

Capability and Quality Development Reference Group Terms of Reference (updated 24 October 2006)

Introduction

The Export Education Levy on export education providers is used to fund export education industry development, promotion, quality assurance and research. The Levy was introduced as part of the Education (Tertiary Reform) Amendment Act and subsequent regulations, and came into force on 10 January 2003.

The Levy is collected by the Ministry of Education, with administration devolved to Education New Zealand to manage industry development activities funded from the Levy. In undertaking this management, Education New Zealand convenes Industry Reference Groups to advise Education New Zealand on priorities for expenditure of the Levy: Research; Promotion and Marketing; Quality Assurance and Professional Development.

Education New Zealand will generally approach significant sector peak body's to nominate a representative to the Capability and Quality Development Reference Group, with sector representative nominations being called for every 2 years. If appropriate, other members may be co-opted by Education New Zealand for their experience in professional development issues.

Functions

The functions of the Capability and Quality Development Reference Group are:

- to provide expert advice and assistance to Education New Zealand on project priorities, processes and estimated costings, drawing upon consultation with the sector that they represent; and
- to help Education New Zealand ensure that the work undertaken is relevant to the industry and takes account of sectoral/sub-sectoral differences.

The primary purpose of the Reference Group is to act as expert advisory bodies. While the provision of industry and sectoral perspectives is important, the aim is for group members to work together in a constructive and consultative manner to produce group recommendations, based upon the outcome of consultation with their sectoral group.

Task

Working within the framework of a provisional budget, the Reference Group is tasked with providing the following:

- recommendations and consideration of a range of possible work initiatives;

- prioritisation of projects and activities and development of a recommended work programme for the current financial year (and prospective programme for future years) including budget allocation across the various projects and activities proposed;
- advice on the implementation of projects – ideas, access to information and networks;
- informal feedback from industry on the impacts of projects;
- advice on the drafting of Requests for Proposals related to specific projects; and
- advice on evaluation, and assessment processes.

In undertaking these tasks the groups are requested to engage in broad consultation with the industry or their sector-sub-sector where appropriate.

Confidentiality

While members are generally expected to liaise with and act as a conduit for their sectors, from time to time material of a sensitive nature may be presented in confidence for discussion and feedback at group meetings. It is a condition of membership of Reference Groups that confidential material presented during meetings will not be disclosed or discussed outside the forum of the meetings except between members of the group.

Meetings and Time Commitments

Education New Zealand will convene and Chair all meetings. It is expected that each Reference Group would meet approximately 3 times per year. Participants will be required to read materials, prepare and sometimes contribute to e-mail discussions between meetings. Communication with people in the industry will also be required. All work associated with the Capability and Quality Development Reference Group is on a voluntary basis. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed from Levy funds.

Education New Zealand will provide Secretariat services to the committees, including expense disbursement.

Location of Meetings

Reference Group meetings will normally be held at the offices of Education New Zealand, Level 6, 138 The Terrace, Wellington.

Scope

The key functions of the Capability and Quality Development Reference Group are:

- to provide expert advice and assistance to Education New Zealand on the specification and implementation of the Export Education Levy funded work programme in relation to professional development work. Work will be focussed in three broad domains:
 - (i) Implementing Reforms, such as the new revisions to the Code of Practice, new immigration requirements, etc;
 - (ii) Responding to a 'crisis' or a large perceived skill deficit. At a systemic level this could include overcoming a perceived skill deficit within the

industry, or sub-sectors of the industry, that have the potential to have negative impacts across the industry or sub-sectors of the industry; and

(iii) Responding to/handling growth or decline. This is linked to (ii) above. In the case of growth, it would assist the industry, or sub-sectors within the industry, to prevent the speed wobbles. In the case of decline, it would assist the industry, or sub-sectors within the industry, to adjust to falling demand.

- to foster and enhance best practice across the industry;
- support national quality improvement initiatives, ensuring a consistently high delivery of service to international students; and
- enable, via professional development resources, the international education industry to compete better as a country in the global market.
- assisting to ensure that minimum standards of quality are being met by feeding information to regulatory bodies (MoE, TEC, ERO, NZQA, NZVCC, ITPQ) and analysing quality assurance issues and trends (for example the measurement of student outcomes);
- assisting in raising the bar on quality assurance to go beyond minimum standards (for example what standards apply across the sector vs what should the sector aspire to, over and above these).