

Victoria University of Wellington (VUW), Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL) Submission on New Models for Tertiary Education

CLL role with Victoria University of Wellington

The Centre for Lifelong Learnings role within VUW is to design and deliver a wide range of non-award courses and programmes. It has two core portfolio areas - Professional and Executive Development, and Continuing Education. The two portfolios differ on subject matter, delivery methodology and cost structure. Their respective roles are:

Professional and Executive Development (PED)

To build capability and capacity in the workplace both within New Zealand and internationally. PED covers many subject areas from skills-based training to senior strategic leadership. PED runs predominantly on a market-driven model. Courses are delivered during working hours with course fees mainly covered by employers.

Continuing Education

Engage widely with the community showcasing VUW's range of expertise and research that contributes to a more informed society. The delivery model is mainly evening and weekend classes with course running over a period of weeks. Course fees are kept as low as possible to attract a wide variety of students who self-fund.

Submission Questions

Q33

What are the significant trends in employer demand for tertiary-educated employees, and in student demand for tertiary education? How is the system responding?

With rapidly changing nature of work, Employers and Sector Groups are increasingly asking for credentialing of shorter pieces of learning that are delivered flexibly. Under the current CUAP system new courses and qualifications can take up to two years to be approved. This does not work for Employers who want the development and delivery within a much shorter period.

In 2015 CLL proposed a flexible qualification (Certificate in Professional Practice) to meet specific workplace capability requirements. After working through academic programme approval processes it became apparent that this was not possible. More details can be supplied if required.

We believe there is a need for the development of generic, flexible but rigorous frameworks that can be used to deliver specialist subject credentialed certificates at both undergraduate and post-graduate levels.

Q35

What are the implications of new technologies that are predicted to make many currently valuable skills obsolete? Will this change the role of the tertiary education system?

Some processes and roles will become obsolete with the advancement of technology; however while humans still run the planet certain skills and attributes will always be required. Employers are expecting graduates to have the following attributes to be “work-ready”:

- Empathy
- Respect
- Leadership
- Resilience
- Communication skills
- Collaboration
- Project management
- Creative thinking
- Relationship management
- Marketing
- Analysis

All university programmes should have these skills and attributes designed into their courses or as a separate component of larger programmes/qualifications, so that regardless of the subject enduring learning is taking place.

Q36

What challenges and opportunities do demographic changes present for the tertiary education system?

The ageing population will have another 30 years of learning ahead of them, Continuing Education will become important again to the fabric of society for both recreation and also for health and wellbeing of the community.

In the future people in late middle age will need to re-train for new jobs because of technological changes and as people work longer if the retirement age moves into the 70's.

While many workplaces will be prepared to invest in staff capability develop, in the future this will become a personal responsibility. Current student loan systems only allow people

enrolled in full-time degree based programmes to apply. CLL does regularly receive queries about whether student loans can be used to pay for short courses and at present this can't happen.

There should be a range of funding options available for community continuing education and professional development courses and part-time study.

We acknowledge that there are other areas of demographic change, including New Zealand's increasing cultural diversity, and this will need to be addressed in the model of delivery of tertiary education in the future.

Summary Statement

Victoria University's Centre for Lifelong Learning believe that any future changes in tertiary education need to take into account the need for lifelong learning that takes account of the need to be flexible, affordable and demand-driven.