). Rather, what has been missing is the coordination of purchased services in such a way as to achieve desired outcomes of the macro-nature sought, in the form of a literate population. Essentially funding has been applied, and still is being applied, in erroneous ways.

If an outcomes-oriented approach is to occur, investment decisions must be made by professionally competent individuals at a local level. One of the missing elements for literacy provision in this country is a "tight-loose" approach to goal achievement. The tight element in this refers to the need for a clearly specified, centrally mandated, nationally monitored set of aims to achieve adult literacy that flow from the Government's social goals.

However, the allocation of the funding that purchases policy outcomes must be determined in so-called loose mode by national and local decision-makers acting together. **Because of the very diverse character of low literacy and its social and economic concomitants, locally determined solutions to locally defined problems are essential.** A stronger voice for regional stakeholders and experts in literacy provision will permit the sharing of responsibilities for both outputs and outcomes.

But only when literacy provision is much more developed than it is now, and thus is on a more professional footing, will appropriate decisions be made on a case-by-case basis on which approaches to learning are best suited to the individuals and groups requiring literacy training.

Some of the fundamentals for growing professionalisation are being put in place, for example, the development of the Adult Literacy Practitioners Association (ALPA) and the Adult Literacy Educators (ALE) qualifications. However, this framework will not change anything by itself until the reality of practitioners' work lives permits them to employ this framework to strengthen their professional knowledge and practices.

### **Other needed developments include:**

- Stabilised funding
- Building the critical mass of adult literacy businesses
- Pay scales, career progressions, & structured induction training for practitioners
- Diverse professional development opportunities

## **Professional development needs**

The diversity of programmes across providers means tutors do not necessarily share similar professional development needs<sup>3</sup>. Practitioners described difficulties finding professional development opportunities relevant to their needs. For professional development opportunities to be relevant, they either needed to be very generic (and thus malleable to different settings) or very specific in their focus. Practitioners suggested that having the opportunity to forward areas of interest to those running a workshop before attendance was valuable in receiving relevant training.

Generally, however, one-off workshop opportunities were not viewed as overly useful, with a preference expressed for workshops structured over a few days or months, which allowed for initial attendance, testing the approach in classrooms, returning to the professional development course to share experiences and discuss ways to improve, testing the improved model in classrooms again, and coming back to discuss experiences again.

Currently, for many practitioners, the time required out of work to attend meetings, take courses, or attend conferences is not realistic due not only to a lack of committed funds to support this, but also to the lack of a reliever

practitioner to continue work in their absence. Funding for attendance (and travel and accommodation costs if needed) at professional development opportunities is useless if funding is not also available for relievers to continue quality learner training in the practitioner's absence.

As mentioned above, however, it is not solely the need for more funding that is at issue here (although more funding is indeed necessary). It is the need to provide funding alongside business training to ensure funding is targeted appropriately which will help to ensure professional development can be undertaken.

As providers furnish a distinctive service from one another in any one given geographical region, professional development needs are also distinctive. Through further professionalisation and strengthening of the ALPA group, professional development could be improved through bringing together communities of tutors defined by "type of tutor" nationally, rather than defining community in a geographical sense. By enhancing access to telephone, video, or internet conferencing resources, discussions between similar provider agencies could enhance practice. Especially when combined with a re-think of the competitive model of funding, enhanced national collaboration between similar types of organisation would help ensure that best practice is shared and built on.

Differing forms of professional development also need to be supported. For example, providers mentioned the ability to collaborate with one another through joint practitioner-led research projects would impact on community development, community research capacity building, and best practice.

An additional issue related to enhancing quality of adult literacy programmes via the requirement for adult literacy qualifications is tutors' acknowledgement that they need to gain the respect of reluctant students before those students will be prepared to undertake literacy study. In the view of practitioners, there was a tension between those who could

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed, in-depth discussion of the professional development needs of Wanganui adult literacy practitioners, please see Harrison & McKinnon (2007).

teach foundation learners (who were described as needing maturity, life experience, and usually having had the experience of being parents themselves), and those who held the necessary qualifications but did not have the necessary life experience.

This unique mix of life experience and qualifications needed to fulfil the role of an adult literacy practitioner adequately (now and in the future) will require professionalisation of the field in order to attract more potential recruits. Professionalisation for practitioners implies (amongst other things) job security, realistic pay scales, career progressions, structured initial training and qualifications, and ongoing professional development opportunities.

## Deficiencies in critical mass

The industry is still dogged by problems of insufficient business critical mass. The problem of inadequate critical mass of adult literacy businesses helps to account for a significant proportion of what we see as the current wastage of adult literacy funding. **The adult literacy funding regime in effect props up numerous micro-businesses in a day-to-day sense, but does little to introduce necessary business systems or upgrade those that are in use.**

Hence, enterprise systems taken for granted in larger enterprises, such as appropriate governance, planning, administration, control, financial planning, human resources planning, professional training and development for staff, and information services, are either missing or are insufficient. We can see no prospect of industry reform in the short to medium term for this inefficient system.

The nature of micro-level adult literacy business also does nothing to build the libraries of essential resources needed for teaching and learning. Such libraries should comprise a reserve or knowledge bank of organisational expertise and form a major part of the raw material employed within this industry to achieve its outputs. Currently the micro-individual

provider businesses scabble for resources, trying to find something serviceable from the internet or any other source they can think of, to serve their needs.

Unlike a medium-size enterprise such as a primary school, where appropriate collections of teaching and learning materials can be built up over time, few such resources exist in many provider businesses<sup>4</sup>. Downloads from the internet have some value, but such material is not generally contextualised for local situations, given that it tends to be designed for American rather than local learners. The costs of providing such resources and other relevant overheads are substantial and continuing, and need to be factored into funding arrangements.

**To this end, providers advocated a similar funding arrangement to that of schools where the majority of funding is paid near the beginning of the year to allow these costs to be met.** Further, significant overhead funding should be provided at least once per term in order to furnish some predictable cashflow for business planning.

In respect of training and development, as mentioned above, very small business entities have little prospect, for example, of engaging relieving staff if they wish one of their staff to undertake professional development. In a literacy provider, just as in any other micro-business, release of, say, one out of just three staff members is normally impossible when each person has to earn their keep on a full-time basis.

This is why, typically, small businesses in other New Zealand industries undertake little or no formal training. The situation is no different for literacy businesses. While the establishment of entities such as ALPA are worthy initiatives, a reality check is needed. There is little point in providing training and development solutions that appear to be modelled with reference to more mature industries that

<sup>4</sup> Wanganui providers did mention that information of use could be accessed via the Workbase, Literacy Aotearoa, and NZ Literacy Portal internet sites.



feature medium-size organisations (for example, primary or secondary schools) when the nature of the adult literacy infrastructure is quite different.

Similar constraints apply to the professional development courses that are run by entities such as the TEC and the Learning for Living project in Wanganui. **As touched on previously in this report, professional development opportunities need to be closely aligned to the actual constraints on staff release that apply in the adult literacy training industry.**

An example of lack of resources associated with the micro-enterprise status of adult literacy training businesses is the absence of adequate induction processes for training practitioners' roles. Currently, new practitioners tend to have few formally supplied resources to help them understand the professional norms, parameters, and possibilities in their work. This creates for newcomers a slow and uncertain entry into the workplace and runs the risk of new staff learning erroneous work approaches that do not represent good practice. In this environment, the insights obtained from initiatives such as the foundation learning progressions from the Learning for Living project were viewed by one new practitioner as especially valuable.

The low pay for adult literacy training practitioners is a further constraint on the development of the industry and on national hopes for a literate society. Once again a comparison with the primary and secondary school sector is relevant. If a strong and secure adult literacy industry is sought, then it is reasonable to expect that its practitioners should have a similar level of income expectation as school teachers, for example, along with a similar level of status and job security.

The difference between the Government's attitude to the school sector and the adult literacy industry can be seen in factors such as poor income for adult literacy practitioners, uncertain continuing employment prospects, and a low level of status and recognition for the work that they do, despite its national impor-

tance. Practitioners draw attention to the norm that if a student in their class fails to arrive, funding for that student is withdrawn. They ask, would a primary or secondary school teacher get their pay docked if a student was sick and did not come to class? If not, where is the equity in relation to the equally important work of adult literacy education?

In the researchers' view, it is quite logical to fund institutions such as polytechnics, universities, etc., on the basis of their actual number of equivalent full time students (EFTS), as some, but not all, of the adult literacy providers are funded. However, provision needs to be made for the institutional reality of the adult literacy industry. Once conditions such as pay rate and security of employment are comparable to primary or secondary teachers', for example, then it will be reasonable for expectations to take effect such as a consistent level of professional qualifications, and ongoing education for practitioners. By such means a necessary transition into a more mature industry will occur. And once adult literacy businesses possess a size that permits economies of scale, then a relationship between students who turn up and funding levels should be workable.

**Practitioners also draw attention to funding disparities across the sector based on the way providers are funded.** For example, some are funded for very low-level literacy learners, others by TOPS funding, others by EFTS funding etc. Funding disparities of this nature create unevenness and uncertainties in business planning and do nothing to assist enterprises to carry out their management and planning functions. Uncertainties about the extent and continuity of funding undermine provider businesses' ability to keep their practitioners on the payroll. Again, this industry suffers by comparison with other sectors that can rely on fairly consistent and predictable cash-flow, such as schools. This fairly consistent, predictable cash-flow provided to schools with the majority of funding and overheads paid near the beginning of each year, has been outlined as an example of the way PTEs should be funded.

**Further, funding needs to take into account the high level of pastoral care, very often shading into social work, that is required before adult literacy students can advance significantly in their learning.** Little such funding for this kind of social work support for learners is currently available. But tutors know, on the basis of their everyday teaching reality, that they cannot advance in their pedagogical goals until students are assisted to put themselves into a psychological and social space that will accommodate learning. Therefore, in effect, tutors and their provider employers themselves subsidise the costs for the social work-related activities that must often precede and accompany literacy learning.

For example, adult literacy students often need to make a breakthrough into an understanding that their literacy learning experience will not be a repeat of previous failure at school. Strong systems of support for students within the provider organisation were considered critical by practitioners we spoke to in focus groups. Also discussed was the necessity to continually encourage students and provide moral support through phone calls, site visits, and tutor contact with employers while on work placements.

Further, adult literacy participants mentioned the impact of appropriate identification of health needs on their learning ability, with some stating that eyesight or learning difficulties were not properly diagnosed or addressed until they came to an adult literacy provider (Sligo, Comrie, Olsson, Culligan, & Tilley, 2005). In terms of broader health needs, adult literacy providers also discussed the difficulties associated with teaching students (or indeed preparing students so that they were able to learn) who were on drugs, or in need of counselling services (Neilson, Culligan, Watson, Comrie, Sligo, Vaccarino, & Franklin, 2006).

Tutors detailed the importance of support for each other within their roles. It was important for practitioners to have access to some form of outlet or relief from work stress. This could take the form of talking things over with fam-

ily members or colleagues, or a more formal support/ supervision system with provider management. Given the pervasive need for pastoral support of students by all the practitioners we spoke to, it is necessary that structured supervision is available for practitioners as part of the professionalisation of the field.

**Tutors are additionally well aware of the disparity in the levels of income that they currently receive, in comparison with what they could obtain in other jobs. It is only through reliance on tutors' goodwill and passion for their work, that the industry stays in operation.**

## **Development of a national assessment tool**

In our view it is a basic duty of an education professional to conduct individual assessments of clients to assess initial learning needs, test how well learning has progressed, and then follow up with the individual as necessary. Yet providers will not be undertaking their work at a professional level until such time-consuming assessments and follow-up procedures are standard practice in their industry. **Currently, providers are not sufficiently funded for assessment and remedial work, nor are tutors typically well trained to undertake them.** Nor do providers generally possess technology - such as appropriately flexible testing materials - to perform quality assessment.

The Government's 2007 Budget outlined \$8.5 million funding for the development over the next four years of a new national assessment tool to support adult literacy, numeracy and language tutors in preparing teaching and learning strategies for their learners. The lack of such a tool has been a topic of substantial concern to Wanganui adult literacy training providers, so we see this development as an important step forward. The particular value of the proposal is its promise for the creation of stronger shared understanding of literacy learning and professional standards on ways to build improvements in literacy, numeracy,

and language, on a national rather than local level. However, we stress that it is essential this national tool be flexible and responsive to relevant local situations and contexts.

It will be important that development in assessment should be informed by comprehensive consultation with both adult literacy learners and trainers. Wanganui would be a valuable site for any such developmental work and trials of the tool, given the intense community research into adult literacy that has been undertaken there over the last few years.







# Addressing literacy learners' needs

In an earlier report (*Tipping Points*, step 8, Sligo, Tilley, Culligan, Comrie, Vaccarino, & Franklin, 2006) we argued that a clear focus for policy must be the urgent need to keep learners in school, given that a person's level of educational attainment is the strongest predictor of subsequent adult literacy proficiency. However, it may reasonably be objected that this recommendation exists in some tension with the problem that many of our respondents reported experiences of failure at school, with consequent feelings of inadequacy and a strong desire to get out of that environment.

Providers also pointed to how ITOs may sign on students who do not then complete their qualifications. Many instances are known of students as young as in years eight or nine who in effect fall through the gaps. They may exit from school at intermediate or in early secondary years, and then are supposed to undertake home correspondence schooling, but in reality have no further educational experience. Providers also pointed out that too often the learning needs of pregnant early school leavers are not catered for. The prospects are not great of such students achieving high standards of literacy and numeracy, or obtaining access to positive role models of educational and social achievement.

So how are such problems resolved, and what kind of school environments would enable learners to stay engaged with the secondary school system? These are crucial questions but because issues of primary and secondary schools are not the main focus of this research, it is mainly beyond our scope. Nevertheless, while it is not appropriate for the current report to delve too far into this issue, clear signals for what kind of schooling is needed are available from the comprehensive set of pathways into learning already identified by our low literacy learners, which are described in our earlier reports (for example, Sligo, Culligan, Comrie, Tilley, Vaccarino, & Franklin, 2006; Tilley, Comrie, Watson, Culligan, Sligo, Franklin, & Vaccarino, 2006; and, Tilley, Sligo, Shearer, Comrie, Murray, Franklin, Vaccarino, & Watson, 2006).

In these reports we described the attributes of adult literacy learning which delighted these respondents. As earlier noted, these learners often initially feared their literacy training might replicate their earlier schooling disasters. However, they were overwhelmingly happy to find this adult literacy training did not replicate school and typically took them onto a whole new plane of successful learning experiences.

**In essence, then, the way to keep at-risk learners in school is to ensure that their school experience is as close as possible to the learning environment they find in adult literacy provision. A further part of the solution is to strengthen existing transitional school to work programmes, so that academic literacy can be transformed into workplace literacies.**

## **Persistence and retention issues**

Economic and other factors sometimes draw providers to accept students presenting for instruction. This is regardless of whether or not, in the providers' best judgement, the student is ready to take on the arduous work of improving their literacy. Students who are accepted too quickly may not understand what they are committing to and can quickly exit from the course. This causes outcome measurement problems for the provider. Systems need to be instituted that encourage providers to interview the potential student, giving them a realistic preview of what is entailed, and ensuring that some lead time is available before an enrolment is accepted. Some providers already undertake this system; however, with current funding and other pressures, not all providers are able to make use of this approach.

Often associated with this are issues of compliance and coercion. Some students are instructed to attend a course, such as by Work and Income. Yet if students are not psychologically or socially ready for a commitment of this nature, then the efforts of the provider are substantially undermined. **Often funding sys-**

**tems seem to possess little recognition that a student with rock-bottom morale and minimal experience in classroom-style learning will have the greatest difficulty in building a commitment to a literacy programme of even 10 hours a week, let alone 40.**

Providers described the problems inherent in dealing with young students who do not want to be in adult literacy training. Those teenagers who have not made a psychological transition from school and its long breaks tend to be unmotivated. For example, such students' peers and friends are on school holidays, so why aren't they? However, they are typically dependent on their unemployment benefit, so do not want to lose it. Hence they will attend the course even though they may have very little interest in performing well in it.

This raises serious questions about the appropriateness of permitting such students who are still children, cognitively and emotionally, to receive the unemployment benefit. Instead there needs to be a means of ensuring such students understand that they have a responsibility to undertake training. They also need support, perhaps for the first time in their lives, to experience success in educational achievement.

## **The needs of young school leavers**

An issue to be addressed is the larger numbers of teenagers finding their way into literacy learning post-school. More 15-16 year olds are turning up at providers as more parents are getting exemptions from school for them. This is highly challenging for adult literacy practitioners as very different skills are needed to teach a 15 year old than to teach an adult. Teenage and adult levels of understanding are also different, and literacy tutors who have not been trained to teach adolescents are often not equipped to undertake this demanding task. However, providers expressed a concern that there is nowhere else for these students to turn to, considering that many are unable to learn within a formal school setting. Some, having been expelled from school, find it difficult, if

not impossible, to re-enter the school system. Sometimes such students' relative lack of maturity means they need particular supports to successfully engage in literacy learning.

School funding systems were seen as part of the problem of why early school leavers ended up in the adult training arena. Schools receive the majority of their funding for students at the beginning of the year, with one provider referring to the "mid-year cull", stating that some schools perceive little incentive to retain "difficult" students thereafter. The question was asked "Why are schools allowed to kick these kids out?"

**Providers also expressed a concern about the lack of collaboration between secondary schools and providers which could help ease the transition for a 15-16 year old student who can no longer cope with the formal school system.** The opinion of some providers was that once the student was no longer enrolled in the school, they were not seen to be the school's problem. However, practitioners believed a system of collaboration where students could take a break from school for a while by attending a provider (trained in working with teenagers) could sometimes be all that was needed to get the student back on track with their learning. With sufficient collaboration in place, the student could then be supported to re-enter formal schooling systems. Again, this cannot be further explored in the present report, but the place of transitional programmes does need further investigation.







# Lifelong learning and development for learners

In our view far too little is being done to provide training and support schemes for literacy learners that cover the transition to the workplace and enable the provision of further top-up training. None of the relevant strategies seems to cope well with this area, and there appears to be no vision that is being articulated in reality of how to ensure citizens newly entering work are helped to succeed in their literacy.

The term lifelong learning is being employed increasingly, but it lacks conceptual definition and experts do not agree on what the term actually means. Since there is no clarity about what lifelong learning is, no operational route to its implementation exists in respect of what precisely is being sought, or how it is to be facilitated. Lifelong learning appears more as generalised and optimistic rhetoric, rather than as a set of outcomes which is being pursued by some logical and systematic means.

**In our view, literacy learners, whether in the pre-employment phase or once in employment, need constant support by way of directional support systems, especially one-to-one counselling for career and life direction.** Informal support is even more critical, so that literacy learners obtain access to strong and positive role models. Thus lifelong learning requires formal supports, especially in the early days when people are building confidence in their own abilities, and informal supports for the duration of learning, hopefully their lifetime.

Both formal and informal underpinnings for learning are critical as smarter technology inevitably finds its way into all levels of enterprises of all sizes. Organisations succeed in maximising their returns from new technology only when people in the enterprise are supported to make the best use of it. This means on-going, situated literacies within technology learning programmes are needed. Situated literacies refer to contextualised foundation skills needed in a particular situation. These skills are important so that learners can confidently tackle the challenge of smarter technology and understand how to employ it at work.

## Post-placement employment support

Literacy tutors described how students had varied willingness to continue contact with a provider once in employment. Some enjoyed actively retaining connections with tutors, while others made no further contact. A follow-up period of between six months and two years was often considered necessary to help newly-employed students remain on track with their literacy. However, in the absence of requisite funding for this, tutors are often unable to continue offering any such support. In the absence of supportive literacy backup, students who leave a course early and lose touch with providers may well regress in their literacy capabilities.

Tutors thought it essential for students' ongoing reinforcement of learning that they should have access to continued teaching after entering employment such as apprenticeships. Employers may be open to the possibility of their staff having ongoing learning, but are deterred by the cost of providing this. Some practitioners reported that their organisations had been asked by local employers to assist employees struggling with literacy components of Industry Training Organisation (ITO) courses. However, even though literacy classes at night are possible, lack of attendance is a difficulty when classes are not compulsory.

There was also a need for funding to be targeted more towards identified needs. For example, providers found it difficult to offer employment preparation programmes successfully when they are not funded to include workplace support of students.

Some providers referred to what they understood to be funding for them to follow up with students newly placed in employment, for a period of up to six months after they have left the training course. However, they did not know how to access this nor did they know how the funding for it worked.

One provider reported success by employing a workplace liaison person whose role was to

follow up students with programmes in the workplace. Unfortunately this is funded for no longer than two to three months, which is usually insufficient time to provide any assurance that the student is making substantial gains in their literacy.

Once again many practitioners attempt to substitute informal support systems where the formal ones are lacking. From a sense of personal responsibility they will often follow up with former students. However, this assistance depends on individual tutors and the time that they can make available, which means that such support is unlikely to be well planned, structured, or resourced.

## Whole person development

A major theme that kept emerging from virtually all our 20+ research approaches and methods in this research programme was the centrality of the whole person in literacy learning. We found, for example, that learning disability or health impairments (particularly chronic conditions) have a strong association with low achievement of literacy (Sligo. et. al., 2005). Closely associated with this is the impact of poverty on health. In all cases better identification and support systems are needed for people with health impairments. Especially important is specialist training for literacy providers who work with people presenting with multiple health and welfare needs.

## Literacies measurement

Because of the array of interlinked disadvantages facing people of low literacy, so-called soft achievements must first occur before people are capable of making literacy progress. Quantitative measures can be used to demonstrate a person's progress in learning how to learn and making actual progress with literacies (for examples, please see the list below). Yet because of the narrow, functional way in which literacy is currently understood, such measures find no part in Government funding.

**Progress is needed in defining which soft outcomes are to be measured, and funding them, as valid and essential aspects of preparation for literacy and further literacies learning.**

Such outcomes, all of which can be measured satisfactorily, are elements in everyday life events associated with developing literacy, for example, when people can:

- consistently articulate their needs face-to-face to another person
- be responsibly assertive such as with their own family members
- help their children with their homework
- show confidence when speaking within a small group
- prepare a CV that demonstrates their competencies
- obtain a driver's licence.

All these are measurable outcomes. The Government and its funding agencies need to demonstrate an understanding that literacy training, and the community schemes of which they are a part, provide increases in important outcomes such as the above. These contribute to the stability of society, lay the foundations for literacy learning, and start to build a quality workforce.

## **Preparedness for learning**

Providers constantly drew attention to the holistic needs of adult literacy learners. As learners' confidence grows in line with their educational achievement, and in the safe and supportive environment of the adult literacy class, a need often arises to discuss painful past or present experiences. This may manifest itself either one-to-one or in a group setting where it has the potential (as one practitioner put it) to "flip the whole class". Providers expressed concern that often they were called upon to act as social workers with no specialist training. They discussed attempting to refer the learners on to appropriate support agencies (and sometimes accompanying them to such) while

avoiding falling into a counselling role themselves. These incidences impact heavily on learning, with the learners usually unable to continue their training until they are working through or resolving their life issues.

**To address this, one Wanganui provider has recently served as a pilot agency for assessing the impact of a part-time clinical social worker on-site for access by both learners and staff (see McDonald & Jones, 2007) for a report outlining the findings from this pilot). Other Wanganui practitioners felt a clinical social worker on staff would be a means to resolve such learner needs (as well as providing supervision opportunities for staff), and take the load from tutors who were not trained to deal with these issues. Alternatively, a clinical social worker accessible to several different providers was viewed as a viable option.**

Government funding bodies for adult literacy provision do not ask for reporting of outcomes to do with increases in confidence, self-esteem, or progress in dealing with past or present problems. While acknowledgement of the student "getting to another space" is reported anyway by many of the providers both internally and to governmental level, these measures are not what the evaluation of the progress of the provider agency is based upon. For example, while an adult literacy provider may have moved five out of 10 students to a point where they can begin to learn and/or maintain employment, this is not recognised as an outcome. Instead, the provider could be seen to have "not achieved" for 50% of its students, as only movement into employment or further training is counted.

Lifelong learning policy must acknowledge the level of support needed to prepare adult literacy learners for learning and subsequent employment. This recognition must be reflected in reporting structures which include specific measures of a learner's progress in work readiness. Reporting learners' needs along these lines would create a candid picture of the resources necessary to address differing areas of literacy development. Structured and spe-



cifically targeted funding, based on evidence of need areas built up over time, could ensure the opportunity to prepare learners to achieve and maintain employment through PTEs is not lost.



In an earlier report (*Tipping Points*, Sligo et al., 2006) this research team expressed the view that it is critical for relevant Government strategies (and associated Government departments) to work well together. We noted unevenness in the articulation and outcomes of the relevant Government strategies, especially the Adult Literacy Strategy (ALS), the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES), and the Industry Training Strategy (ITS). We were of the view then, and still are now, that all three need to work seamlessly in respect of actual policy, in policy signals received within and beyond Government agencies, and in directing funding.

However, this was regarded as just a pious hope by some Wanganui providers, who in practice were unable to identify any significant direction supplied by the strategies. The existing strategies are regarded as wish-lists only. The absence of apparent collaboration among ministries and departments provides no effective underpinning for the Government's claim that the strategies should serve as influential and live documents.

**There is a particular need for strong connections between the TES and the ALS. While the TES is essentially an umbrella policy with adult literacy and foundation skill enhancement one of its concerns, the ALS focuses specifically on these areas. Yet the two strategies appear to have two different foci once the overall aim of enhancing adult literacy skills is removed.** The TES has a focus on lifelong learning, whereas the ALS focuses its energy on improving gains for learners "as quickly as possible" so they may move into employment (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 3). This difference in foci raises the issue of how these two strategies can be implemented jointly in a collaborative fashion? The differences (and similarities) apparent in the direction of these two strategies with regard to the same area of need are addressed in Appendix B of this report.

The focus of adult literacy provider funding and various government departments on outcomes of employment, means that both learn-

ers and providers experience difficulties when students are extracted from a training course for a temporary job commitment for as little as one to two weeks. It is debateable whether students gain much from work experience such as this, but certainly both their learning and the teaching programme are significantly interrupted by this means. We see this as an example of where instrumental and short-term thinking on employment outcomes impedes the goal of ensuring every citizen possesses good opportunities to strengthen their literacy.

We also argued in *Tipping Points* (step 4, Sligo et al., 2006) that leaving literacy training for employment is often not a positive outcome for the student or the national goal of high literacy. In the absence of good on-site workplace literacy programmes, ceasing literacy training to enter employment produces neither a competent, flexible worker, nor organisational capital which is appropriate for the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Literacy policy needs to be re-thought in broad ways so that valid outcomes sought from investment may also include a wide range of benefits in the workplace and wider society.** Literacy and lifelong learning policy need to be tied more securely not just to broader considerations of human capital at high levels of human performance but also to a clearer set of intentions pertaining to the development of national organisational capital. In other words, literacy and lifelong learning policy not only need to address the whole person, but also incorporate aims and outcomes for the whole of economy and society that are then reflected in the implementation structures put in place.

Many government and community agencies understand the need for joined-up inter-agency policy, and seek ways to create the conditions that will generate quality employment. Yet strong, effective ways of doing so have not yet been devised, indicating the importance of jointly sponsored research into how this could be achieved.

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## Appendix A: How we developed this report

In early 2007, the Department of Communication and Journalism, Massey University, in collaboration with our key community research partner, the Wanganui District Library, developed a set of critical theme areas that we thought reflected the need for change within adult literacy strategy. As discussion ensued (and building on previous work in the project), it was proposed that the appropriate focus for this strategy document should be lifelong learning rather than adult literacy alone. This later evolved to lifelong literacy to permit us to maintain focus on adult literacy provider agencies, while also demonstrating our belief in the need for lifelong practice of learning.

The initial themes emerged from the findings in the Literacy and Employment research project over the previous two-and-a-half years, and particularly section “thirty-nine steps” within *In Their Own Words: Policy Implications from the Wanganui Adult Literacy and Employment Research Programme* (Sligo, et. al., 2006). The initial nine themes were:

1. Professionalisation (quality assurance)/ professional development for practitioners
2. Integration and collaboration of programmes
3. Funding
4. Bicultural awareness
5. Linkages with government/ workforce/ employers/ community stakeholders/ secondary schools
6. Personal/ professional development/ lifelong learning for participants
7. Whole person development
8. Awareness of lifelong learning and/ or literacy
9. The contribution of research.

These themes were discussed by adult literacy provider management at a PTE meeting in March 2007. It was agreed that these themes represented the areas most needing strategic changes in the sector. Managers present at this meeting also ranked each theme in order of importance, with funding the highest ranked area requiring change. Further, funding and bicultural awareness were discussed as the two strategic areas that should not be treated separately. Instead, ideally, these two areas should be integrated throughout a strategy document.

All Wanganui adult literacy providers, practitioners, and research partners/ subcontractors were next invited to take part in developing this discussion document. In both facilitated group and one-to-one meetings over the next two months, providers and practitioners gave their perspectives on each theme area, focusing on three questions about each:

- What do you do (if anything) to work with/address the issue now?
- What things need to happen to allow this issue to be addressed more effectively?
- What (if any) changes would you suggest to the way this area is funded?

Transcripts from these meetings, along with feedback from the 2007 national ALPA conference plus findings from the Literacy and Employment Project, were then collated. While evaluating these data, it became evident to the authors that it would be more effective to comment on issues of current strategy and how current strategy and adult literacy provision abilities could be improved, rather than to try to develop a new strategy as such. Therefore, this report discusses both the strategic direction needed for future adult literacy provision, in tandem with the disconnection between current adult literacy strategy, current tertiary education strategy, and the implementation of key, relevant strategies.

We hope this report offers some constructive solutions, derived from the insights of adult literacy providers and practitioners themselves, for developing a strong, efficient, and effective adult literacy sector.

## Appendix B: Comparison of key areas of the ALS and prior and current versions of the TES

	Adult Literacy Strategy (Ministry of Education, 2001)	Tertiary Education Strategy 2002-2007 (Ministry of Education, 2002)	Tertiary Education Strategy 2007-2012 (Ministry of Education, 2006)
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Increasing opportunities for adult literacy learning</li> <li>2) Developing capability in the adult literacy sector</li> <li>3) Improving quality to ensure that adult literacy teaching programmes and learning environments in New Zealand are world class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Tertiary system more connected to: national goals, business, Māori communities, needs of learners, future-focused strategies, global education providers, tertiary system sectors, increased quality, optimism and creativity</li> <li>2) Raise skill levels so all can create, transfer and apply knowledge throughout economy and society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Success for all New Zealanders through lifelong learning</li> <li>2) Creating and applying knowledge to drive innovation</li> <li>3) Strong connections between tertiary education organisations and the communities they serve</li> </ul>
<b>Strategies/ Priority outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Build on existing providers to expand the range of learner opportunities</li> <li>2) Increase workplace literacy programmes, continually reinforce skills learned, and sustain on-the-job learning</li> <li>3) Trial new provision in undeveloped areas (family literacy; community-based partnerships between providers and Māori/ Pacific/other ethnic communities)</li> <li>4) Build robust quality assurance system</li> <li>5) Develop provider capability: qualified teachers, support networks, training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Strengthen system capability and quality</li> <li>2) Contribute to achievement of Māori aspirations</li> <li>3) Raise foundation skills so all can participate in knowledge society (KS)</li> <li>4) Develop skills needed for KS</li> <li>5) Educate for Pacific peoples' development and success</li> <li>6) Strengthen research, knowledge creation and uptake for KS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Increasing educational success for young New Zealanders – more achieving qualifications at level 4 + by age 25</li> <li>2) Increasing workforce literacy, numeracy and language levels</li> <li>3) Increasing the achievement of advanced trade, technical and professional qualifications to meet regional and national industry needs</li> <li>4) Improving research connections and linkages to create economic opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>			2008 new approach to tertiary planning, funding, QA, monitoring: TEC longer-term

			funding for more stability; will fund on basis of 'quality and relevance of education and research' (p. 13)
<b>What's been done</b>	<p>1) Budget 2000: allocated additional \$45.3 million over 4 years for adult literacy</p> <p>2) Since May 2001 progress in developing quality standards and benchmarks</p> <p>3) Work to continue in parallel with related work on foundation skills arising from TES 2002-07</p>	160,000 in industry training in 2005.	<p><b>Budget 2007 announcement:</b></p> <p>1) \$76.3m operating funding over 4 years, \$2.2m capital funding over 2 years to meet skills shortages, raise skill levels in work-force.</p> <p>2) Industry training funding to increase by \$53m over 4 years.</p> <p>3) Funding to support 220,000 in training annually by 2011 (160,000 in 2005).</p> <p>4) No tax credit in Business Tax Reform. Will support existing schemes to improve skill levels.</p> <p>5) \$15.8m over 4 years for ITOs to identify current/future industry skill and training needs, work along side other TEOs to help them respond to needs.</p> <p>6) \$7.5 million operating funding over 4 years, \$2.2m capital funding over 2 years develop/implement national assessment tool for adult literacy/numeracy/language. This to involve research into effective teaching and learning, and professional development for tutors.</p>
<b>Lifelong learning (LL)</b>	Not mentioned	7 mentions: 1) LL culture in workplace (p. 27); 2) More Māori in LL (p. 35); 3) Pathways from foundation education to higher tertiary education facilitate ease of LL (p. 35); 4) Contemporary world demands LL	14 mentions. LL major focus, repeated slogan 'Success for all New Zealanders through lifelong learning' – e.g. Expected contribution of tertiary education: Success for all NZers through LL (pp. 5, 21); System

		(p. 36); 5) High-level generic skills built on basic literacy/ numeracy skills create LL foundation (p. 37); 6) Education system must deliver 'foundation skills' to all for learning throughout lifetime (p. 38); 7) Outcome of raising foundation skills: Improved life skills and LL skills (p. 66)	must respond to diverse students to attract/retain Māori, Pasifika and Asian peoples to develop LL culture (p. 12) Contradiction: Next five to ten years need more young NZers to <i>complete their tertiary qualifications</i> before age 25 (p. 6). Modified to <i>completing a tertiary qualification</i> by age 25 provides a sound foundation for LL (p. 32)
<b>Māori focus</b>	<p>References to Māori tend to be alongside 'Pacific Islands peoples (PIP) and other ethnic minorities from non-English speaking backgrounds (OENE)'. Focus on 'strengthening communities' while raising groups' literacy levels through 'culturally appropriate' learning</p> <p>p. 8 Provision to be culturally appropriate for wide diversity of learners, especially Māori, PIP and OENE</p> <p>p. 9 Trial new provision in undeveloped areas, e.g. community-based partnerships between established providers &amp; Māori, PIP and OENE</p> <p>p. 10 Partnerships with Māori, PIP, and OENE to develop innovative/appropriate ways of learning targeted to these high-need groups</p> <p>p. 11 Communities need adequate range of culturally-appropriate provision attractive to Māori, PIP and OENE</p> <p>p. 12 More literacy learning opportunities in job seeker programmes, especially PIP and</p>	<p>TES 2002-7 opens with a formal greeting in Māori. The unique position of Māori through their Treaty relationship acknowledged, claimed as 'central element' of TES after 'extensive engagement' with Māori, who are recognised as 'not just another stakeholder group' (pp. 5-6). Tertiary education system to increase partnership with Māori communities, take more 'responsibility for success of Māori students, be more accountable to diverse Māori realities', more inclusive of tikanga Māori, while Māori are to exercise greater authority (p. 29).</p> <p>In TES 2002-7, there are six strategies. Strategy Two (7 pages) is <i>Te Rautaki Mātauranga Māori: Contribute to the Achievement of Māori Development Aspirations</i>. It includes 6 objectives that aim to provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Tertiary leadership accountable to Māori communities.</li> <li>2) Strong, balanced Māori staff profiles within the tertiary education system</li> </ol>	<p>No Māori greeting to open TES 2007-12. The Treaty is not mentioned, but almost a quarter of the introduction is devoted to a statement on the Strategy's responsibility to Māori 'aspirations and development' (p. 4). TES 2007-12 not divided into six Strategies with one devoted to Māori. Instead Māori issues are discussed in a separate section within each chapter. Care has been taken to integrate Māori issues within each facet of the Strategy. However, as subheadings are not listed in the Contents page, it is not easy instantly to identify discussion of Māori issues.</p> <p>The unique status of Māori is reflected in subtle ways, e.g. (p. 9) bullet point in discussion of Economic Transformation: <i>Help maximise Māori collective assets and grow Māori innovation – develop Māori business leaders with entrepreneurial and management capabilities to underpin innovation and productivity</i>. There is no similar discussion relative to Pasifika or any other group.</p> <p>p. 10 Section <i>Māori living as Māori in both Te</i></p>

	<p>Māori, developing literacy skills before job search programmes. Trial Māori and PIP family literacy and adult literacy programmes to raise adult literacy levels.</p> <p>p. 16 The new adult literacy system supports iwi and other Māori communities to achieve quality provision and literacy learning gains <i>according to their requirements and aspirations</i>.</p> <p>p. 17 Must address need for qualified teachers for Māori/PIP, over-represented among those with poor literacy skills.</p> <p>p. 23 Majority of Māori, PIP, and OENE function below literacy competence level to effectively meet everyday needs.</p>	<p>3) Quality programmes that recognise Te Ao Māori perspectives and support revitalisation of Te Reo Māori.</p> <p>4) Options for kaupapa Māori tertiary education reflecting Māori aspirations.</p> <p>5) Increased participation by Māori in broader range disciplines/programmes leading to higher-level qualifications.</p> <p>6) A tertiary education system that makes an active contribution to regional and national Māori/ whānau/ hāpu/ iwi development</p>	<p><i>Ao Māori and wider society ... work with Māori, take responsibility for Māori education and research outcomes. No matching Pasifika section.</i></p> <p>p. 15 Section on wānanga included among sections on types of tertiary providers.</p> <p>p. 24 Section <i>Creating and applying knowledge to drive innovation: Māori</i></p>
<b>Pacific/Pasifika Peoples</b>	<p>Issues for Pacific Islands' peoples mentioned along with 'Māori and other non-English speaking ethnic minorities' as mentioned above.</p>	<p>Strategy 5 <i>Educate for Pacific Peoples' (PP) development and success</i>, includes four objectives:</p> <p>1) Pacific learners encouraged/assisted to develop skills important to the development of Pacific and New Zealand.</p> <p>2) Tertiary system accountable for improved Pacific learning outcomes, connected Pacific <i>economic</i> aspirations</p> <p>3) Pasifika for Pasifika education services assisted to grow capability and enhance PP's learning opportunities.</p> <p>4) Increased proportion of Pacific staff at all levels of decision-making in the tertiary education system.</p>	<p>No chapter on Pacific tertiary education. There is a Pasifika section within most chapters, but not as often as Māori. As with TES 2002-7 where there were fewer pages with fewer objectives for Pasifika than for Māori, there are distinctions between the discussion of Māori and Pasifika issues, e.g. no matching discussion on <i>Creating and applying knowledge to drive innovation: Māori</i> (p. 24); or on <i>Improving research connections and linkages to create economic opportunities: Māori</i> (p. 39).</p>
<b>Industry</b>	<p>IALS identified almost 50% of those needing literacy improvement were employed. Im-</p>	<p>1) Provide industry leadership on skills</p>	<p>1) Build ITOs' capability for provision of skills and leadership in new ways</p>



<b>Training Organisations</b>	proving workplace literacy crucial to ALS. Assessing and training in workplace literacy requires specialised trainers and assessors; currently most industry training has the employer as the trainer (p. 19)	and training need 2) Design national qualifications and set national QA standards 3) Arrange industry training delivery	2) Lift industry training quality and performance to be in line with other quality requirements of other parts of the tertiary sector 3) Respond to industry skills needs by managing industry-training delivery
<b>Private Training Establishments</b>	Not mentioned specifically, but come under the general term 'tertiary education providers'.	[By 2007] PTEs to address small size, provision duplication/capability issues by regional/national <i>collaboration</i> with TEIs/ ITOs/ iwi/ among selves (p. 22). TEIs/ PTEs/ ACE/ ITOs share services/ programmes; distribution networks; alliances with each other/ iwi/ industry/ CRIs/ community/ regional groups (p. 24)	PTE contribution is to support government's investment decisions in tertiary education and expected outcomes; be flexible, responsive. Investments to PTEs will be in line with performance (p. 17)
<b>Adult and Community Education (ACE) Providers</b>	Not mentioned, but Adult Education and Community Learning Working Group is to include advice on sector's contribution to most effectively improve adult education (p. 19)	[By 2007] ACE sector to be more cohesive, better connected to tertiary education system. Develop local/ national ACE collaborative networks, for more strategic provision. Providers to better address ACE workers' professional development requirements (p. 23). See also p. 24 as above	ACE should: 1) Target learners with unsuccessful initial learning; 2) Raise foundation skills; 3) Encourage LL; 4) Strengthen communities: meet identified community needs; 5) Strengthen social cohesion. Achieve by implementation of reforms underway in QA, capability and funding
<b>National goals</b>	1) Economic transformation; 2) Social development; 3) Māori development; 4) Environment sustain; 5) Infrastructural development; 6) Innovation	TES 2002-7: 6 national goals: 1) Economic transformation; 2) Social development; 3) Māori development; 4) Environmental sustainability; 5) Infrastructural development; and 6) Innovation. Tertiary education to support government's Growth and Innovation Framework.	TES 2007-12: National goal of high income, knowledge-based economy, innovative and creative providing unique quality of life to all New Zealanders. By high quality learning and research, tertiary education to contribute to sustainable economic and social development of the nation and provide for diversity of teaching and research that fosters the achievement of international standards of learning and scholarship.

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