



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

STP/Trades Academy Programme Operational Policy and Guidelines

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Version Control

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1. Purpose

This paper outlines operational policy relating to the delivery of Secondary-Tertiary Programmes. In particular the paper clarifies:

- The minimum expectations with regards to STP programme design/length;
- Funding distribution and FTE Tertiary/School splits;
- Student eligibility to participate in a STP; and
- Learning outcomes expectations.

This paper does not intend to be fully prescriptive, noting the Education Act 1989 (Sections 31A-31L) allows the recognised Lead Provider to define the methods of delivery, participants, funding split and educational awards offered. The Ministry encourages Lead Providers to align with the operational policy recommendations below (we expect on the most part, Lead Providers already align with the majority of the recommendations), which will ensure compliance with the Education Act and requirements outlined within Funding Agreements (held with either the MOE or TEC).

The document may also be useful for participating secondary schools, students, parents/whanau and other stakeholders to aid their understanding of STP delivery expectations, funding, outcomes and in particular, student eligibility.

2. Background

Trades Academies are the first example of a secondary-tertiary programme (STP) and provide a broad range of learning opportunities for senior secondary students motivated by a trades career to ensure they stay engaged in education for longer.

To date the majority of STPs in operation are Trades Academies, although there is also a School of Secondary-Tertiary Studies, a Careers Academy and a Vocational Academy. All operate according to the same STP rules since establishment in 2010. STPs will be closely monitored and evaluated to determine their effectiveness; this will inform any future commitment.

STPs are based on a partnership between schools, tertiary and industry organisations and will deliver:

- a worthwhile qualification of at least NCEA level 2; and
- a programme which leads to a trades (vocational) related nationally transferrable tertiary qualification in Level 1,2 and 3

This operational policy document will be reviewed on an annual basis, with updates and changes released on a half-yearly basis (or if urgent, immediately). All releases will be subject to the review and approval of the Trades Academy Advisory Group.

3. STP Design and Minimum Expectations

High Level Principles

- Is an integrated learning programme, developed by the lead provider in collaboration with regional stakeholders (i.e. schools, employers, tertiary providers etc).
- Is a quality programme that leads to students achieving worthwhile trades (vocational) related nationally transferrable tertiary qualification in Level 1,2 and 3 (the Ministry accepts a full national tertiary qualification may not be feasible within a one year STP course).
- Is standards based (unit/achievement), so that credits can contribute to NCEA (specifically L2).
- From 2014, students should have the opportunity to attain a Vocational Pathways endorsement in their programme of study. This endorsement opportunity will be expected from 2015 for all students.
- Is a coherent programme delivered by a range of providers able to offer specialist expertise and resources as co-ordinated by the Lead Provider.
- Integrates both the secondary tertiary components so that literacy and numeracy credits are embedded within the programme.
- Includes arrangements for student welfare and safety such as pastoral care, career guidance, and work experience.
- The National Education Guidelines (NEG's) and the New Zealand Curriculum will apply.
- Whilst STP programmes are focussed on enabling NCEA L2 achievement, the Ministry accepts that returning Y13 students can be considered in NCEA L3 programmes (if resourcing allows) to ensure positive transitions.

Programme Minimum Expectations

- Integrated Learning Programme (as noted above) developed with participating stakeholders.
- The programme must deliver sufficient NCEA Level 2 credits to enable the student to successfully attain the NCEA Level 2 qualification upon completion of the course (this may be a multi-year course). The programme includes school based and tertiary based NCEA Level 2 credits.
- The programme will lead towards (or enable achievement) of a nationally transferrable tertiary qualification in Level 1/2/3 (i.e. National Cert in a particular Trade).
- Based on a standard enrolment, it is agreed that the minimum weeks applied to a full time course would be 30 weeks, with most senior roll students expected to be at school for between 30 and 34 weeks¹.
- For full time courses delivered over 30 weeks, lead providers should endeavour to provide flexibility to students in the form of catch up classes to enable the completion of course credits (i.e. during the 4th term).
- Minimum of 25 hours per week study (across both secondary and tertiary based learning).
- A full time course (as per length/times above) will generate 1 FTE student/funded place.

¹ Where a student does not achieve NCEA L2 during the first year of study, the Ministry recommends that where possible, regular school operational grants (e.g. STAR) should be used to support the student completing any unfinished credits (as opposed to utilising a full year funded place the next year).

4. STP Funding Distribution

- Each funded place equates to 1 FTE – this is a full time place across a year (minimum 30 weeks, 25 hours per week).
- The Lead Provider, student and participating school must agree on the programme delivery model and as part of this, must also agree to the funding split based on days (or half days) spent in school or in tertiary learning. Total FTE must equal 1.
- Tertiary Lead Providers are funded by the Tertiary Education Commission on a monthly basis with a yearend wash up completed to account for any under-utilisation.
- School Lead Providers are funded by the Ministry of Education on a quarterly basis², instalments being released in January, April, July and October. Wash ups are completed for each instalment to account for actual students enrolled. This policy aligns with regular schooling operations and reporting requirements.
- Transport funding support will be funded by the Ministry of Education for all Lead Providers. Applications will be processed during the period Dec-February of each year, with approved funding released in two equal instalments. The first instalment will be released in Jan/Feb (subject to a timely submission of the Lead Providers application) and the second instalment in July.

5. School and Student Eligibility

5.1 Participating Schools

Section 31 of the Education Act 1989 defines eligibility for students entering into an STP. A student who is enrolled in any of the following may apply to an STP Lead Provider or Provider Group for his or her entry (typically via the enrolling school) into an STP programme:

- A secondary school
- A composite school³
- A partnership school⁴ kura hourua, other than a partnership school kura that is only a primary partnership school kura hourua
- A private secondary school registered under Section 35A of the Education Act 1989 (not including schools registered only as a primary school)
- A special school that is a relevant school within the meaning of Section 246 of the Education Act 1989

Those students who are home schooled are not eligible to participate in an STP (see Student Eligibility section for further information).

² The Huarahi Trades Academy is funded in three segments as opposed to quarterly. Funding is released and washed up in January, May and September.

³ A composite school in terms of the Education Act, includes (but is not limited to) Area Schools, the Correspondence School (Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu), a Designated Character School, Te kura kaupapa Māori, Teen Parent Units and Te Wharekura.

⁴ Includes Chartered Schools.

5.2 Student Eligibility

Overview

Students participating in STPs must be enrolled in a school as above, and also:

- be a senior secondary school student, i.e. in years 11-15⁵; and
- be aged 18 or under at the start of the calendar year. A student's right to enrol ends on 1 January after the student's 19th birthday, as defined in Section 3 of the Education Act. Adult students are not eligible to participate in an STP⁶.
- be aged 20 or under at the start of the calendar year if the student is ORS funded (see detail below).

Special Education Students

If a student has special education requirements and receives ORS funding, the student's right to enrol ends on 1 January after the student's 21st birthday as defined in Section 9 of the Education Act.

Therefore, these students will be eligible to participate in an STP if aged 20 or under at the start of the calendar year. Special education students aged 19 or older (at the start of the calendar year) who are not ORS funded, will not be eligible.

Homeschooled Students

Those students who are **home schooled are not eligible** to participate (receive STP cash funding) in an STP. Home schooled students are not defined as 'Full Time Students', with the education delivered by a parent or an unregistered PTE also not being a valid form of learning in which to generate funding as defined in Section 311 of the Education Act 1989.

A home schooled student would need to enrol at a secondary or composite (or another school type noted above) school to allow them to attend and generate relevant STP funding. Alternatively, as per the international student guidance below, other funding could be used to fund the tertiary component of the programme, although these students would not be officially recorded as STP funded students.

International Students

International students are eligible to participate in an STP, as per their right to enrol (i.e. visa requirements are met etc). If the international students are fee paying students, they will not be entitled to utilise STP funding for costs associated with the course. Rather part of the international fee can be used to fund the tertiary component of the programme. Therefore these students would not be officially recorded as an STP funded students, but could complete the learning programme pending agreement between the tertiary provider and school.

⁵ Exceptions may be applied to Year 10 students, approval must be sought by the Ministry if a Lead Provider is considering enrolling students from Year 10.

⁶ Exceptions may be applied to adult students who are completing the final year of their programme; approval must be sought by the Ministry if a Lead Provider is considering enrolling an adult student (i.e. a student aged 19 at the start of the year).

If international students are not fee paying students, for example the student's parents are in New Zealand on a work or student visa, that student will (in most cases) be regarded as a domestic student for primary and secondary school⁷. The student will therefore not need to pay international fees. Hence, in this scenario the student will be eligible to utilise STP funding as their school would be funded via regular operation grants and staffing entitlements. It is noted, that based on current tertiary education policy this type of student would not be eligible for free tertiary education (i.e. via other YG funding streams).

The Education Act 1989 Section 31L also notes that a Lead Provider (or Provider Group) must not approve the entry of an international student into a Secondary-Tertiary Programme if to do so would result in the provider excluding from entry to the programme, any domestic student who has applied for entry into the programme and is otherwise eligible to participate.

Private/Public/Partnership School Student Priority

The following principles are provided as a recommendation to Lead Providers regarding private/public/partnership school students:

- All enrolled students (noting sections above) are eligible to participate in an STP.
- STP funded places should be allocated to those students where the Lead Provider, secondary school and parents/whanau agree the trades based learning programmes delivered by STPs will best benefit the students needs.
- While STPs are open to all enrolled students in New Zealand, schools and/or Lead Providers may determine that priority learners or those at risk of disengaging from education (in particular where the 'academic' learning pathway does not align) should be given priority.
- STPs must be treated in the same way as other academic based learning programmes which seek to transition students into higher education. STPs provide an equivalent learning opportunity for those students who wish to pursue and achieve success in a vocational environment.
- Students from private schools may enrol in a STP. Lead Providers will be expected to apply their best judgement as to whether a private school should be allocated funded places, over Public or Integrated Schools. It is important to note the private school will not receive STP funding and their student subsidy for the student may also be reduced. The private school will also need to consider student fees when agreeing to participate in a STP.
- Students from partnership (Chartered) schools (who have been approved by the Ministry) may enrol in a STP. Lead Providers will be expected to apply their best judgement as to whether a Partnership School should be allocated funded places, over Public or Private Schools. The principles in the sections above should be applied when making this assessment.
- Partnership Schools will receive a reduced STP funding rate to account for the per student funding each student will receive in regular operational grant funding. Processes and policy relating to this potential funding requirement is currently being designed.
- It is recommended that where private or partnership school students wish to participate in an STP programme that unfunded STP places be utilised, i.e. the funding arrangements are agreed and managed between the Lead Provider and the private or partnership school.

⁷ Further information can be found at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/immigration/knowledgebase/item/1035>

Student Participation in Multiple Programmes

Analysis of 2013 data identified several students who were enrolled in more than one STP, or were enrolled in more than one programme at the same STP.

The Ministry recommendations with regards to multiple programmes are outlined below:

- STP places should be utilised by Lead Providers to ensure the greatest number of students have access to vocational learning programmes, in particular those priority learners where the school or Lead Provider identifies a high risk of disengaging from education.
- Where there is a particular benefit to a student from participation in multiple STP programmes, the Ministry will approve these students on a case by case basis.
- Lead Providers are expected to engage with participating schools, to confirm if any enrolling students from the school are enrolled in another STP programme.
- Schools should be aware that students participating in more than one programme, will mean their STP funding will reduce accordingly (0.2 FTE per day).

6. Learning Outcome Requirements

- **A** - Ensure student **achievement** of NCEA Level 2 and a programme which may lead to the attainment of a nationally transferrable tertiary qualification in Level 1/2/3

Lead Provider Performance Requirements:

- *At least 80% of all students enrolled in an STP programme will achieve a minimum of NCEA L2*
- *All students in the programme will attain 80% of programme specific credit*

- **R** – Increased **retention** of students in education

Lead Provider Performance Requirements:

- *Of those students enrolled in multi-year programmes, at least 60% will remain in the programme for the next year*
- *All students in the programme will have an attendance rate across the whole programme of at least 80%*

- **T** - Ensure successful **transitions** into further education or employment (i.e. apprenticeships)

Lead Provider Performance Requirement:

- *At least 60% of all students enrolled in the programme are either retained in secondary education or progress to further education or employment*