

**New Models of Tertiary Education: Draft Report
New Zealand Productivity Commission**

A submission by Tertiary Accord of New Zealand (TANZ)

This submission is made by TANZ to the New Zealand Productivity Commission in response to the report - *New Models of Tertiary Education: Draft Report*.

Tertiary Accord of New Zealand (TANZ)

The Tertiary Accord of New Zealand (TANZ) has been successfully collaborating since 2000. TANZ is an Accord between seven of New Zealand's leading tertiary education institutes, established to promote best practice in applied education.

The members are:

- Ara Institute of Canterbury
- Otago Polytechnic (OP)
- Universal College of Learning (UCOL) Palmerston North
- Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT)
- Bay of Plenty Polytechnic (BoPPoly)
- Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT)
- Northland Polytechnic (Northtec)
- Toi Oho Mai Institute of Technology

The aim of the Accord is that, through collaboration, TANZ will strengthen and enhance the performance of member institutions and the ITP sector and show leadership towards a better vocational education system in NZ.

All seven institutions share a commitment to excellence in vocational and applied education. They are autonomous in operation and the Accord accommodates and enhances existing relationships with other tertiary institutions.

TANZ is well positioned to contribute to the current government's desire to foster co-operation and collaboration in the sector.

TANZ eCampus

TANZ eCampus is a key initiative of the Accord partners with a focus on the delivery of a quality online learning service that enables learners to achieve their study goals – whether that is professional enhancement or academic development.

Our vision is to be recognised as New Zealand's leading provider of wholly online learning and to be recognised as the place to go for a top quality on-line learning experience.

TANZ eCampus is the service entity to deliver a range of courses from programmes currently offered on TANZ eCampus platform by:

- Ara Institute of Canterbury
- Otago Polytechnic
- UCOL - Universal College of Learning
- Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology
- Eastern Institute of Technology
- North Tec

All qualifications earned through TANZ eCampus are awarded by one of these providers and all courses are NZQA quality assured.

This submission:

- Provides an overview of the success of our innovative delivery model
- Recommendations to strengthen and assist with the practicalities of delivering successful on-line tertiary education.

TANZ eCampus – Overview

TANZ eCampus has over ten years' experience in delivering on line tertiary education. We have been at the forefront of delivery and have pioneered methodologies and expertise to ensure successful outcomes. Our submission is based on this expertise and learnings.

As identified in the report, online learning is a rapidly expanding sector. An increasing number of institutions are offering online courses and an equally increasing number of learners are choosing to undertake their learning and professional development online. Online learning opportunities offer both learners and institutions significant benefits.

The flexibility of the TANZ eCampus online learning environment is proven to assist with completion and achievement levels and also accounts for its growing popularity. Using international consultants, in collaboration with the expertise housed within our partner institutions, TANZ eCampus has applied international best practice to the development of our online learning design framework. We have enhanced and adapted best practice principles to tailor and target appropriate demographics and different types of learning within a quality framework. Comprehensive data collection and analytics allows us to place the learner experience at the centre of the platform and build support programmes around them. The analytical capabilities and insights built into our programmes result in informed decision making about required levels of support for individual learners.

Through our partnership model we are able to offer over 40 courses to learners covering a range of subjects and qualifications.

Recommendations

We appreciate the opportunity to provide a submission on the draft report - *New Models of Tertiary Education* prepared by the New Zealand Productivity Commission.

This submission does not specifically address individual questions posed in the Draft Report but provides a response to key themes.

The report provides a good context for future delivery models. It provides high level and academic information regarding the provision of future focussed on line delivery from Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs).

The draft report also provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced by the sector in delivery of tertiary education and on line education.

We note that the report was designed to ensure policy findings and recommendations addressed the challenges and opportunities as well as the levers available to government and the actions required by tertiary providers to increase responsiveness to new ways of delivering tertiary education. While we acknowledge that the report does address the first part of this requirement, there is a definite lack of policy/recommendations in relation to the delivery of actions required to increase responsiveness and delivery. It is this aspect that provides the biggest shortcoming in the document from our perspective. We believe this should be addressed in the release of the final report.

TANZ eCampus has been developing expertise in this space for ten years. We have a good understanding of the environment in which we operate and the shortcomings within the sector. It is our view that the time has passed for high level dialogue and overviews and what is required to cultivate innovative practice is to focus on the development of solutions to the issues that currently impede delivery within the sector. We had anticipated that the draft report would do this and we are disappointed that the report does not engage in this territory.

In order to address this shortcoming it is our submission that time is taken in the development of the final report to identify and provide practical solutions that are required to support innovation, investment and collaboration in alternative, future focused delivery models (such as on line learning) in the sector. We have identified the more high level issues in our recommendations.

These include:

- The development and adoption of a framework that encourages and enables a greater level of collaboration within the sector. This would assist with addressing financial concerns and enable economies of scale with regard to the development of innovative responses and programmes. The draft report has clearly identified barriers but does not suggest solutions. These should be included in the final report.
- The development of relevant policy to enable exploration and implementation of commercially based solutions for delivery of on line education by ITPs. On line learning provides the greatest opportunity for sector growth and internationalisation, with the associated benefits and contribution to our economy. We recommend a review and identification of current policy that hinders that growth and the roll out of commercial solutions with appropriate responses developed to address current policy constraints. This review should be included as a recommendation in the final report and should include reference to the development of associated solutions.

- The identification of more flexible funding mechanisms to facilitate investment in cost effective and viable models of on line learning by ITPs. While we recognise that there is a requirement for prescriptive funding within the sector, the current funding model does not facilitate innovation and flexibility. These recommendations should be included in the final report.
- The identification of potential funding collaborations and subsequent mechanisms established to facilitate and enable funding of collaborations. For example, enabling Student Achievement Component (SAC) funding to go directly to collaborations and enabling collaborations to be directly accredited to deliver. A recommendation to undertake further work to enable identification and facilitation of appropriate mechanisms should be included in the final report.
- The provision of policy to enable the development of structured business models to deliver on the government's requirement for improved system wide performance. This would require the implementation of comprehensive commercial application within the sector to ensure viability, ROI, productivity and appropriate scope. The steps required to move towards a more commercially appropriate delivery model should be included as a recommendation in the final report

We would welcome the opportunity to have further dialogue and expand on these recommendations with the authors of the draft report.

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