

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DECISION-MAKING TO SUPPORT UNDER-25 STUDENT SUCCESS

Resources for teachers



Background

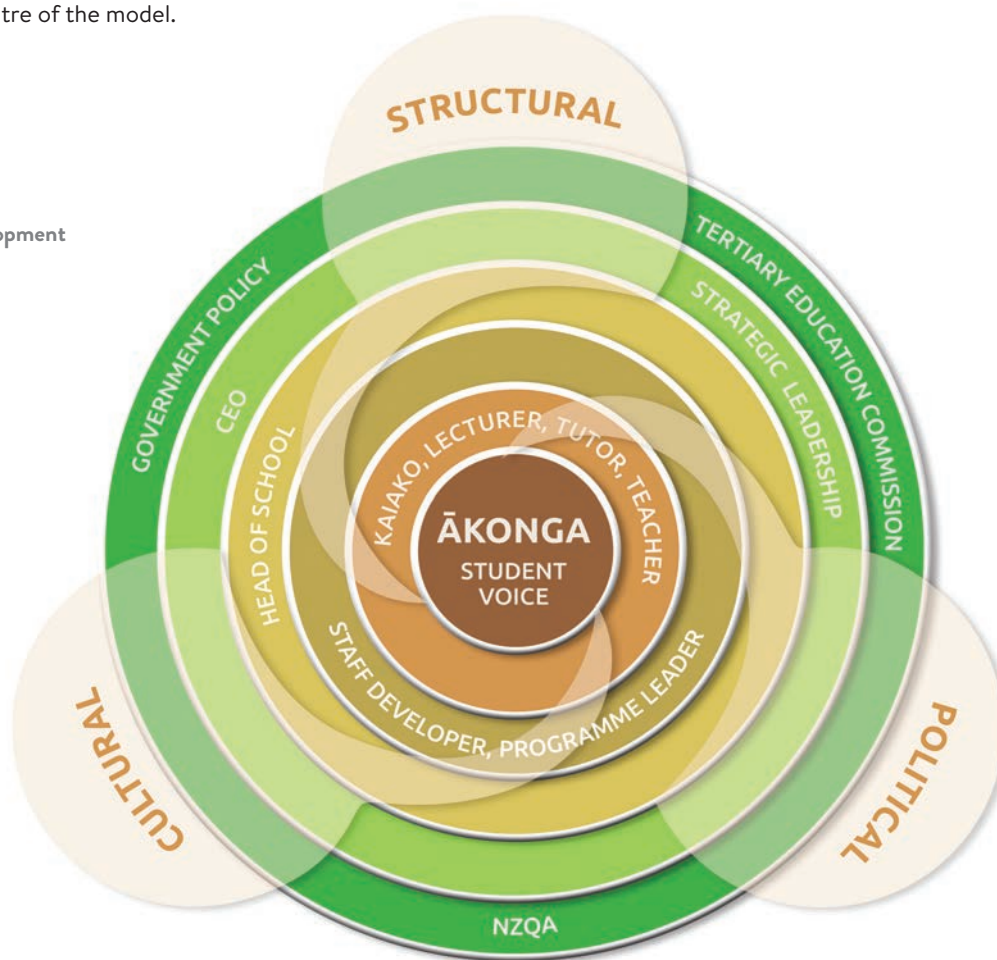
Improving educational outcomes for young people is a critical issue facing tertiary providers¹. The study, *Professional Development Decision-making to Support Under-25 Student Success*², involved a team of staff developers and educators from across four institutions; Eastern Institute of Technology, Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology³, Wintec and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. Co-funded by Ako Aotearoa and the partnering tertiary education organisations, the project investigated professional development decision-making to improve Under-25 students' achievement.

This study followed ten case study programmes, with large numbers of students aged Under-25, across a range of programme levels. The new Integrated Professional Development Decision-making Model (Figure 1) was developed to provide a mechanism for shifting practice and institutional change through a multi-level approach in which crucial decision-making occurs. The ākonga/student voice is at the centre of the model.

Using a Kaupapa Māori framework

A Kaupapa Māori theory and conceptual framework was used to provide a critical and reflective lens to evaluate the project's design, analysis and outcomes. The framework ensured the project took account of the structural, cultural and political factors that impact professional development decision-making.

Figure 1: Professional Development Decision-making Model



¹Ministry of Education. (2014). *Tertiary education strategy 2014 – 2019*. Wellington: Ministry of Education & Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

²Honeyfield, J., Petersen, L., Bidois, V., Nicholls, L., van Toor, H., Fitchett, L., Crossen, M. (2016). *Research Report: Professional Development Decision-making to Support Under-25 Student Success*. Ako Aotearoa: Wellington. Retrieved from www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/projects/professional-development-improve-outcomes-under-25-learners.

³Formally Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and Waiariki Institute of Technology.



Key findings

The resources developed are based on seven key findings from this project following implementation of the Decision-making Model. These findings reflect student, stakeholder and teacher feedback to improve support for Under-25 student success.

- 1. The importance of reframing and repositioning professional development focused on obtaining and acting on student feedback is essential.** The ideas, models and definitions about what constitutes 'professional development' were challenged in this project. In response, the researchers developed and reported a range of critical questions to guide student outcome-focused teaching development, positioned with student feedback and voice at the centre.
- 2. Relational and relevant learning and teaching is key to improving outcomes for Under-25 students.** Professional development that focuses on how to develop and maintain effective relationships with students, close to their career aspirations, is key to developing responsive and effective teaching for Under-25 students.
- 3. Together quality teaching and learning environments with student support make a difference.** A range of positive learning environments that embed learner support, and take account of the cultural, social and academic needs and aspirations of students, is highly effective for Under-25 students.
- 4. Under-25 students value focused learning and teaching activities that reflect employment and higher learning transitions as preparation for their longer-term career aspirations.**
- 5. Participating in communities of practice is an effective professional development activity for teachers of Under-25 students.** Particularly useful were those driven by teachers where knowledge and resources are shared, and where membership provided an avenue to help them confidently redefine, reframe and reposition their teaching practice.
- 6. Educational leadership that reflects an understanding of both content knowledge and pedagogical requirements and supports teachers in their learning is essential.** Such leadership also helped teachers of Under-25 students make decisions about effective professional development.
- 7. Reflective and reflexive learning and teaching conversations that occur in multiple places in an educational setting are highly valued by teachers working with Under-25 students.** Participants credited collegial discussions and peer observations as key mechanisms for engaging with change and identifying approaches that make a positive difference with Under-25 students.

Resources for teachers, staff developers and managers

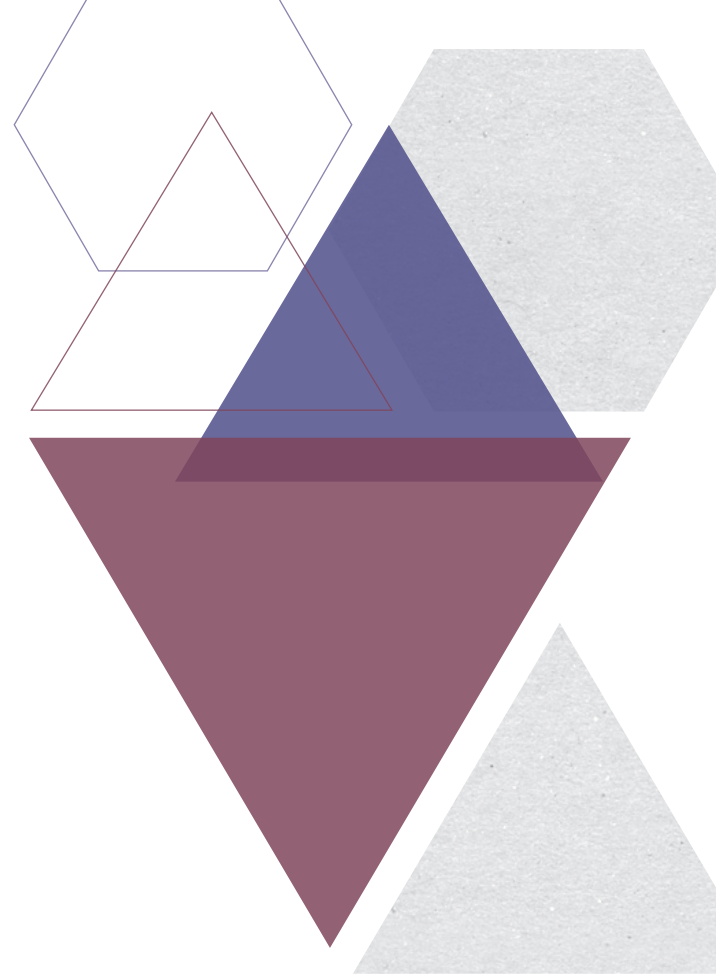
During the implementation of the Decision-making Model, a series of intervention strategies and resources were developed for teachers, staff developers and managers. The eight resources have been designed to enhance practice and have come about through critical understanding of factors that are required for successful professional development that leads to positive student outcomes.

Resource	Explanation and use
1. Orientation and whakawhanaungatanga: Building positive student relationships	Starting the course with positive relationships between learners, teachers and other support staff is important. This resource provides a number of activities and approaches to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a sense of group and connectedness 2. Know your learners 3. Enable student team work 4. Link education and practice
2. A community of practice (CoP) working with Under-25 Māori students	An overview and concept plan for establishing a CoP for teachers of Under-25 Māori students to share strategies, ideas and challenges with each other and support improvements in teaching practice.
3. Establishing and maintaining effective teams and groups	An overview and step-by-step process for establishing and maintaining effective groups and teams to enable educators to intentionally prepare, establish and enhance student learning.
4. Peer observation of teaching	Provides a process and templates for peer teaching observation. Enables reflection, review and action planning.
5. Timing teacher talk: A formative teaching observation tool	An eight-step process to gain quantitative and qualitative data from formative classroom observations to assist reflection and changes in practice.
6. Three-way teaching feedback: A collaborative teaching observation approach	This resource helps to identify possible areas for teachers to change their practice to improve student learning. It takes into account data gathered from the teacher, their students, and a trusted observer. It includes a video example.
7. Teaching young students workshop	The session plan and associated resources provide a facilitator (e.g. staff developer) with a process for planning, organising and facilitating a series of group workshops for teachers of young students.
8. Self-reflective analysis tool for teachers of Under-25 students	Developed from the synthesised ākonga/student, teacher and stakeholder descriptions of effective teaching attributes and practices, these guide reflection, professional development decision-making, and action planning.

Aligning findings and resources

The following matrix links the seven key findings from this project with the eight professional development resources created and tested in this study to support Under-25 student success. The matrix is designed to support teachers, staff developers and managers to effectively facilitate professional development decision-making.

Key findings	Resource 1: Orientation and whakawhanaungatanga: Building positive student relationships	Resource 2: A community of practice (CoP) working with Under-25 Māori students	Resource 3: Establishing and maintaining effective teams and groups	Resource 4: Peer observation of teaching	Resource 5: Timing teacher talk: A formative teaching observation tool	Resource 6: Three-way teaching feedback: A collaborative teaching observation approach	Resource 7: Teaching young students workshop	Resource 8: Self-reflective analysis tool for teachers of Under-25 students
1. Reframing and repositioning professional development		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Relational and relevant learning and teaching	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Quality teaching and learning environments with student support	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Employment and higher learning transitions					✓		✓	✓
5. Participating in communities of practice		✓			✓			✓
6. Leadership-driven quality teaching and learning and staff support		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
7. Reflective and reflexive teaching and learning practice		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓



About this resource

This work was supported through the Ako Aotearoa National Project Fund 2012. This is a summary and guide to eight resources developed as a result of the study by Honeyfield et al (2016). *Research Report: Professional Development Decision-making to Support Under-25 Student Success*. These resources, the research report and a literature review can be downloaded at www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/projects/professional-development-improve-outcomes-under-25-learners. The resources are also available for purchase at www.shop.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz.

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