

14 May 2020

Tēnā koutou colleagues

The last six or so weeks, since 1 April when NZIST was established, have not played out quite in the way we thought or expected they might! NZIST came into existence on the first day of the COVID-19 lockdown and I began the NZIST Interim CE role working from home, as we all have had to learn to do.

Like many of you, my days have mostly been back-to-back zoom, skype-for-business or Microsoft team meetings, with seemingly little time to attend to much else. It is good news that we have moved to Level 2 - I look forward to being able to engage more in person with other people. This week also has the Budget announcements, so we await to hear more about Government initiatives, particularly in the education space.

This is just a quick update on NZIST activity that has been occurring during lockdown.

COVID-19

The stories we have heard from across our NZIST network have been very impressive – particularly around the way staff have worked hard to ensure our learners stay engaged. The efforts and creativity of staff has been outstanding – thank you all for the way in which you have worked together, within institutions and across institutions, to build capability and to enable learners to keep learning. No doubt Level 2 will bring new challenges for us all.

As a network, NZIST has been participating in a COVID-19 Education Agencies Emergency Management Committee meeting twice a week to get updates, seek clarification and share information about activities and issues from across the tertiary sector.

NZIST network CEOs have also established a COVID-19 Project Group to focus on building a cohesive NZIST strategy to drive a coordinated approach and to share initiatives. The goal is to ensure NZIST is as effective as possible in contributing to the rebuild of communities, industries and to assist in displaced workers being able to re-skill and return to employment. Thank you all for the contribution you are playing in this – Government is looking to see NZIST play an important part in the rebuild and recovery process.

At each subsidiary institution there have also been significant planning and strategising on local responses to COVID-19. As a network we are trying to share and collaborate as much as possible to avoid doing things 16 different ways, particularly where it may be possible to take a more co-ordinated and integrated approach.

NZIST network CEOs have also been meeting via zoom each week to discuss and raise relevant issues and share information. This has been a valuable time to test ideas and try and ensure a cohesive approach is occurring across the NZIST network.

NZIST Council

Council have met three times since 1 April as well as holding Council workshops – all via zoom of course. Council Chair Murray Strong has also held two Chairs forums since 1 April to provide a forum for discussion and sharing of information between Chairs. NZIST Council

has had to deal with a considerable number of operational setup matters and is now beginning to move on to more strategic matters. If you haven't caught up on who is on Council, the Minister has appointed the following members to NZIST Council:

- **Murray Strong** (Council Chair) is an independent director and Chair, and a member of the Institute of Directors in New Zealand.
- **Kim Ngārimu** (Te Aitanga ā Mate, Ngāti Porou) (Deputy Chair) is a director of Tāua Limited, a consultancy specialising in public policy and management advice.
- **Tania Hodges JP** (Ngāti Pāhauwera, Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāti Hauā, Tuwharetoa, Maniapoto, Kahungunu) is Managing Director of Digital Indigenous.Com Ltd providing advice on governance and leadership, strategic development, change management, Māori and Iwi relationships, and community development.
- **Sam Huggard** is the former National Secretary of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions 2014–2019. He is now a Strategic Researcher with E tū.
- **Maryann Geddes** is the Group Manager Risk & Compliance at Skyline Enterprises, based in Queenstown.
- **Kathy Grant** is a former Associate in the Dunedin legal practice of Gallaway Cook Allan. Mrs Grant has been a Ministerial appointee and Chair of the Otago Polytechnic Council since 2010.
- **Peter Winder** is a Director of McGredy Winder & Co. He has been a Ministerial appointee and Chair of Manukau Institute of Technology since 2013 and is a Member of the Advisory Committee to the Commissioner at Unitec.

As you are no doubt aware, on 1 April new subsidiary institutional Boards were also established and there has been considerable activity across the network with new Board induction sessions and Board meetings.

Scenario Forecasting

We are in the process of completing scenario forecasting for our subsidiary institutional network. COVID-19 has obviously had a significant impact for almost all, particularly on international student intakes, but also on domestic student participation levels and educational delivery. We need to assess what the collective picture will look like by year-end for NZIST. We will be working on this once all information has come in and been analysed. This will be presented to NZIST Council for its consideration and strategy decision-making in due course.

Academic Board

Following a call for nominations from across the sector in March, and from recommendations put forward by the Establishment Board, NZIST Council has appointed the NZIST Academic Board which held its first meeting on May 6. Thank you to all those who submitted nominations – an impressive group of people were put forward - and congratulations to the appointed candidates. Membership was based on achieving a balance of skills, experience, and expertise from across the network. Alongside members from subsidiary institutions, two members were also seconded and appointed from ITOs. The following people were appointed to the Academic Board:

- Glynnis Brook (Ara)

- Neil Carroll (Open Polytechnic)
- Greg Durkin (BCITO)
- Lorna Gillespie (Skills Active ITO)
- Jeanette Grace (Whitireia New Zealand)
- Kieran Hewitson (Toi Ohomai)
- Nita Hutchinson (WITT)
- Oongah McGirr (Otago Polytechnic)
- Sue Smart (NMIT)
- Luana Te Hira (MIT)
- Natalie Waran (EIT)
- Deborah Young (Ara)

The Board is Chaired by myself as Interim CE. The first Academic Board meeting was primarily an introductory meeting, with members sharing their background and experience, discussing and considering a Terms of Reference, a possible architecture of national committees and the inter-relationships with subsidiary institution Academic Committees. At the next meeting, members will provide feedback on the Terms of Reference before taking these to Council for consideration, final approval and signoff. One of the first major tasks of the Academic Board will be to consider the early steps towards what academic harmonisation across the network might mean and look like.

Mobilising the New World reports

Council approved the release of the Mobilising the New World workstream reports at the May meeting. This represents the collective work of colleagues from across the sector and was part of the co-design thinking into how we might go about building and transforming NZIST as we take it forward. Thank you to all those who participated in these workstreams – it represents many hours of commitment and work. Workstreams covered: *Learner Journey Map*, *Work Based Learning Development*, *Education Products and Services*, *New Academic Architecture*, *Employer and Community Engagement Model*, *Online Delivery Model* and *International education*. These reports will be put up on our website shortly, please look out for them.

Technology Access Fund for Learners

Government has made available a new fund to try and ‘close the technology divide’ that exists with some learners who are unable to effectively engage in their learning through lack of access to a device or internet. If this has been an issue for your learners, please make sure you are alerting your academic leaders of this. Funds are available to try and address this issue. NZIST has allocated funds to most subsidiary institutions and will be working to try and secure further funding for all parts of the network. If you have any ideas on this front, please take them up with your programme leaders or heads of department.

International Learners

We know this has significant impact on most subsidiary institutions. We are working with colleagues across the network to think through and consider strategies going forward. There is unlikely to be any quick fix on this issue and we continue to engage with Government agencies on this front. Clearly the safety and health of our communities, staff and students

must remain paramount, but within this context we will be considering options for supporting and continuing to engage in international relationships, partnerships and student engagement.

All the best to you as we move to Level 2. The NZIST network has an important role to play in assisting the rebuild of our communities, businesses and in supporting people to remain in employment or reskill to gain new employment.

At the same, we remain committed to continuing to transform our NZIST network, to ensure we are able to provide the very best of vocational, applied and professional education and training for all members of our communities. It is not the start we thought we might have to the life of NZIST, but thank you for the part you are playing in our education provision and to the success of our learners and trainees.

We update our website regularly, so do please keep an eye on it www.vocationaleducation.ac.nz

Ngā mihi nui

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