ACE Strategy Session
28 Aug. 7.30 – 9.00pm

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA

Briefing Note: Adult and Community Education Strategy Session

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Cc:	Hon Tracey Martin, Associate Minister of Education Hon Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education Hon Jenny Salesa, Associate Minister of Education		
Date:	22 August 2019	**Priority:**	Low
Security Level:	In Confidence	**METIS No:**	1201662
Drafter:	Angus Stallmann	**DDI:**	s 9(2)(a) OIA
Key Contact:	John Brooker	**DDI:**	
Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	**Round Robin:**	No

Purpose of Report

This briefing note provides you with information to support the Adult and Community Education (ACE) strategy session on 28 August 2019.

Summary

We have been working with the sector to develop an understanding of the contributions ACE makes and can make to education and society

Adult and Community Education is an integral part of New Zealand's education system and wider society in general.

You tasked us with developing a new vision and priorities for ACE to provide the basis for future sustainable government investment in ACE.

In the 2017 Speech from the Throne, the government included a commitment to reinstate funding for night classes and encouraging lifelong learning.

We have co-designed a draft vision and priorities with the sector

You asked us to work together with sector representatives from a wide range of providers, we have co-designed a draft vision and priorities for the sector. These are outlined in the attached A3.

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Options for the future strategic direction of the sector

We have three potential options for your consideration:

1. Target any new funding at night classes by increasing the volume and rates of funding for ACE in Schools, while also removing the restrictions on the current funding priorities.

2. Increase the volume and rates of ACE funding within the current funding system and current funding priorities.

3. Make a phased investment in the sector over time, based on the new vision and priorities that we have co-designed with the ACE sector.

These are broadly based options to promote discussion and to get guidance from you on the future direction of this work.

Next steps

We will continue to work with the sector based on the feedback you provide at this strategy session and the option you indicate your preference for.

s 9(2)(f)(iv) OIA [redacted]

Proactive release

Agree that this Briefing will be proactively released.

Agree / Disagree

Andy Jackson
Group Manager
Graduate Achievement, Vocations and Careers

22/08/2019

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

28/9/19

Proactively released

Strategy session information

The importance of Adult and Community Education (ACE)

1. Adult and Community Education is an integral part of New Zealand's education system and wider society in general.

2. As a part of New Zealand's education system, ACE can provide a catch-all solution to educating New Zealanders who are out of school and want to learn.

3. The flow on effect of the education is that people develop their ability to participate in and contribute to wider society.

Government involvement in ACE

4. The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) is the largest funder of ACE provision in New Zealand. It currently spends around $23 million per year funding ACE provision.

5. TEC funded ACE primarily serves learners whose formal education left them underprepared for life in New Zealand.

6. You tasked us with developing a new vision and priorities for ACE to provide the basis for future sustainable government investment in the sector.

The Government's commitment to ACE

7. In the 2017 Speech from the Throne, the government included a commitment to reinstate funding for night classes and encouraging lifelong learning.

8. s 9(2)(f)(iv) OIA [redacted]

9. The ACE sector has a strong role encouraging life-long learning. s 9(2)(g)(i) OIA [redacted]

Co-designing a new set of vision and priorities with the sector

10. Together with sector representatives from a wide range of providers, we have produced a draft vision and priorities for the sector, written in the sector's words.

11. We used the Government's Living Standards Framework to shape our discussions with the sector and considered ACE through a wellbeing lens. ACE directly contributes to five wellbeing measures and indirectly contributes to the remaining seven measures. The five wellbeing measures that ACE directly contributes to are:
    - subjective wellbeing
    - social connections
    - cultural identity
    - knowledge and skills
    - time use.

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The Attached A3

12. In the attached A3, page one sets out ACE's role in the education and social sectors and the co-designed vision and priorities.

13. Page two discusses the contribution the contribution the ACE sector makes to the education system and wider social sector and explores the broadly based options to inform the future direction of this work.

Next steps

Progressing Ministers' preferred option

14. Following the strategy session we will use your feedback to inform our work with the sector and develop your preferred option.

15. s 9(2)(f)(iv) OIA [redacted]

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ACE's role in the education and social sectors

ACE supports New Zealand educationally, economically and socially

ACE is important to the education sector and contributes to New Zealander's education, wellbeing and sense of belonging.

ACE provides learning opportunities for those who do not or can notfit into the formal education system and for those disengaged from the education system. ACE can upskill learners, creating pathways so they can reengage in formal education. The example from Te Whare Wānaga o Awanuiārangi below highlights this.

ACE can also improve people's employment outcomes by providing them with education and support. These people include those who have been long-term out of employment or in part time employment, immigrants whose employment options are limited by language barriers, and those who have experienced work-life disruptions.

ACE delivers a wide range of education opportunities

Foundation skills, including literacy, numeracy, English and te reo Māori that the government funds, are the core of the ACE sector.

Life skills are a large part of the ACE sector. These include drivers licencing, CV and interview development, financial basics and kapahaka and cultural understanding.

There are also personal development courses, such as DIY skills, foreign languages, dance and art, and gardening. The government tends not to fund life skills or personal development courses.

The benefits of ACE

The principal benefit of ACE is the education learners receive in the courses. Other benefits o ACE include:

- pathways in education and employment,
- connections to other people, including whānau/family and,
- increased wellbeing and sense of self-esteem.

ACE contributes to the Government's wider goals including cross portfolio links to te eo Māori goals under Maihi Karauna, Better Later Life - to enhance positive ageing, and supp ting Pacific community goals in the Lalanga Fou.

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanauiārangi's marae-centred ACE

Awanuiārangi delivers marae-centred ACE programmes throu h its Sch ol of Iwi Development. It works with 100 marae throughout the North Island to deliver A E to aro nd 3,000 learners every year.

Awanuiārangi's ACE learners include school parent g oups ese groups include parents who enrolled their children in kura kaupapa schools. The pare ts w n to keep up with their children's learning and help them with their schoolwork.

The parents learn or re-learn about themse es and th ir whakapapa, te reo, and tikanga. They connect or re-connect with their marae nd g w to su port their children's kaupapa learning.

Through ACE learning, the aren raise heir foundation skills. They also become culturally capable. They are able to connect with their hildren nd wider community, including the school and their marae.

These foundation skills als a ist many second chance learners to ascend in to foundation programmes. A small proporti of these learners then staircase in to higher learning programmes such as degree and post-gradua degrees.

The proposed co-designed vision and priorit es

You asked us to co-design a new vision and priorities for ACE w h the se tor, to advance the sector, put it on a more sustainable footing and revitalise lifelong learning opp tunities o New Zealanders.

Vision

Strong connected communities where individuals ānau family and groups can participate fully in Aotearoa.

Purpose

ACE should deliver accessible, learne cen red ducation that enables New Zealanders to have the knowledge, skills and confidence t fulfil t eir a pirations and contribute to the wellbeing of Aotearoa

Priorities

ACE can be for anyone dep nding on their community and circumstance. The priority communities and circumstances ar :

- people needi g to nga e in education or society
- pe ple oking f r emp yment, to advance beyond underemployment or who require upskilling
- eople w nting t w their independence, confidence or who are looking for their first success in educati n or society
- eop e learning or their family/whānau.

Delivery priorities

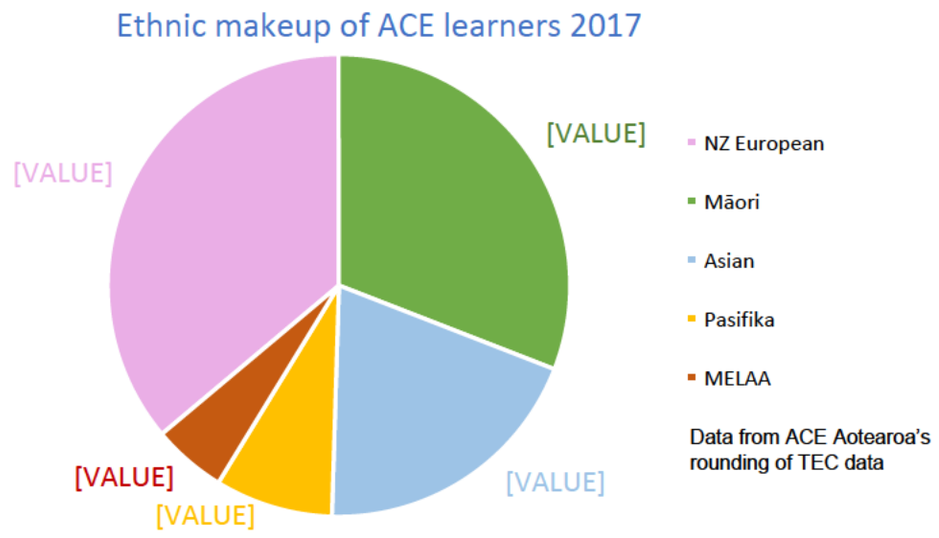
The priorities for community based education delivery are:

- learner focused, from a needs based perspective, and
- accessible, with low barriers to entry.

L ng-term outcomes

The outcomes that the vision and priorities seek to achieve are:

- building human and social capital,
- living and fulfilling our obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi, and
- supporting the government's commitment to the UN's social development goals.



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Our work has developed our understanding of the ACE sector

Through our co-design work we have built stronger relationships with the sector and better understand the potential of ACE.

We know more about the sector

Through our work with the sector we have gained a much better understanding of the ACE sector, providers and learners.

Most of the available information on the ACE sector comes from ACE providers' compliance with TEC funding requirements or voluntary reporting.

There are large information gaps with both the funded and non-funded ACE sector, particularly as the non-funded sector has no obligation to report to the TEC.

We think ACE is currently reaching the right people

Our discussions with the ACE sector, combined with the data we have from the TEC and the sector, show that the 2009 reduction in funding reoriented the government funded ACE sector towards learners who benefit the most from ACE. But this came at the cost of a loss of the connection between schools and the local communities they serve.

Over the last 10 years the government funded ACE sector has reoriented to target learners who need ACE because they lack foundation skills and knowledge, and can't get them from somewhere else.

Prior to the funding cuts, the government was funding a much wider range of courses than it currently does. Some of these courses were valuable, delivering applicable life skills. Other courses were being funded despite having relatively little benefit to the learners or New Zealand.

ACE has the potential to reach more of the right people with more investment

The ACE sector can do more good for New Zealanders and New Zealand. The only constra nts a e the volume of funding and the priorities for the funding.

There are many potential learners who would benefit from increased government investm nt in ACE. With more funding, providers could offer more courses and more learners could acces the courses they need.

The current funding priorities are targeted at learners who were underserved forma education and need foundational skills to engage in society. This misses out a larg number of ACE learners who would benefit from ACE programmes if they were funded, including people w o lack important life skills, such as driver's licencing.

Our work with the sector has helped us identify this issue. We coul resolve the problem with the new vision and priorities that prioritise the learners who need ACE the m s , while allowing the flexibility to fund a wider range of education and life skills.

Setting the future strategic direction of the ACE sector

We believe there is a strong case for increased government inve tment in the ACE sector.

We have three potential options for you to consider:

1. Target any new funding at night classes incr asing the volume and rates of funding for ACE in Schools, while also removing he restrictions on the funding priorities

Positives:
- ACE in Schools receives a funding ncrea and fewer restrictions on the courses that they can offer. This could result in a very wide ran e o cou es being funded from foundational education to hobby courses.

Challenges:
- Most of the ACE se tor wo ld miss ut on this increased investment.

Expected outcomes
- This approac could grow in ACE in Schools provision and expand the options for those wanting to further enga e in ifelo g learning. It would take time to restore night classes to their pre-2009 levels.

2 Increase the ume and rates of ACE funding within the current funding system and cu e t funding priorities

Positi s:
- ACE nding gets increased across the entire funded sector to help meet the costs of provision and expand provision for those who will benefit the most from ACE.

Challenges:
- This approach keeps the sector locked in to the current narrow range of provision, although at greater scale.

Expected outcomes:
- This approach could grow the volume of ACE provision and the number of ACE learners. If providers chose to offer night classes, they would still only be funded for foundational education.

3. Make a phased investment in the sector over time, based on the new vision and priorities that we have co-designed with the ACE sector

Positives:
- This approach is consistent with the co-design we have been doing with the ACE sector, developing solutions that work for providers and learners
- Funding goes to the priority areas identified by the sector, which could include a broader range of provision including night classes.

Challenges:
- This approach will likely take longer to restore the sector to its desired levels of funding and capability than the other approaches

Expected outcomes:
- This approach could put the sector on a more sustainable footing and grow the number of ACE learners and range of provision funded by the government.
- This could broaden the range of courses being funded but this would be subject to central direction over how these courses align the priorities that we co-designed with the sector. This may include night classes.

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