



Impact of COVID-19 on the Services Sector Thematic Analysis

Contents

Introduction	1
Impact of COVID-19 on the services sector	2
Job losses, redundancies and restructures	2
Adapting to different ways of front-facing work	3
Adapting to working remotely	3
Sector responses	4
Innovating for the future	4
Reinventing and diversifying ways of working	4
Just hanging in there	5
Embracing technology	5
Skills needed to support recovery	5
Knowledge requirements	6
Getting the new knowledge and skills	7
Conditions for the future development of the services sector	8
Opportunity for a reset	10

Thematic Analysis: Services Sector Review

This document brings together a summary of the findings from 16 Services Sector reviews. Nine of these: accommodation; aviation; catering; cafés, bars and restaurants; clubs' sector; quick service restaurants; retail and retail supply chain; tourism; and travel were conducted in mid-2020. Cleaning services; contact centres; financial services; local government; the public sector; real estate and property management; and security services were conducted in mid-2021. While the latter groups had more time to consider the impact of COVID-19 on their sectors, their responses do not differ from those collected in the earlier tranche.

Introduction

One thing is very clear: in the COVID-19 environment and the post COVID-19 environment there will be no going back to the way things were done before. Changed ways of working, changed ways of learning and changed ways of living are here to stay and the services sector (and all of us) must adapt to this. A constant theme in the services sector's reviews is the need for resilience in the face of disruption and change. As Ganesh Nana notes, "Facing increased risks in a hostile and uncertain world, it makes sense to re-orient our business and community models to prioritise resilience."¹ In the services sector this is not only about resilient business models, but is also about building resilient workforces who are able to work in new ways, with the population of Aotearoa New Zealand which, based on the evidence in the sector summaries, has become increasingly anxious and demanding in light of their own uncertainties.

In their vision for the future Reid, Schulze, Green, Groom and Dixon (2020)² talk about a world where jobs are no longer described as low-skilled given that many of the jobs that fall into this category have been deemed essential and necessary during COVID-19. This is certainly a theme of the sector reviews where the skills required by those on the front line, in for example, retail, food and accommodation services, contact centres and security has required an increasing focus on the soft skills required for front-facing roles, underpinned by the value of manaakitanga. "The future of work will be uniquely human ... [requiring the qualities and skills of] human connection, teamwork, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking" (Schulze & Hurren, 2020, p. 7).³

These key points made by Schulze and Hurren and by interviewees and focus groups in the services sector reviews is that in order to survive and thrive in the new work order there is a need to upskill, reskill, and cross-skill. The latter is a strong theme to come through in the hospitality sector. This means being multi-skilled and being afforded the opportunity to develop transferrable skills – skills learned at one job that can be used at another job. While this will be important for all of those in the services sector, Reid et al. (2020, p. 17) note it is key to improving Māori employment outcomes and a mechanism for Māori to move on to higher paid and sustainable employment.

Opportunities for learning happen in three ways. Informally through what is seen and done everyday at work; non-formally through courses such as compliance training, health and safety training; and formally through qualifications that help people with their current and future roles. If people are to be multi-skilled it is the make-up of these qualifications and the ways in which they are delivered that are key to preparing people for new ways of working in the services sector.

At the same time as opportunities are afforded to those working in the sector there is a need to take cognisance of the capacity those in the sector have to learn, remembering they are balancing learning with work, family and community commitments. Capacity for learning includes personal attributes (e.g., motivation, persistence, self-efficacy, confidence); their ability to engage (i.e. their skills and knowledge); and their agency (the control they have to act independently, intentionally, and take action in situations). It seems that the call for resilience in the interviews and focus groups encompasses these aspects.

1 Nana, G. (2020, August 20). Eliminate – or live with – COVID-19. Article. Accessed October 4, 2021 at <https://berl.co.nz/our-mahi/eliminate-or-live-with-covid-19>

2 Reid, A., Schulze, H., Green, S., Groom, M., & Dixon, H. (2020) Whano towards futures that work: How Māori can lead Aotearoa forward. BERL. Accessed October 4, 2021 at <https://berl.co.nz/sites/default/files/2020-07/Whano%202020%20-%20portrait.pdf>

3 Schulze, H., & Hurren, K. (2020). Ka whati te tai. BERL. Accessed October 4, 2021 at <https://berl.co.nz/sites/default/files/2020-06/Tokona%20Te%20Raki%20-%20Ka%20whati%20te%20tai%20-%20Final.pdf>

Impact of COVID-19 on the services sector

The impact of COVID-19 on the services sector is well known about at the surface level through media reports. But at the ground level what the reviews highlight is that ordinary people were being asked to do extraordinary things while coping with what was happening in their work and home lives. While many of us simply worked from home, those in the front-facing services sector were expected to “keep calm and carry on”. But, uncertainty at work impacted on wellbeing through a combination of stress – contributed to by worrying about not having a job, having to deal with stressed and anxious customers; and fatigue – contributed to by working more hours, needing to work differently, needing to learn how to work differently. Much of the formal training at work fell by the wayside as the reality of business pressures and business survival took precedence. Formal training in provider settings reduced, both because of the loss of international students and the lack of job certainty in these sectors. This has implications for the pipeline of skills that will be required once Aotearoa New Zealand opens fully for business.

Job losses, redundancies and restructures

Those working in the four sectors of travel, tourism, accommodation, and aviation were the hardest hit in relation to job losses, redundancies and restructures as the international visitor market stopped and Māori are over-represented in these sectors.⁴ Travel, tourism and aviation have been the hardest hit.

- ▶ Travel: shifted to dealing with “outraged customers” over refunds and to repatriation and domestic travel; high stress levels; decline in international student numbers in provider education.
- ▶ Tourism: loss of international market; the domestic market is “lumpy” and has not made up the short fall; women, young people, Māori and Pacific people have been disproportionately impacted by job losses; customers are less tolerant than previously; Māori cultural experience tourism was almost solely targeted to international visitors prior to COVID-19 and some Māori tourism businesses have gone into hibernation and others have adapted to the domestic market; a more casualised workforce; decline in student numbers.
- ▶ Aviation: drop in passenger numbers, but cargo retained; losses in associated fields, e.g., air traffic control, engine maintenance; reduced training capacity and capability and decline in international student numbers in provider education.
- ▶ Accommodation: the domestic market has helped but this market differs to the international one and staff have had to learn how to deal with this through retraining and cross-training; hard to recruit staff (lack of availability of international staff – New Zealanders are not interested and have higher expectations of pay and hours); reduction in training.

⁴ Te Puni Kokiri. (2020). Data & analytics summary: economic impact of COVID-19 July 2020. Accessed October 11, 2021 at [Māori Employment – Impact of COVID-19, July 2020 \(tpk.govt.nz\)](https://www.tpk.govt.nz/māori-employment-impact-of-covid-19-july-2020)

Adapting to different ways of front-facing work

In eight sectors – catering; cafés, bars and restaurants; cleaning; clubs; contact centres; quick service restaurants; retail and retail supply chain; and security services, there have been job losses and restructuring, but the markets have not completely disappeared. The key theme has been adapting to new ways of working in the COVID-19 environment. This has meant finding ways to multi-skill employees, to deal with anxious and stressed customers, and to use technology at work and for learning.

- ▶ Food service industries have had to deal with: the requirements of different alert level capacity and behaviour requirements; customers in relation to enforcing these requirements and “increased aggression” from customers; adapting to online ordering; skills shortages because of fewer international staff; fewer events to cater for; the need for employees to be multi-skilled.
- ▶ Retail and retail supply chain has seen: an increase in online sales – but this was challenging for those who did not have e-commerce platforms; fewer people available for jobs; the need to shift people to roles in distribution centres (particularly grocery); an increased appreciation of people working in essential roles; an increased uptake of online learning (apart from those in supermarkets).
- ▶ Cleaning services, contact centres and security services have seen considerable demand for new ways of dealing with the expectations of clients and customers.
 - ▶ Cleaning had magnified importance, higher demand and increased anxiety for those cleaning in COVID-19 environments; inadequate training.
 - ▶ Contact centres had to deal with more customers with higher and more complex needs; needed to deal with working remotely and insulation in their homes; a shift to online learning.
 - ▶ Security services found it challenging to get sufficient people into the industry to cover the new roles in public places to manage social distancing and appropriate behaviours; increased anxiety from families of those working in COVID-19 environments; a shift to online learning.

Adapting to working remotely

Real estate, financial services, local government and the public sector had both front-facing and backroom adjustments to make. Here delivering via technology became key to service delivery.

- ▶ Real estate quickly adapted to online selling and to online learning. Commissioned-based earnings (and loss of these) impacted on wellbeing and extra mental health training opportunities were offered.
- ▶ Financial services moved to meet customer needs digitally, but this impacted on customers who did not have this capacity. There was an increased need for cyber security training. Overall training interest varied – some wanted to get on with it, others were too busy.
- ▶ Local government had to maintain essential services, but also had a role supporting the safety and wellbeing of their communities where there have been examples of “fraught” customer service situations.
- ▶ The public sector varied by sector, for example, border work virtually stopped, education delivery went online, and there was increased demand for work in contact centres. Keeping up with the demands of government short turn-around times for support packages placed considerable stress on staff.

Sector responses

Overall, those in the services sector have been quick to respond to the impact of COVID-19 on their businesses. While it has been about survival, for most it has been a process of re-invention that has required innovation, responsiveness, creativity, agility, and flexibility. The upside of the pandemic has been it has acted as a catalyst for change, particularly in relation to technology for work and learning. The downside is the stress, anxiety and fatigue that come with the pressure of coping with the loss of business (for some), increased work for others, and new ways of working and learning.

Innovating for the future

For the hardest hit sectors of aviation, travel, and tourism, the response has been both to deal with the now, but also to take stock and prepare for the future.

- ▶ **Travel:** while wanting to be in a state of readiness for international travel there has been a focus on different aspects of travel – the legal requirements e.g., cancellations, refunds, booking changes. There has also been a shift in focus to domestic travel and working with Regional Travel Organisations (RTOs).
- ▶ **Tourism:** shifted the focus to the domestic market with a focus on the needs of domestic travellers and making connections into regional initiatives. The Māori tourism market has adapted with some providers looking to deliver more authentic experiences expected by domestic tourists (e.g., heritage story-telling, full immersion tours, focussing on correct pronunciation of te reo). Those working in the industry have had to upskill to undertake a number of roles therefore cross-skilling training was required.
- ▶ **Aviation:** the sector has used the time to look at its systems and processes and moved to digital marketing. Training delivery and assessment are online. The content includes theory training, along with training on human factors such as fatigue and compliance requirements. The pipeline is being given a focus with providers reaching into schools and NZQA giving approval for offshore online learning.
- ▶ **Accommodation:** training has focussed on reskilling and cross-skilling so staff are able to undertake a wider range of activities as businesses run leaner and smaller business models. There has been an increase in the use of technology for marketing, booking and communication with customers – and there is a need for training on this.

Reinventing and diversifying ways of working

Keeping business streams going and keeping people in work have led to diversification in revenue streams and ways of working. To a certain extent the changes made were possibly in the pipeline, but the COVID-19 environment gave the time (during lockdowns) to rethink approaches and necessitated a greater uptake of technology.

- ▶ **Food service industries** explored new options. From a food perspective this has seen, for example, smaller menus, plant-based options, deliveries, supporting local suppliers, fewer buffets, and collaboration between restaurants. From a technology perspective, websites have been upgraded to improve visibility, there has been increased use of social media, many have introduced mobile ordering and payment services, and there has been increased use of ordering kiosks in quick service restaurants. Multi-skilling has been a key requirement from a training perspective with training being moved online and being seemingly successful.
- ▶ **Retail and retail supply chain** saw an increase in e-commerce, along with deliveries and drive-through options. There was an increase in ethical spending, buying local and customers having an interest in the origin of their goods. The reduction in staff numbers meant fatigue became an issue and a need to focus on staff wellbeing. Retraining packages were offered to staff.

Just hanging in there

Cleaning services, contact centres and security services have struggled to maintain services because of workforce shortages and consequently have not been able to adapt in the same way that others in the services sector have been able to.

- ▶ Cleaning services had a staff retention issue with short staffing numbers increasing workloads and fatigue and a high level of mobility between companies. The workforce had to adapt to use health sector cleaning practices more widely and also to use technology to validate that cleaning had been done. An online training module was introduced by Careerforce on COVID-19 and measures to prevent the spread of the virus.
- ▶ Contact centre work has required additional support (technology and wellbeing) to help staff work remotely. There is also greater recognition of the need for a diverse workforce that includes people who speak languages other than English. There has been an increased emphasis on training content that supports staff wellbeing and customer service, and recognising that training helps with recruitment and retention.
- ▶ Security services have seen a drop in the quality of applicants – there is high turnover, low pay and lack of incentives. The high workload has seen a drop off in training, with many not completing the Certificate of Approval in the required time period of three months. New training has been required for MIQ work. Training moved online for electronic security.

Embracing technology

Real estate, financial services, local government and the public sector just had to get on with delivering services. Technology has been key for each of them for dealing with customers and for training. The efficiencies of online training have been appreciated, but there is a sense that this will move back to more blended approaches given the preference some in these sectors have for face-to-face delivery. For the public sector there has been an increasing focus given to the need for a more flexible workforce – one that can transfer between agencies to meet demand.

Skills needed to support recovery

So, what are the skills needed for the future in the services sector? Two key points emerge from the services sector summaries. Firstly, the need for multi-skilled workforces who have the knowledge and agility to move to different roles within and across businesses. Secondly, the need for a greater focus on what are variously referred to as soft skills, employability skills, non-cognitive skills, transferable skills. In their list of these skills Reid et al. (2020, p. 20) include complex problem solving; critical thinking; creativity; people management; co-ordinating with others; emotional intelligence; judgment and decision making; service orientation; negotiation and cognitive flexibility. These skills were in demand pre-COVID-19, but the “new normal” has highlighted the importance of them.

The call for soft skills has emerged given the front-facing roles of those in the services sector. This has happened because of the demands placed on these workers as they deal with customers / the public who have become increasingly challenging to deal with (because of their anxiety and/or stress) and because those in the services sector are now required to take on more of an “enforcement” role than previously – for example, those in retail and food services need to ask people to sanitise, scan and social distance. The skills required for conflict management and de-escalating situations are important across many of the services sector.

The other generic skills required are literacy, numeracy, digital literacy and digital skills, and cultural competence. While literacy and numeracy have been in the mix for quite some time, the demand for digital skills has increased in the COVID-19 environment – for work, life and learning. Cultural competence is not referred to as often as the other skills, but as we look at a more domestic-focussed market in the short term, as local government looks for stronger partnerships with iwi-led organisations, and as central government looks to commit to Te Tiriti-led approaches, more training will be required in relation to tikanga, te reo Māori, and understanding te ao Māori.

A new skill to emerge as being required is the ability to work remotely or manage teams that are working remotely. While this will require digital skills – it will also require soft skills, digital communication skills and the skills of self-management.

Finally, there is a call for attention to the wellbeing of staff in these workforces. Addressing wellbeing needs is stressed in nearly all the sector summaries. This is about having managers and supervisors who can attend to the wellbeing of their staff. It is also about developing people who are resilient and can manage their own wellbeing, but training will be required for this.

Knowledge requirements

In keeping with the shifts that have had to be made over the last 18 months, the skills needed to support the recovery and the sustainability of industries, workplaces and workforces in the future are both vocational (knowledge) and behaviour (practice) based. While there are similarities across the sectors as shown above, there are also some vocational knowledge requirements specific to some of the sectors.

Travel and tourism both require multi-skilled workforces with more knowledge about the domestic market and how to provide authentic tourism experiences. This will require knowledge of tikanga, te reo Māori, and understanding te ao Māori and more knowledge of niche tourism, e.g., food tourism, sustainable tourism, eco tourism. There was also a call for all tourism operators to have culturally competent staff and for tourism to have Māori culture integrated into it. “It’s not just about saying kia ora.”

Those working in these industries will also require more knowledge about the regulatory environment – for example, the Fair Trading Act and the Consumers’ Guarantee Act. Across travel, tourism and the accommodation sectors the sector summaries identify a shortage of chefs, front of house staff, duty managers and those with the skills to work at the high end of the market. Aviation also wants a workforce with transferable skills. They identify a shortage of engineers, those working in avionics, pilots, and aviation computer programmers.

In the food services sector there is call for the knowledge that enables people to be generalists – to have adaptable skills that enable them to, for example, move between front of house and kitchens, to move between working environments – from airport lounges to rest homes. There is also a call for knowledge about sustainable practices, people management skills, leadership skills, communication skills, and a very strong call for digital skills and the skills required for managing conflict.

The theme across cleaning services, contact centres, and security services is the need for more people with supervisory and management knowledge and skills. In addition, those in the cleaning sector need the skills to adapt to new ways of interacting with clients where there are more requests for day cleaning, along with the need for increased use of technology for communications.

Real Estate is needing to upskill staff in the use of digital technology for conducting business, including using it for communications and social media. Those working in local government require knowledge around their reform agenda and the public sector require knowledge that will enable them to meet the conditions and Aotearoa

New Zealand’s place in the world as set out in the Public Workforce 2035 – Futures Scan.⁵ As this document succinctly puts it, “The problem with the future is that it keeps turning into the present”. The extent to which the knowledge needs of the latter two sectors are best met by qualifications or in-house training is a point for further discussion.

⁵ See <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/assets/SSC-Site-Assets/SAPG/Public-Workforce-2035-Futures-Scan.pdf>

Getting the new knowledge and skills

Recruitment and retention

As with all industries, recruitment and retention are key. From a recruitment perspective the sector summaries are clear on the requirements across the sectors. This involves attraction, including promotion in schools so there is a pipeline into training and subsequently the industry. The infrastructure for this already exists through programmes such as Gateway and the Secondary Tertiary Alliance Resource (STAR), and through Vocational Pathways. While these exist for learning opportunities, what seems to be missing is the promotion of the services sector as a viable career option. Suggestions for improving this include scholarships for underserved groups in aviation, and internships in a number of the other sectors.

However, the pipeline doesn't only come from schools. It also comes from communities including iwi and churches. There is the opportunity to work with these organisations and understand and recognise the skills people, particularly young people, develop in the roles they have in these organisations.

Retention in the industries is also important and there is a call across the services sector for establishing career pathways. From a training perspective this is about the establishment of apprenticeships for management roles, and the development of leadership and supervisor training.

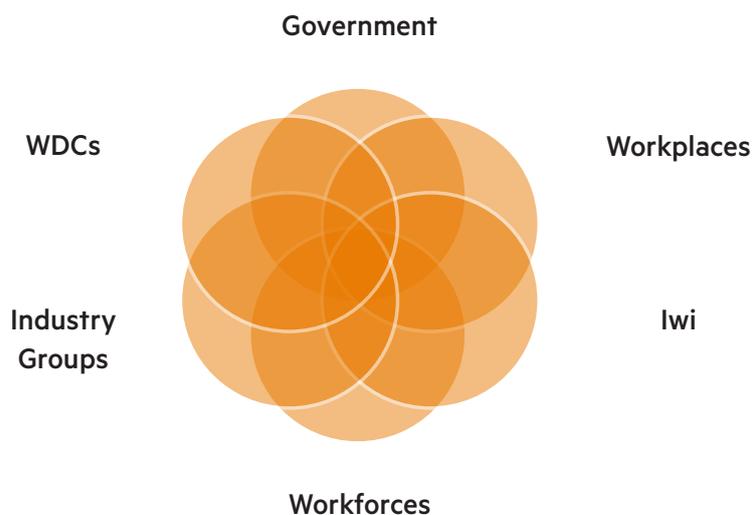
The training

All of the services sector want on-job, online, bite-size, stackable qualifications. This approach supports workplaces to multi-skill and cross-skill staff, thus making workforces more agile and adaptable to change. This approach also allows those in the workforce to put together training packages that meet their current and future needs. While the knowledge needs for each of the sectors varies, the call for soft skills that has been so strong may well lend itself to some core competency training and standards that can be used across sectors.

Regional approaches

For Māori there is a particular interest in training happening in the rohe. The impact of COVID-19 has seen more rangatahi wanting to stay close to home and more whānau wanting to return home. This means taking the training people want to the people. There is a call for face-to-face training, workplace-based training and recognition that marae-based training has a considerable amount to offer in terms of skills' development. This often goes unrecognised by formal education providers.

Conditions for the future development of the services sector



While the services sector has made adjustments to work and training in the COVID-19 environment these have not been done in a systematic or systemic way. Rather, the changes have been just-in-time and needs-based. COVID-19 and changed ways of working have highlighted the need to rethink the skills required in the services sector meaning a change to (some) qualification content. It also means a change to delivery models through a breaking up of qualifications and learning into bite-size pieces (micro-credentials) and a shift to online learning.

Supporting workforces and their development requires a systems approach that puts in place the enabling conditions that support the growth and development in service sector workforces. Government (central and local), industry groups, Workforce Development Councils (WDCs), iwi, workplaces and workforces sit in this system and need to work together to bring about the change that is required for a sustainable future for the services sector. This means having the structures (policies, practices, resources) and meaningful relationships (Kania, Kramer, and Senge, 2018)⁶ that support and enable the required changes in the services sector.

Role of government

Those spoken to for the sector summaries were clear on the things that government needs to do: attend to migration policy settings; work with local communities and iwi to provide localised solutions; have a reopening strategy; provide flexibility with employment legislation; and promote service sector roles as viable and valuable career options, including promotion into schools.

Along with this, those working in local and central government are having to attend to the considerable change in their work environments. For local government there is the current reform agenda and in the public sector the Public Service Act 2020 is driving the behaviour change expected of this workforce. This means a workforce that is more culturally competent and 'citizen' focussed and more agile and collaborative in its ways of working.

Those working in real estate and financial services are also having to work within new regulatory frameworks. For financial services this means adhering to the legislative regime that came into effect on 15th March 2021. Here the [Code of Professional Conduct for Financial Advice Services](#) requires those giving financial advice achieving the New Zealand Certificate in Financial Services (NZCFS), Level 5, version 2.

What is not talked about in the services sector summaries is the need for skills policies that will provide the opportunities for skills development. The current focus is on qualifications as the proxy for skills. However, the sector summaries highlight the need to think differently about how skills are attested to and call for more "stackable" ways to put skills sets together. The current work on skills standards may address this.

⁶ Kania, J., Kramer, M., & Senge, P. (2018). The water of system change. FSG

Role of iwi

At regional hui, iwi are clear they have a central role to play in determining and meeting the needs of whānau and hapū and in working with communities in collaborative ways to do this. While they acknowledge the role of central and local government in supporting economic development and education, they want local, holistic, iwi-led approaches that take into account and benefit individuals and communities.

Role of industry groups

While those spoken to saw a promotional role for government, there is a role for industry groups here too, along with finding out more about what it would take to get New Zealanders interested in services sector careers. There was also a call for professionalising the image and roles of those working in cleaning, security, real estate and property management.

Role of workplaces

Workplaces are the interface between industry and the workforce. Here the enabling conditions of pay (higher wages), flexible, safe working conditions, the affordances of on-job training,⁷ career pathways – within workplaces or across workplaces come into play. Also included is the acceptance of diversity within workforces and support for the development of culturally competent staff and connections with iwi in parts of the sector where this is appropriate.

Role of workforces

In the COVID-19 environment workforces have had to adapt to different ways of working and learning. As noted above, this has meant having the ability to reskill and learn through online learning. The extent to which online learning is feasible is not known but there are some things of which to be mindful. The Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC)⁸ shows those working in the services sector (excluding those in local and central government, real estate and financial services) have literacy and numeracy skills at the top end level 2 of the five- point scale, meaning they are likely to find studying for qualifications at levels 4-5 challenging. In addition, those working in the services sector have technology skills at the top end of level 1 on a 1-3 point scale. This means they can use a range of applications “where simple forms of reasoning are required”.⁹

Learning and achieving a qualification then maybe a challenge for some but research (Alkema 2020)¹⁰ has shown that those with lower literacy and numeracy skills in workplaces and provider settings can learn through and with technology when they are supported to do so. In terms of offshore online delivery that some of the sectors are to cover the shortfall in numbers, Murray and Alkema (2021, p.3)¹¹ report learners need to “have a sense of self-efficacy and agency over their learning, an acknowledgment of the importance of interaction and connection for the learner, and an ecosystem of learner supports.”

While learning on the job is called for, workplaces need to consider that while affording the opportunity to train for qualifications there are barriers in terms of time for staff who are likely to be required to undertake some of their training outside of work time.

⁷ According to the 2014 Survey of Adult Skill (PIAAC) study those working in low-skilled occupations spend fewer hours in formal training than their higher-skilled counterparts and are more likely to have no learning activities. Food and accommodation services have one of the lowest rates of on-job learning. See [Skills-at-Work.pdf](#) (educationcounts.govt.nz)

⁸ Ministry of Education & Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (2016). Skills at work. Author. Accessed October 7, 2021 at https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/173572/Skills-at-Work.pdf

⁹ See <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/pstrep/level.asp>

¹⁰ Alkema, A. (2020). Technology-enabled learning in the foundation education sector. Skills Highway. Accessed October 8, 2021 at <https://www.skillshighway.govt.nz/sites/default/files/images/Skills%20Highway%20Technology%20Enabled%20Learning%20Report%20Final.pdf>

¹¹ Murray, N., & Alkema, A. (2021). He mahi e tika ana mō te tuku ā-ipurangi ki tāwāhi – good practice for offshore online delivery. New Zealand Qualifications Authority. Accessed October 8, 2021 at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Providers-and-partners/International-education-planning/NZQA-Literature-review-He-Arotake-Tuhinga-web.pdf>

Role of WDCs

WDCs have a pivotal role in the skills system to consider future skills needs, set standards, develop qualifications, and determine the mix of skills and training required for their industries. In July 2021, the TEC announced WDCs would work with industries and employers and contribute to improved outcomes for industry, employers, learners, and providers.¹² For employers this means ensuring that the vocational training meets their needs and increasing the numbers of employers who engage with industry training. The services sector summaries also suggest there is role for WDCs to be front facing and look to provide support to the sectors including brokerage and workforce planning.

The summaries also highlight the need for more collaboration between providers. The extent to which there is a role for WDCs to influence this or at least the content of what is offered by providers is not known.

Opportunity for a reset

COVID-19 has disrupted the services sector in ways that could probably never have been foreseen. The fact that the various services have managed their way through the crisis and adapted is down to the resilience and flexibility of employers and their workforces, and in some areas the work of iwi and Māori organisations who have supported businesses in their regions. However, what it has also shown is that new ways of working, along with the learning and training for that work are required. Reid et al. (2020, p. 20) talk about this as “reskilling for the future”. This reskilling requires mechanisms for skills-based learning that enables the development of transferable skills – and this is not just about gaining qualifications.

We need new tools, practices, and approaches to plot career trajectories and understand the clusters of skills that will enable people to move to “higher” skilled jobs. We need a way to measure skills and competencies – the current focus on qualifications is not delivering the skills needed to flourish in the future world of work

(Reid et al., 2020, p. 20).

¹² See Tertiary Education Commission (July 19, 2021) <https://www.tec.govt.nz/rove/workforce-development-councils/what-wdcs-will-do/>



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